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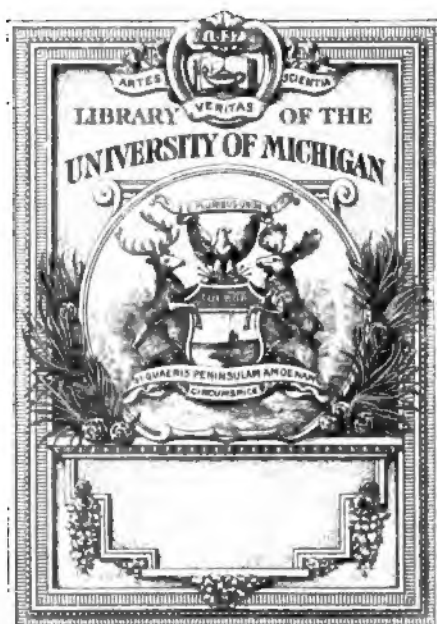
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THE
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

AUTHORISED EDITION.

FOURTH SERIES:

COMMENCING WITH THE SECOND SESSION OF THE TWENTY-FIFTH PARLIAMENT

OF THE

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

57 VICTORIÆ.

VOLUME XVII.

COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM

THE FIFTH DAY OF SEPTEMBER

TO

THE TWENTY SECOND DAY OF SEPTEMBER,

1893.

EYRE AND SPOTTISWOODE,

Her Majesty's Printers,

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(UNDER CONTRACT WITH H.M. GOVERNMENT).

1893.

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THE
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(Authorised Edition)

IN THE
SECOND SESSION OF THE TWENTY-FIFTH PARLIAMENT OF
THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND
APPOINTED TO MEET 4 AUGUST 1892, IN THE FIFTY-SIXTH YEAR OF
THE REIGN OF

HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA.

TENTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1893.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 5th September 1893.

Several Lords—Took the Oath.

SAT FIRST.

The Earl Granville, after the death of his father.

Lionel Sackville Sackville-West, Lord Sackville—Was introduced by virtue of a special limitation in the patent dated 2nd October 1876, and sat first in Parliament after the death of his brother Mortimer Lord Sackville, and took the Oath.

NEW PEER.

Sir Arthur Hamilton-Gordon, commonly called the Honourable Sir Arthur Hamilton-Gordon, G.C.M.G., having been created Baron Stanmore of Great Stanmore in the county of Middlesex—Was (in the usual manner) introduced.

Several Lords—Took the Oath.

VOL. XVII. [FOURTH SERIES.]

GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND BILL.

(No. 265.)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Earl SPENCER) : My Lords, I have frequently had to ask the indulgence of your Lordships, but I am quite sure that I have never addressed you before when I had more cause to ask for your kindness. The subject of the government of Ireland excites stormy feeling ; it arouses great and bitter controversy. I shall endeavour to-night to avoid all personal attack, and, if possible, not to raise any irritating subjects. One thing I know that we are all agreed upon, and that is the vast importance of the subject, not only to Ireland, but to the Empire at large. I have, therefore, a task of unusual difficulty in endeavouring to explain to your Lordships the Bill which Her Majesty's Government have introduced to Parliament, and to state the reasons why they have thought it

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necessary to introduce that measure. I claim credit for the honest motives and intentions of those who support this Bill, in the same way that I attribute the same motives to those who oppose it. I venture to call your Lordships' attention to the history of Ireland since the Union. I shall not attempt to go at length and in great detail into that history, but it is necessary to refer to it briefly, in order that we may see the ground on which we stand and the difficulties which beset Ireland and which have made it necessary, in the opinion of the Government, to take the course they have adopted. If we look at the history of Ireland during the present century we shall find much to deplore. We shall find periodical rebellion; we shall find chronic agrarian discontent, culminating time after time in outbreaks of agrarian crime; we shall find religious animosities and differences; we shall find a people steeped in poverty and in misery, from which have arisen terrible famine and distress which have baffled and given immense difficulty to the Government of the day. We find all that, and, as I have said, we cannot but deplore all these circumstances; and I do not think there will be much difference of opinion between those whom I represent and noble Lords on the other side of the House with regard to the unfortunate condition of Ireland during the century. We differ, I know, and differ with extreme force; but that difference is with regard to the remedies to be applied to Ireland, and not as to the state of Ireland itself. How have the Government of the day endeavoured to meet this state of affairs? They have met rebellion by force; and, though rebellion has often been troublesome in Ireland, it has never been extremely formidable, for the reason that the powerful forces of this country could do what they liked with a poor and weak country like Ireland. Therefore, there has been no time when rebellion has lifted its head for any period and the Government of the day have always been able to cope with it. But there is another difficulty of a more insidious kind; I refer to agrarian discontent and outbreaks of agrarian crime. These have been more difficult to deal with. Governments, one after another, whatever Party has

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been in power, have dealt with this agrarian discontent, first by the control of a powerful constabulary, and even by the use and the aid of the military. They have also dealt with this agrarian discontent by means of exceptional legislation. I will say a few words with regard to this exceptional legislation, because I do not wish to pass by that subject without referring to it. I have never stated, and I do not mean to state now, that in my opinion exceptional criminal legislation ought never to be applied to a country. There are occasions, and there have been occasions in Ireland, when exceptional criminal legislation—or, as it is called shortly, coercion—has been necessary. There have been times before when remedial legislation has taken root and where time was wanted in order to develop its effects—times when, as has happened more than once, there have been violent outbreaks of crime, when murders were rife in the country, and when agrarian conspiracy and secret societies ruled a great part of the country. Then it was essential, for the safety of the State, to introduce for a time exceptional legislation. But exceptional legislation, as we know, is not a cure for a deep-rooted and deep-seated evil. There is one drawback and fault attached to exceptional legislation which I think has often been overlooked, and that is the demoralising effect which exceptional criminal legislation has on the various forces which are maintained in the country for the maintenance of law and order. The police rely more upon the exceptional measures than on the ordinary methods for detecting crime and following up criminals. The law itself is not applied so rigorously as when the peace and order of the country depend entirely on the ordinary law. I have often heard it said that exceptional legislation and coercion does not in any way affect the well-ordered people, and in that way it does not do much harm; it only brings criminals to justice, and punishes those who might otherwise escape the law. That may be true in one sense; but those who urge that plea forget that in a country like Ireland there is a large body of men who, though they entirely refrain from actual crime, yet are so opposed to the Government of the day that they will not move a finger in

order to bring the criminals to justice. Exceptional legislation to them is merely a new proof how great the inability of the British Parliament is to govern that country. To them exceptional legislation is hateful, and every time you apply exceptional legislation you increase and irritate the feeling of the Irish and many of the well-disposed people against the British Government and against law and order. Exceptional criminal legislation or coercion has been a very frequent method of legislation for the government of Ireland in the past. I believe that in 87 years there have been 87 Coercion Acts or renewal of Coercion Acts in that country. They have been, as a rule, temporary in character, but at this moment there is an exceptional Criminal Law in Ireland which is not temporary but permanent. I will now pass from this part of the question and refer to other Acts in connection with Ireland. Every statesman knows that when there is widespread discontent and crime in a country there is some cause for it, and every statesman who is worthy of the name of statesmanship will try to find out what the cause of those grievances is, and will bring forward measures to remedy them. These measures have been called remedial measures of legislation. Discontent is never of spontaneous growth; it always originates through some cause or other. Now, my Lords, what have been the measures which statesmen on both sides have applied to Ireland? I will speak of the measures which I may call, perhaps, heroic measures, though there have been other measures on many occasions which the Government of the day have applied with the view of overcoming the difficulties of government in that country. The first great measure was Catholic Emancipation in 1829; at a long interval came the Disestablishment and Disendowment of the Irish Church. Dealing with agrarian discontent there was first of all the Encumbered Estates Court Act; then followed a smaller Act in 1860 with regard to the land; and, finally, there came those great measures of 1870 and 1881; next the Act of 1887—all of them dealing with the tenure of land in Ireland. These measures also contained provisions for the purchase of land by the occupiers. These measures were followed in 1885 by the measure which is known by the

name of the noble Lord opposite, Lord Ashbourne, for giving facilities to tenants to buy the land which they occupy. This, again, was followed by the Act of 1891. There have been numerous other measures passed for the benefit of Ireland, such as Irrigation Acts and Reclamation of Land Acts; there have been loans to railroads; and money has been lavished upon Ireland with the hope of improving its material condition. What has been the effect of all this legislation, of all these efforts which have been nobly made by one side or the other to endeavour to win over Ireland to contentment and happiness? I fear the state of Ireland has not become proportionately satisfactory. I do not for a moment say that there has been no improvement, or that there has not been a very considerable improvement during the century. It would be vain to contend that there has not been great improvement; that great grievances have not been redressed, and that to some extent a better feeling does not prevail among the people. But I would like to follow this up a little further. Do you find in Ireland that support of law and order without which no good government exists? The symbol and sign of good government is to find, as we do in this country, the whole population anxious to support the law. I fear in Ireland, although there has been some improvement, even now, when agrarian crimes arise and political agitation exists, you will find large portions of the population determined to resist the law and to obstruct the action of the Government. That, my Lords, in itself is a grievous sign of the condition of the country. Has the country prospered? No doubt it has made some advance, for greater prosperity exists than there was 40 or 50 years ago. Yet even now there are districts of the country where the population barely subsist at times on the land they cultivate. If a bad season occurs or prices fall, then that population is on the verge of famine, and looks to the richer sister country, England, for support and existence. If we look at the feeling which is exhibited throughout the country we shall find hardly a single Representative Body out of Ulster—a Board of Guardians, Local Government Board, or Borough Authority—which does not take every opportunity to

thwart and oppose the Government of the day. Lastly, if we look to Parliament—and that, I think, is the best test of all of the feeling of a country—we find that the majority the Nationalists have had in Parliament ever since 1874, which has always been considerable, has increased until now four-fifths of the Irish Representatives are in favour of Home Rule or self-government for Ireland. That, I think, is a very serious position, especially in this country where we are so proud of our Representative Institutions and so proud of our Constitution. That alone points to an unhealthy condition of affairs in a country. Now why is it that those measures have failed? Why is it that, after passing the measures I have referred to, we still find an unhealthy state of things in Ireland? I venture to think that nearly all these great measures have been introduced too late, or without due regard to the feelings, sentiments, and customs of the Irish people. I will illustrate this very shortly from the measures of which I have spoken. Take Catholic Emancipation. We all know that at the time of the Union it was in the mind of Mr. Pitt to pass Catholic Emancipation. In 1801 he resigned his place in the Government because he was unable to introduce a measure of Catholic Emancipation, and it was not till 29 years after the Union that Catholic Emancipation was given. We do not know what might have been the effect on the Union and on subsequent events in Ireland if this measure of redress had been passed at the time of the Union. After Catholic Emancipation we had to wait 40 years before we dealt with another great grievance of the Irish people—namely, the establishment of a religion which was not the religion of the bulk of the people. There is one exception, probably, which I believe was almost entirely successful—namely, the commutation of tithe. The two observations I have made will apply to the measures passed with reference to the land. The first great inquiry with respect to the land was made by the Devon Commission. That Commission went into this subject with the greatest care, and it drew up one of the ablest Reports ever presented to the Queen. The Report of the Devon Commission was scathing in its terms with

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regard to the condition of the Irish tenants and peasantry. I was looking the other day through some of the speeches on this subject, and I came across what I think a remarkable statement on the subject by one who was well-known in both Houses of Parliament in his day as one of the most eloquent speakers and one of the most intrepid statesmen who ever sat on these Benches—I allude to the late Lord Derby, the father of the noble Lord whose recent death we so much deplored, and also of the noble Lord whom we welcome amongst us, and who lately filled a high position with honour and dignity in Her Majesty's Colonies. Lord Stanley, as he then was, in introducing a measure immediately after the Report of the Devon Commission, after referring to the fact that the tenants in Ireland erected buildings and did all the substantial repairs, used these words—

“Could he be surprised to find on those farms everything neglected and in ruin; the land unproductive, the cultivation defective, and the estate peopled not by an industrious, thriving, and peaceful, but by an idle, a dissolute, and a disturbed people? And yet this, with some honourable exceptions, is not a highly-coloured or exaggerated picture of the condition of a large portion of the tenantry of Ireland. Then is not this a state of things in which, when it is for the interest of the landlord himself, we should interfere to give to the tenant some security and encouragement, so that, if he chose to spend his capital and labour in improvements, he should not be turned out of his wretched holding without compensation for his outlay, whether of money or of labour?”

After speaking of the Ulster tenant-right custom, he goes on—

“What is the case with regard to the rest of Ireland? There the tenant holds by a more dangerous tenure—by the security he derives from the fears of the landlord.”

This is a very grave and solemn statement by an eminent statesman whom noble Lords on the other side have followed and honoured, and I do not think you could have stronger testimony as to the deplorable condition of Ireland at that time and of the necessity for some immediate legislation.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: What was the date of that speech?

*EARL SPENCER: It was in 1845. What followed that speech? There was no serious attempt to cope with the Land Question in Ireland, with one exception, until 1870. I say, there-

fore, you may apply the term "too late" to our dealing with this question. At the time of the famine, when it was found that there were bankrupt landlords on settled estates, a great Act was passed in order to relieve that state of things; and I venture to say, if it was not too late, it altogether disregarded some of the most cherished customs and opinions of the Irish people, for no provision was made in that Act to protect the property of the tenants. Later on the new landlords, some of whom were accustomed only to the habits of English landlords, treated their tenants exactly on the English system; and from that sprang some of the difficulties which have culminated in our days in terrible land disturbances in Ireland. Take the next legislation with regard to the land in 1860. Then an Act was passed on the same English lines. It was known in Ireland under the name of Deasy's Act, and in England under the name of Cardwell's Act. It tried to introduce the system of pure contract into the habits of the Irish tenants, and it entirely failed. Now I come to the Gladstone Act of 1870. That was a great and sweeping measure, but it shrank from going the full length of what was wanted in Ireland at the time. It did not deal with the extension of the Ulster custom, and it did not establish Rent Courts in Ireland. I do not say that at that time the Government of Mr. Gladstone could have carried a wider measure. For some years after this measure there was great agricultural prosperity in Ireland; but the moment bad times came, as they did in 1878 and 1879, then difficulties began with regard to the Act of 1870. As you all know, a terrible agrarian insurrection, agitation, and outbreak occurred, and the Government of Mr. Gladstone in 1881 was forced to introduce a new measure. What did that measure do? It supplemented the Act of 1870, and extended the Ulster custom over Ireland and established official Rent Courts in the country. Then came the Act of the noble Marquess opposite, the Act of 1887. That Act, as you know, dealt mainly with temporary circumstances, but it did extend the previous Acts by the clause admitting leaseholders. Therefore, every one of these Acts in succession had to supplement the deficiencies that were found in every Act

that preceded. So much for the Land Acts. The question of Local Government stands even worse than the question of the land. In 1842 a Commission recommended that measures should be taken for altering the laws in relation to Local Government. Act after Act was introduced, but every one failed, and the last failure was the Act of 1892 of Mr. Balfour, who introduced a large measure of Local Government in the other House.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: It never passed. Do you call that an Act which failed?

***EARL SPENCER:** The noble Marquess is too critical. What I intended to say was that those Acts one after another were introduced, but was rejected by Parliament.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Bills, not Acts.

***EARL SPENCER:** Bills I should have called them. Now, my Lords, I should like to refer to the Irish Government. The Irish Government itself and its position illustrate very forcibly the condition of Ireland. The Irish Government is in one sense a powerful Government, for it is essentially centralised in its action; but on the other side it is a very weak Government, for it is completely isolated from the country. Why is it so centralised? There are two reasons. The first is that the administration of the law could not, years ago even, be left entirely to the class that administer it in England; because on certain disputed subjects that class did not receive the support and confidence of the masses of the people. The other reason is that in the large towns and in other places of municipal government the Irish Government could not trust the Municipalities, because they were so opposed to the Government of the day that they could not hand over to them the powers of police and other powers which in England are given to the Local Authorities. That, I conceive, is a very serious and grievous state of things. In England we have in every part of the country buffers to the Central Government. We hear nothing in London of many cases which in Ireland would at once be brought home to the Central Government. But the effect of that is that every breakdown in the law—every Magistrate who makes a mistake—is

thrown against the Central Government. It is a most powerful Government in one sense, as I say, because it wields the police and practically controls the appointment of every Magistrate in the country. The police it is able to move all over the country as if it were one man. It appoints the Magistrates in every borough and county. With all that, my Lords, we know that it is essentially a weak Government, because it has not the support of the masses of the people of the country. There is another reason why the great measures that have been passed for Ireland have not been fruitful in good results, and it is, perhaps, one of the principal causes of the failure of British Governments and British Parliaments successfully to cope with Irish grievances. I mean that there is in Ireland underlying the whole feeling of the great majority of the people one passionate sentiment — namely, the sentiment for Local Government. This sentiment has been shown in a variety of ways. It has been shown sometimes in rebellion, sometimes in cries for absolute separation, sometimes in cries for Repeal of the Union. We have never been able to stifle or conciliate it. We have never been able to use the feeling which is so strong in England in support of law and order in support of the same forces in Ireland. The neglect of this feeling, in my belief, is at the root of the failure of most of these measures to which I have referred, and we felt this very strongly when we had to consider what measures we should introduce for Ireland. I have endeavoured, I am afraid very inadequately, to touch on the condition of Ireland during the last 93 years. I wish a more able exponent of this policy could have stood before you, but I have felt it my duty to trace the course of events, and the study of these events brought my mind in the year 1885—I speak now, and I ought to apologise, perhaps, for doing so, in my own name, but I do not like in this particular part of the subject to introduce the responsibility for others—to the view that a new policy was absolutely required. I have been in Ireland for eight years—for three years under the most difficult circumstances. I had to administer the law entrusted to me by Parliament. I did it as honestly and fearlessly as I could. I endeavoured to

administer it also with perfect justice, and in some degree I think I may claim that I was successful in restoring law and order to the country. But after that was done I could not but feel that I had not succeeded permanently in the work which I had endeavoured to do. I found all those conditions of discontent and want of support of the Government to which I have adverted, and I seriously considered the position. The events on this side of the water in 1885 did not check the feeling operating in my mind. What did these events show? They showed that a Conservative Government were willing and able to enter upon Office when their Party was in a minority in the House of Commons by the support of the Irish vote. These events further showed that the continuity which had hitherto existed with regard to the administration of the law in Ireland had been broken, and these two considerations had a profound effect on my mind, and convinced me that some change in the policy which both Parties had heretofore pursued must be made. The old remedies had failed; was it possible to find new remedies? I faced the question in this way: It was necessary before committing myself to any new policy to see that certain guarantees and conditions were attached to any new principle that might be adopted. Those conditions were three. I conceived that no new policy ought to be adopted unless you could maintain the supremacy of Parliament, maintain the unity of the Kingdom, and effectually protect minorities in Ireland. Those three conditions were the tests which I applied to the question of new methods of governing Ireland. I need not go through all the proceedings of 1886. As your Lordships are aware, the Liberal Party over which Mr. Gladstone presided then inaugurated a new policy for Ireland. It has sometimes been said that we Liberals who followed Mr. Gladstone in this new policy adopted it with a light heart. I assure you, my Lords, that one of the most painful things I and many of my colleagues went through was the way in which we had to adopt that policy, for this reason—that we had to separate ourselves from many of the colleagues and friends with whom we had been all our political lives intimately connected. It was not a light matter. It was a

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matter we felt most deeply, and, I will venture to say, still feel. But it was in our mind a paramount duty that we should adopt this new course, as it was in our opinion the only way of dealing with the Irish difficulty. I shall not go through the Bill of 1886, or what occurred after it. I shall go at once to the measure which is now before your Lordships—a measure which is founded on the same principles as that which was introduced to Parliament and lost in 1886. I venture to think that this measure does embrace those guarantees and conditions without which I did not think any change of policy in Ireland ought to be made. Possibly I might pass over the details of this measure, and no doubt many of your Lordships, perhaps all your Lordships, have followed the long Debates which have occurred in another place on this Bill; at the same time, I do not think I should be treating your Lordships' House with respect if I did not shortly touch on the provisions of the measure. The Bill before your Lordships proposes to establish a Legislature for Ireland consisting of the Queen and two Houses. The Bill guards most carefully the powers of the Irish Legislature. It protects the supremacy of Parliament. In the preamble and in the 2nd clause there are distinct provisos to maintain and uphold the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament. The Irish Legislature will have power to make laws for the peace, order, and good government of Ireland in matters relating exclusively to Ireland, or some part thereof. To this there are exceptions and restrictions, but they only define, enumerate, and explain the matter to which I have just referred. The exceptions are that the Irish Legislature cannot deal with the Crown or the succession; it cannot deal with matters connected with peace or war, with the Army, Navy, or Volunteers, with Treaties with Foreign Powers, with the coinage or legal tender. There are still more exceptions; but I have enumerated enough to show that they are of great importance as bearing on the supremacy of Parliament. The restrictions go to prevent the Irish Parliament from establishing or endowing religion, from dealing with the laws of religious liberty; they insure freedom of conscience for adults and for children

in schools: they prevent the Irish Parliament from making laws to deprive any person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law in accordance with established principles and precedents. They also protect Corporate Bodies and various other interests. The Irish Legislature is to consist of two Chambers—the Legislative Chamber, with the same franchise and the number of Members as govern the position of Irish Members now in Parliament. The Second Chamber, which is called the Legislative Council, is introduced as a safeguard against hasty legislation. If we look at the Legislatures and Constitutions throughout Europe it will be found that there is only one country which has but one Chamber, and that is the Kingdom of Greece.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Bulgaria.

*EARL SPENCER: Second Chambers are constituted very nearly in every country in Europe. That is enough for my argument. The Second Chamber is to consist of 48 Members, to be elected for eight years, whereas the Legislative Chamber is to be elected for five, and the Second Chamber is not to be affected by a Dissolution. In the case of a difference of opinion between the two Chambers—what you call a deadlock—it is proposed that in case a Bill is presented again at the end of two years, or after a Dissolution, after having been rejected by the Legislative Council, then, if the Bill is again rejected, a decision shall be come to by both Chambers sitting as one. The Executive, as a matter of course, is centred in the Queen, and the Lord Lieutenant represents Her Majesty. The Lord Lieutenant is to be appointed for six years by the Government of the day, but he is not to be a political officer going out with the Government. The Lord Lieutenant is to be relieved of religious tests. In his hands is one of the most important powers of the Bill—namely, the veto. He can exercise the veto in three ways. He is to exercise it usually upon the advice of his Irish Ministers, but he can exercise it if a Bill is *ultra vires*, and also upon instructions from the Queen on special Bills. The Lord Lieutenant is to have control of the military in Ireland, as at present, and during six years the

police will be under his control, as representing the Queen. In six years the police are to be disbanded, by which time, no doubt, it will be possible to find places in other forces for a great number of that body. Those who are to be disbanded will have terms of a liberal character given to them — something like an addition of 10 years to their pay. I need hardly say, after having had such great experience of the loyalty and efficiency of the Royal Irish Constabulary, I should regret extremely if they felt they had not received justice in this matter. I come now to the Civil Service, the members of which are provided with retirement pensions and allowances if they retire before five years. The Judges have all their rights preserved to them, both as to pay and as to the manner of their tenure. The new Judges are to be appointed by the Lord Lieutenant on the advice of the Irish Government; but for six years such appointments are to receive the countersign of the Secretary of State in England. I do not want to dilate at length on the question of finance; but, as it is so important, I must say a few words upon it. There is one important consideration to be borne in mind, and that is the taxable capacity of Ireland. We do not propose that the burden should be made heavier than it now is. It is possible that Ireland may now pay a larger contribution, according to her taxable capacity, than England or Scotland towards Imperial charges; but we do not propose at this moment to alter that. We propose that we shall, as far as possible, receive from the Irish for Imperial purposes the same contribution which they now give. The Customs, Excise, and Income Tax are to be for six years exactly as they are now, and when collected two-thirds are to be paid over to the Irish Exchequer, and one-third is to go for Imperial purposes. I believe I am right in saying that within £20,000 this proposal represents exactly the present payments of Ireland to this country. But there is another point. During the time that the Royal Irish Constabulary are to be under the control of the Lord Lieutenant a certain portion of the charge is to fall on the Imperial Exchequer. That will amount to about £480,000, but it is not a permanent charge, and will

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diminish as the police disappear and as their pensions lapse. Now, it may be asked, is that a good bargain for England and also for Ireland? I venture to say that it is a good bargain for England. If England desires to carry this measure and give self-government to Ireland, she will not wish to treat Ireland in a niggardly manner. And, considering the enormous expense of our government in Ireland, expense connected with the judiciary, the police, and the various other parts of the Civil Service, and that that expense on the part of England is an increasing expense, it will be a gain for England not to have to provide for this expensive government. With regard to Ireland, she will, at all events during a considerable number of years, according to the calculation made, have about £500,000 surplus. I pass on now to the question of land legislation. That is a subject in which I know your Lordships take a deep interest, and it is one upon which I hold a strong opinion. I have long held that there were strong reasons for dealing with this Irish Land Question. To carry out the policy of 1886 two Bills were introduced—a Government of Ireland Bill and a Land Bill. These two measures were linked together at the time. The Land Bill never came on for Second Reading, and was, therefore, not discussed in the other House of Parliament. It fell with the Government of Ireland Bill, the two Bills at the time being considered by us to be linked strongly and firmly together. We at that time thought it necessary to connect the legislation with regard to land with the legislation for the Local Government of Ireland. We believed that after the desperate struggle which had been going on for so many years in Ireland on the Land Question—a struggle that had hardly then ceased, or, at all events, was of very recent cessation—it would not be right to give immediately to the Irish Legislature the power of dealing with the question of land. We thought, further, that it would be intolerable to place on a new Legislature, which had an enormous variety of subjects, and pressing subjects, to deal with, the responsibility of dealing with this great question, the difficulty of which had, to a great extent, arisen from legislation of the Imperial Parliament. After the defeat of the Government of

1886 this question of the land was dealt with in Parliament. There was the measure of 1887, which extended the Ashbourne Act, and there was, further, the great measure of Mr. Balfour in 1891. These two measures, to my mind, took the place of the Land Bill, which was linked with the Local Government question in our policy of 1886. Those were Bills of great importance. Ten millions had, I think, been allotted under the Ashbourne Act towards the purchase by the tenants of their farms, and Mr. Balfour's measure proposed that £30,000,000 should be allotted for this purpose. This is how he describes his measure—

“The best calculation that I can make is that in any case the total amount to complete land purchase would be somewhere about £95,000,000 sterling. Therefore, although the 30 odd millions which the Bill proposes to allocate to land purchase certainly is far from carrying it out completely, it will be observed that, if we deduct from the £95,000,000 those cases in which landlords and tenants do not desire to sell or purchase, with the repayments of the £30,000,000 we may really expect under this Bill to see a great impression made upon the problem we have to solve.”

That Act remains in force, and it is protected by provisions in the present Bill. These measures, alone, have made an enormous difference with regard to the position of the landlords in Ireland; and, therefore, if it were only with regard to the passing of these two measures, I should not think it would be necessary now to link a land measure with the Local Government Bill; but the landlords of Ireland have other securities. They have the security of the veto, and that for six years the military and the police are under the control of the Lord Lieutenant. Further, provision is made that for three years the Imperial Parliament may deal with this subject here, and the Irish Parliament are prevented from dealing with it. Lastly, the landlords have behind them the inherent power of the Imperial Parliament in case of grievous injustice and wrong. These are the reasons why, who have been very strongly in favour of securing to landlords the possibility in case of difficulty of selling their estates, consider that their interests are safeguarded under the Bill and under the Acts of Parliament to which I have referred. I must refer to one other point, and it is a point on which

great interest has been felt—I mean the retention of the Irish Members in the Imperial Parliament. Your Lordships are aware that under the Bill of 1886 the Irish Members were excluded. I at that time was strongly in favour of that proposition, and for these reasons. It was the simplest plan, and it avoided many complications which were unavoidable under other solutions of the question. The Irish Members themselves had enormous interests to look after in Ireland, and did not desire to come over to England; but there were strong and forcible reasons urged against their exclusion. Exclusion suggested to the mind of many people, though it was not a necessary consequence, the idea of separation; inclusion under the Bill absolutely prevents the separation of Ireland from England. There were two other ways of dealing with the subject. There was the partial retention of the Irish Members in the Imperial Parliament, voting on certain subjects, and refraining from voting on others. That proposal had its advocates, and found a place in the Bill of the Government when it was first introduced. It had its advantages, because there was a view held among many people that it was unfair for the Irish to interfere in English affairs, when we were precluded from interfering in similar affairs in Ireland. I am aware that that feeling is shared by many people; but when you apply this solution to the question I think you will see that it is perfectly impossible as a practical measure. How was it possible to have a Government supported at one time by one body of men and at another by another body of men? You might divide the subjects into Imperial subjects and into local Irish subjects; but there would always be questions, such as Votes of Confidence, where it would be absolutely impossible to define what was to be done with the Irish Members. Take the question of the Budget, with the Resolutions and the Estimates, and the Appropriation Bill. On some subjects the Irish would take a part; on others they would be absent. This solution of the question was proved on examination to be impracticable. We gave it up; and we adopted what has been called the *omnes omnia* plan, which was to leave the Irish Members in for all purposes. There are two objections

made to that; the one to which I have referred—namely, that it was unfair that the Irish Members should take part in the discussion of English subjects when we did not take part in the discussion of similar subjects in Ireland. There is a further objection—that it would encourage intrigue with the Irish Members. [*Laughter and ironical cheers.*] I expected that cheer; but we have this very difficulty at the present moment. It is not a new thing that politicians should intrigue, or, as it is called, coquette, with the Irish Party on critical Divisions. That is not unknown in politics, and this may be thrown in the teeth of both Parties in Parliament. The difficulty has existed, but it will exist with far less force when this Bill passes. I know that probably I shall not get the assent of noble Lords opposite or behind me to what I am now going to say; but if the Bill does what we expect, it will bring contentment to the Irish people. [*Opposition laughter and ironical cheers.*] I am quite aware of the feeling which that cheer indicates, but I am bound to state what I honestly believe. If that takes place, then there will be far less danger with regard to the Irish Members voting on all subjects than there is at the present moment. No doubt the objections to the Bill with which we are all familiar will be raised again in this House; and as I have been so intimately connected with the subject, and as I have so sincerely at heart the welfare and well-being of the Irish nation, I wish to state my views with regard to some of those objections. There is the question of separation. I have endeavoured to show that under this Bill separation will be impossible. Our opponents say that may be for the moment true; but if the Irish obtain the Bill they will agitate and plot to obtain separation from England. I utterly disbelieve in that theory. The Irish know very well that they could not obtain separation. They are not such fools as to forget the strong battalions which are under the command of Her Majesty's Government and of England. They are not such fools as to wish to go to the heavy cost of finding a Navy and an Army for themselves, which I need hardly say, would be indispensable to them if they obtained separation. They know that they could not obtain it; they

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know that England is powerful enough, and has always been powerful enough, to put down rebellion in Ireland, and they know that England would never consent to separation. I believe that they desire to remain under the flag of England, and that Irishmen are still proud to fight the battles of England, and to share the glory which has been gained in former wars by this country. I now come to another question—namely, the alleged danger of religious ascendancy and tyranny. It is feared that the Roman Catholics will oppress the Protestants in Ireland. As to this, I make the same remark that I made with regard to separation—I do not believe it for a moment. I do not believe that religious persecution and tyranny can exist in the present state of society, considering the force of public opinion in Ireland as well as in England. The Irish Roman Catholics have never shown distrust of Protestant leaders. Time after time they have followed such leaders with the utmost loyalty. I know that at times there have been stories of the persecution of Protestants in different parts of the country. There may be isolated cases of the sort, but I believe that these cases generally arise, not from religious feeling, but from other causes. The Irish people have, as your Lordships are aware, very strong feelings on various matters political and agrarian, and it may often happen that a Protestant takes a very strong view on some points of politics which is hostile to the views of, and therefore offends, his Catholic neighbours. If there is any disturbance in consequence it is clear that it cannot be assigned to religious differences. We often hear it said that the Irish Protestant is to be placed under the heel of Archbishop Walsh. In my opinion there is no ground for that statement. The Irish Bishops and priests have rarely, if ever, initiated any political movement in Ireland. They, no doubt, are carried with the current, and when a strong political current is flowing they swim with it; but as far as I know they have not themselves initiated any great topics of political controversy during the last few years. The Irish people will take a strong line of their own on all political matters. I could not give a better illustration of my meaning than the following:—When I was in Ireland His Holiness the Pope issued some

pastoral or letter, desiring the Bishops and priests of Ireland to prevent their flocks from subscribing to the Parnell testimonial. What was the result? The subscriptions came in after that pronouncement with redoubled vigour until the sum of £35,000 was subscribed to the testimonial. There have been other instances of independence on the part of the Irish people. There is the case of Bishop O'Dwyer in Limerick, who for some reason found fault with an Irish Member. Immediately that Member—Mr. Dillon—called an indignation meeting, which was held under the very nose of the Bishop. There have been cases also when the Parnellite division of the Irish Party have held indignation meetings against the Archbishop of Cashel, because he was opposed to their views. Therefore I do not believe that there is any danger of the Irish people submitting in political matters to be guided and ruled by the Roman Catholic hierarchy or the priests of Ireland. Now, I wish to say two or three words respecting Ulster. I have great respect and admiration for the people of that Province. When I was in Ireland I had difficulties, great difficulties, to contend against in Ulster as well as in other parts of the country, but in dealing with these difficulties I became acquainted with many qualities which I greatly appreciated in the Ulster people. They are full of talent, independence, energy. With the exception of an occasional breaking out on a religious anniversary, they are orderly and law-abiding. I am aware that the people of Ulster view this Bill with great dislike, and oppose it most vigorously. They have been supported by many distinguished men. It has been said that "Ulster will fight, and Ulster will be right." Indeed, that has been the keynote of speech after speech in Ulster and in England. In my opinion, the fears of Ulster are quite groundless. I do not believe that the people of that Province will be subjected to hardship or oppression at the hands of the Nationalist Party, and I look forward to the day when the men of Ulster, with all their ability and power, will assist their brethren in the government of the country. Ulster is in a minority in Ireland. Of course, Ulstermen have a perfect right to oppose any measure

which they dislike, and to demand safeguards for themselves, but have they the right, and ought they as a generous people to oppose what Parliament in its wisdom may direct as a change necessary for the welfare of the majority of their fellow-countrymen? I deny that they have a right to hold out in that way; and, knowing the generosity of the people of Ireland, I cannot but think that these appalling prognostications will come to nothing, and that, when Parliament has decided to pass a Home Rule measure, the men of Ulster will come forward willingly and take part in the government of their island. There is one more objection to this measure that I wish to notice. We are accused of handing over, or proposing to hand over, the government of Ireland to men of the worst possible character, to men who are sometimes called murderers,—[The Marquess of LONDONDERRY: Hear, hear!]—sometimes agitators, who have caused difficulties in Ireland. I was quite prepared for the cheers of the noble Marquess and other noble Lords opposite. I deny, however, that the men to whom I refer are correctly described by the terms which I have repeated. The Irish Party in Parliament are not murderers, and have been cleared over and over again in that respect. The Nationalist Party in the great struggle which they have been carrying on have done many things which I deplore, things which I had to oppose when I was in Ireland. I do not for a moment say that they have been justified in all they have done; far from it. They have been violent in their language; they have been silent when they ought to have spoken out; and I admit that they have been guilty of discreditable acts. But we are not proposing to hand over the government of Ireland to any particular set of men. What we are proposing to do is to rely on self-government, and we have confidence that the people of Ireland will select the right men to govern them in the future. I should like to mention one argument which ought, I think, to have weight with noble Lords opposite who have advocated Local Government for Ireland. The Government of the noble Marquess opposite introduced a measure for that purpose, and I would ask this—If we are committing such a heinous crime in giving the government of Ireland to the

men who are likely to be selected by the Irish constituencies, were you not committing an equally heinous crime in proposing to give Local Government in counties and boroughs to the same class of men? I have always recollected a very remarkable statement with regard to Local Government which was made by Lord Salisbury at Newport some years ago. It is full of wisdom and bears upon the question whether it is better to give County Local Government to Ireland or Local Government of the kind now proposed by Her Majesty's Ministers. What did Lord Salisbury say? "The Local Authority is more exposed to temptation, and has more facility—" I am afraid I cannot read the rest. [The Marquess of SALISBURY: It is not worth reading.] At any rate, the argument is this—that it is safer to entrust a Government on a large scale with Representative Institutions than to frame a system of Local Government which will not be equally open to the influences of public opinion. Now, my Lords, I have made my statement and given the reasons which prompted the Government to introduce this measure. I am not sanguine enough to suppose that I have been able to carry with me any one of those who oppose the Bill. It would be absurd to conceal from myself the intention of the large Assembly whom I am addressing, for it has been announced for days, and weeks, and months that your Lordships intend to throw out the Bill. It would be in vain for me to appeal to your Lordships at the present time; but as I have been, through my family, intimately connected with your Lordships' House for many years, and by a personal membership of over 35 years, I may be allowed to speak on the subject of what I consider to be the interests of this Assembly. I implore your Lordships to pause before you reject this measure. I implore your Lordships to cast off all trace of that prejudice that surrounds to such a great extent this great subject. I implore your Lordships not rashly to follow the advice which has been given you so often. You have a great opportunity freely now of making a great concession to Ireland. The occasion is propitious; there is nothing but peace throughout the nations of the world; there is no turbulence in Ireland; you can now give freely and without pressure

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this great concession. My Lords, the Irish people have now hope instead of the despair they had before. They have hope from the decision which the constituencies gave at the last Election, hope from the measure passed recently in another place. Do not dash, my Lords, their hope to the ground. Hope encourages peace; despair engenders discontent and rebellion. My Lords, if you reject this measure, you will once more throw back the Irish people into despair. The responsibility for doing this will be a very heavy one, and I ask your Lordships to pause before you take upon you this heavy responsibility. If, on the other hand, you make this concession and pass this Bill, you will add to the lustre and honour belonging to your Lordships' House. You will once more give power to the Houses of Parliament; you will increase the influence of our country in every part of the world; you will, in my opinion, give contentment and good government to Ireland, and make her a source of strength instead of weakness to the Union. My Lords, I beg to move the Second Reading of this Bill.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."
—(*The Earl Spencer.*)

*THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: My Lords, I do not propose to follow my noble Friend in the disquisition, which occupied a large portion of his speech, on the history of Ireland during the present century. I failed to observe that that part of my noble Friend's speech bore any particular reference to the measure before the House. It was chiefly occupied with an account of the land legislation which had been too long delayed, of the Coercion Acts, and of the attempted creation of local self-government in Ireland. That historical disquisition might have been an appropriate introduction to a new Coercion Act, or to a new Land Act; but I think that my noble Friend forgot that part of his speech in which he proposed to connect his history with the present proposal of Her Majesty's Government. I will only say on that part of my noble Friend's speech that his review of the land legislation of Parliament as regards Ireland, and the evil effects which have resulted from the unhappy delays of that legislation, seem to me to be a somewhat singular introduction to a policy which

as it was originally introduced, proposed to remove altogether the control of the land legislation from the new Irish Parliament, and was combined with a plan by which this Parliament, hitherto, according to my noble Friend, so unsuccessful in its efforts, was once more to resume the task of finally settling that Irish difficulty, and still more was it a singular introduction to the proposal which, as now laid before us, imposes a delay of, at least, three years on the Irish Parliament in doing anything on that particular subject which, according to my noble Friend, lies at the root of the whole difficulty. In these circumstances I can scarcely see what my noble Friend's object was in making the historical review he gave us. It would have been, in my opinion, satisfactory to many of your Lordships if my noble Friend had found a little more time to devote to the explanation, which struck me as a remarkably brief one, of the causes which have led him to the conviction that a change of policy has become necessary. My noble Friend had at one time very strong convictions on the subject. I do not want to read more quotations than I can help, but my noble Friend has expressed himself in terms of somewhat unusual strength upon the question of tampering with the Union. In 1881 my noble Friend said—

“ We have to consider the most difficult problem ever presented to any English statesman—namely, the future of Ireland. What we have to do is this. We have to tell the Irish that their just grievances will always be redressed, that we will extend to them any privilege or liberty we Englishmen possess ; but we must tell them plainly, at the same time, that no Party in England, whether Conservative or Liberal, will put up with anarchy, and, what is more, that they are beating the air if they agitate for the repeal of the Union. We feel like the Americans when the integrity of their country was threatened, and, if necessary, we must shed blood to maintain the strength and salvation of this country.”

[“ Hear, hear ! ”] I am glad to hear from the cheers of my noble Friends behind me that they are still ready to shed their blood for the Union. But my noble Friend told us what were the circumstances which in 1885 led him to the conviction that a change of policy towards Ireland was necessary. His own Government, from 1881 to 1885, had been a fairly successful one. He had himself done much to restore law and order in

Ireland. My noble Friend was disappointed that he had not also succeeded in giving contentment to Ireland. He detected, or he thought he detected, a political intrigue between the Tory Party and the Irish Members, and he discovered that there was no continuity to be expected from the British Parliament in Irish policy. What was the proof of that? The Tory Government came in in 1885. They found a Coercion Act in force. That was a temporary Act. One would think, to hear the observations of my noble Friend, that the Conservative Party had found a permanent Coercion Act in force and had deliberately suspended its operation. Whatever may be my opinion of the policy or impolicy of the Tory Government at that time in undertaking to govern Ireland without the assistance of exceptional powers, it must be felt that they were justified in making the attempt to govern Ireland once more under the ordinary law, without the assistance of any exceptional repressive legislation. These simple facts—namely, discontent in Ireland, my noble Friend's detection of the supposed Tory intrigue, and the want of continuity which he discovered in British policy towards Ireland—were sufficient to make my noble Friend change the whole course of his policy, and be a party to the proposal of a measure which, although my noble Friend behind me does not seem to think his words bear that meaning, he had denounced in the strongest terms in 1881. Now, my Lords, I shall not detain you any further with the speech we have just listened to, though I may have to make some reference to it in my further observations. I desire, in the first place, to touch on a point which, I think, has not been referred to by my noble Friend. I want to call your Lordships' attention to the character of the decision you are called upon to give upon the present occasion. It is an important one, but it does not appear to me to be a decision which involves on your Lordships any heavy responsibility. Such cases have occurred before, and doubtless will occur again. The question has had to be solved and to be decided by this House whether your Lordships should make use of the Constitutional powers which you possess to reject measures which did not commend themselves to your own judgment, but

which you had reason to believe were approved by the majority of the House of Commons and of the country. The question has had to be decided by your Lordships, each for himself, whether you should in your collective capacity as one branch of the Legislature act upon your individual convictions and opinions in opposition to what you believe and have ascertained to be the view of the House of Commons and of the country. I think that your Lordships know well the limits of your power. You know that not being a Representative Assembly, and not backed by the strength which a representative character gives to a Legislative Body, and not sharing altogether the democratic principles which are making progress in this as in other countries, it would be unwise, impolitic, and unpatriotic to insist upon your personal convictions by enforcing your own political convictions in opposition to what is believed to be the decided view of the country. Such was the case of the Reform Bill of 1832, and, I may say, also of later Reform Bills. Such was the repeal of the Corn Laws. Such was the case of the Irish Church Act. Such cases may recur, and it is not for me to say what it may be the duty of this House to do when a similar case occurs again. It may be that a measure may be in your Lordships' judgment so wrong, so impolitic, so unjust, and so mischievous that it may be your duty to resist it to the last at any risk, even at that of the loss of your own political privileges. But, my Lords, this is no such case. This is not a case in which you are called upon to refuse to read this Bill a second time, because you are opposed to the principle of it. If I could conceive the case of a majority of your Lordships being of an opinion favourable to the principle of this measure; if, as the Prime Minister thinks might be possible, a measure founded upon a similar principle had been introduced by a Conservative Government, I do not undertake to say what the conduct of this House might have been, but I, at all events, should be prepared to say the duty of this House would be the same. I maintain that on a question of such magnitude, so closely touching the fundamental Institutions of our State, if there is any object in the existence of a Second

Chamber at all, it is, at all events, to prevent changes of that character being made without the absolute certainty that they are in accordance with the will of the majority of the people. Now, as to that certainty, we have no knowledge, and we can have none. Look for one moment at the history of the measure. It has been preceded by no popular agitation such as preceded the passing of the Reform Act or the Repeal of the Corn Laws. Those measures had been for years before the country, and had been fully debated and discussed throughout the whole country. I admit the Irish Church Act was a different case. There the proposal of the measure had not been preceded by any lengthened or any excited agitation. But the whole of the Liberal Party, or almost the whole of the Liberal Party, had been long in principle committed to the Disestablishment of the Irish Church, and, as Mr. Gladstone has reminded us, the Disestablishment of the Irish Church Act was only proposed to your Lordships after it had formed the single issue submitted to the country at a General Election, and after the verdict of the country had been given in the most unmistakable terms. But in 1885 not only was no political Party committed to this policy, but I venture to say that not one elector in 10,000 was favourable to the principle of Home Rule. This is a policy which emanates from the brain and will of a single man. It is not a policy which has proceeded from a political Party; it is not a policy advocated by a political Party and then adopted by its Leaders. It is a policy which has been imposed upon his followers by the single will of one man. Now, so far as we can form any opinion at all, the presumption is against this policy being adopted deliberately by the country. It has never been accepted by the country when it has been placed as a definite issue before it. Its rejection by the House of Commons in 1886 was followed when the country had before it the proposals within the four corners of a Bill by a still more decisive rejection at the hands of the electors. Immediate after that time a determined attempt was made to concentrate the attention of the country on the Irish Question. Judging by their own conduct on the part of the gentlemen who sit upon the Government Bench, that effort was wholly unsuccessful.

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ful, for it is within our knowledge that in the electoral campaign which was carried on from 1886 to 1892 the Home Rule policy was more and more withdrawn from the notice of the constituencies, and other measures which it was found commanded a larger measure of popular sympathy and support were put forward in its place. That policy was so successful that no human being can tell on what question the majority which put the present Government in power was returned. No doubt some electors voted for Home Rule, but it is quite certain that a larger number voted for Disestablishment, or Local Option, or for Parish Councils, or for changes in the incidence of taxation in towns, or for changes in the Labour Laws. Well, these tactics were successful in their immediate object, and enabled Her Majesty's Government to propose measures of great importance on these and various other subjects. But they have had this disadvantage—that it has been absolutely impossible to form any opinion as to what the real desire and wish of the people is upon this most vital question. We contend that it is a question large enough to justify us in refusing to pass this measure into law until that question is settled beyond the shadow of a doubt. I will ask your Lordships for a moment to contemplate the possibility of this Bill passing into law. Suppose that all or even some of the evils we anticipate come to pass; suppose the people, irritated by the recurrence of the Irish difficulty after this final effort, were at the next General Election to return a strong Unionist, anti-Irish majority to Parliament, I ask your Lordships to consider what would be the position of the new Irish Parliament and the new Irish Government in such circumstances? Entering upon their new duties confronted by a hostile Government and a hostile Parliamentary majority in Great Britain, it is easy to see the risks of danger that would result. Consider what, in that case, would be the responsibility of your Lordships' House. You would be told that you had had the power to prevent these evils; that you had the power to impose an interval during which the true will and desire of the people might be ascertained, but that you had failed to use this opportunity. In vain you would plead that you had acted as we are told we ought to act; in vain you

would plead you had acted on the assumption that the vote of the House of Commons was conclusive. Those who now denounce you for attempting to withstand the judgment of the popular Assembly would then be the first to denounce, with more justice, this Assembly as an utterly useless and inefficient Body incapable of averting even the consequences of a mistaken estimate of the opinion of the country. I will go one step further. I maintain that this policy is of sufficient gravity to make it imperative that not the principle of self-government for Ireland alone should be definitely accepted by the country, but also the form in which it is to be conceded, and the provisions by which this principle is to be carried into effect should also undoubtedly receive the popular approval. Here I think, my Lords, we stand on still firmer ground. Not even those who contend that the last Election was conclusive as to the opinion of the country on the principle of Home Rule will contend that its form or provisions were within the cognisance or knowledge of the country. This form and these provisions are in this case the very essence of the question in the contention of the promoters of the measure themselves. If it were a question of granting independence to Ireland or of restoring the Irish Parliament of 1792, those would be simple issues upon which the judgment of the country as represented in Parliament might be deemed conclusive. But we have been told all along that Irish independence is inadmissible; that the restoration of the Parliament of 1792 is impracticable; and that the granting of Home Rule to Ireland, desirable as it may be, is one which should only be conceded on certain conditions; those conditions being, that the supremacy of Parliament shall be maintained; that sufficient authority shall be reserved to Parliament to safeguard all Imperial interests; that adequate protection is secured for the minority; that an equitable financial arrangement between the two countries shall be devised; and, lastly, that there shall be some security that the settlement is final. When this measure is proposed only conditionally; when, also, the form, structure, and provisions of the measure have been avowedly concealed from the country up to the time of the General

Election, how can it be possible to contend that the country has given its decision on the measure, the form of which is now shown to be only less essential than the principle itself. I shall be told that the House of Commons approved of this Bill, and that the General Election gave to the House of Commons the necessary mandate and authority to work out the organic details of the measure. I traverse that argument at every step. For reasons which I have stated, I deny that the House of Commons received any mandate upon Home Rule at all at the last Election; and I say, further, if there were a mandate it was a conditional mandate, and that the conditions were not within the knowledge of the country. Before this measure is passed into law we have a right to demand that the judgment of the country shall be given, not upon a cry, not upon an aspiration, not upon an impatient impulse, but upon a completed work; and that this measure, the result of the collective wisdom of the Government and Parliament, shall be submitted to the country for its approval, aye or no. Then, lastly, I say the conditions under which the House of Commons considered this measure have made it impossible for us to have any knowledge that the deliberate judgment of the House of Commons is represented in the matter. Everyone has known from the moment that this measure saw the light that it would never be passed into law, and never could be passed into law. Members have debated and voted on this question, knowing well that it was not a question of practical politics. Under these circumstances, many of them thought that it was not worth while to incur unpopularity with their Party or a portion of their constituents. Many of them knew that they had not been elected to discuss and vote upon the provision of Home Rule, but on some more popular question, such as Welsh Disestablishment or changes in the Liquor Laws. Under those circumstances, knowing that their vote would bear no immediate fruit and have no immediate effect, they were indifferent to the principles to which they might be committing themselves; and so, with some few and honourable exceptions, they have voted with their Party. But I deny that the votes of the House of Commons given under such circumstances imply any certainty on our

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part that those votes represent the judgment of the House of Commons. As to the means by which this Bill has been forced through the House of Commons, I have been attacked in another place for saying that I should ask this House to reject the Bill because three-fourths of it had not been debated at all by the House of Commons. I have been told that the House of Lords has no right to dictate to the House of Commons as to the mode of their procedure. I claim no such right for this House. But what I do claim for this House is the liberty to regulate our proceedings by the knowledge we possess of the procedure which has taken place in the other House. We are accustomed here to receive measures which have been not only voted upon but debated in the other Chamber; and we are entitled to take note of the fact that three-fourths of this measure have never been discussed at all in the other House. That is a fact which we are not only entitled to note for the guidance of our own proceedings, but also to call to the notice of the country in case any controversy should hereafter arise between us and the other House. We are told that a change of Forms in the House of Commons has been rendered necessary by obstruction. If we are to be debarred from cognisance or criticism of the procedure of the other House, what do we know about obstruction? We have before us officially the Journals of the House of Commons. From those Journals we can ascertain that three-fourths of the Bill have been put without Debate, and that among these parts of the Bill are some clauses which were not in the Bill when it was introduced. Some of those clauses have never been read a second time. And some of those clauses relate to financial matters, which, by the practice of our Constitution, we are not allowed to discuss if we are allowed to discuss. With this knowledge before us we are entitled to say that we should decline to pass a Bill so presented even if only of minor and secondary importance; and much more, therefore, we must decline to accept measures so presented that are of primary and paramount importance. If there has been obstruction—and I am not going into that question—on whom ought the blame to rest? On those who have been guilty of any violation of the Rules or the ordinary procedure of the House.

of Commons. But in this case the consequences of our acceptance of an undiscussed measure would fall not upon those who have been guilty of the offence—if an offence has been committed—but upon British and Irish subjects whose interests are disposed of without discussion. Under those circumstances, we are entitled to say that this measure, which we cannot know to have directly received the approval of the country, has not, from the consideration which it has received from the House of Commons, given us the assurance that it had indirectly that approval through the Representatives of the people in Parliament. I think I have said almost enough to justify the Motion which I shall make, even if this House did not proceed to enter upon any discussion whatever of the provisions of the Bill. The Motion which I make is not founded solely upon the objection which we may individually entertain to the principle and character of the Bill, but it is also founded on the fact that it is a change of too large and vital a description to make it right that it should be passed into law without greater knowledge and certainty of the real judgment of the people upon it. But in view of the controversy which may, some time or other, take place between the two Houses on this question, I trust that before you vote on this Bill, my Lords, it will receive at your hands, not necessarily a minute, but, at any rate, a broad and general consideration. I can only attempt to-night to refer to one or two of the main principles of the Bill. My first assertion is that those who are responsible for the Bill have not taken the trouble to consider some of the most fundamental characteristics of our Constitution, or how they would be affected by the Bill. From their speeches in support of the Bill, it appears that they recognise no distinction between the Government of the British Empire and the Government of the United Kingdom. They see no difference between the expressions "Unity of the United Kingdom" and "Unity of the Empire." In the United Kingdom, Parliament is supreme not only in its legislative but in its Executive functions. Parliament makes and unmakes our Ministries; it revises their actions. Ministries may make peace and war, but they do so at pain of instant dis-

missal by Parliament from Office, and in affairs of internal administration the power of Parliament is equally direct. It can dismiss a Ministry if it is too extravagant, or too economical; it can dismiss a Ministry because its government is too stringent or too lax. It does actually and practically, in every way, directly govern England, Scotland, and Ireland. Parliament can decide, and Parliament only can decide, whether Ireland should be governed under a Crimes Act under Mr. Balfour, or under the ordinary law administered by Mr. Sexton or Mr. Healy. That is the nature of the Government and the supremacy of Parliament in the United Kingdom; it is the direct government of these Islands by Parliament through a Committee. As for the British Empire it is altogether different. Over the whole of the British Empire, including our self-governing Colonies, Parliament remains nominally and Constitutionally supreme. So long as a Colony desires to retain its connection with Great Britain it has to be content to have no foreign policy; it has to share our risks in that respect, while it receives the advantages of our protection. As regards the internal affairs of our self-governing Colonies, the supremacy of Parliament and the direct control of Parliament has become nothing but a name. Parliament has no doubt the Constitutional right to make laws for a Colony, to repeal or to veto Colonial Acts, to direct the Governor to impose a certain policy upon his Minister, to dismiss a Ministry or summon others, and to exercise every other act of sovereignty; but this power is only nominal; and no British Government would propose—no Parliament could support Government in proposing—to exercise any real control over the Acts of internal government on the part of a Colonial Parliament. Which of these two systems is the system at which we are aiming in this policy? When the Government speak of this measure sometimes as one preserving the unity of the United Kingdom, and sometimes the unity of the British Empire, are we to read those terms in the sense in which they are now applied to the United Kingdom, or only as they are now applied to the British Empire? On this point

we get no light from the speeches of the Government, and not much from the pages of this Bill. It is somewhat remarkable that in the first speech I can find on this subject by the Prime Minister when he was preparing for the introduction of this policy (it is one of his Scottish speeches, delivered in the Autumn of 1885), in the course of the same sentence the right hon. Gentleman appears to use these terms in the two different senses.

"We are all," he says, "every man, woman, and child among us, convinced that it is the will of Providence that these Islands should be bound together in a United Kingdom."

When he says that I presume he is referring to the maintenance of the Governing Authority of the United Kingdom; but the right hon. Gentleman goes on to say—

"From one end of Great Britain to the other I trust that there will not be a single Representative returned to Parliament who for one moment would listen to any proposition tending to impair, visibly and sensibly to impair, the unity of the Empire."

The unity of the Empire, as I have endeavoured to show, would not be impaired if Ireland were made a Colony tomorrow. In the same speech the right hon. Gentleman says—

"I take it for granted that any demand that is made from Ireland will be a demand which sets out upon that basis, that the unity of the Empire is not to be compromised or put in jeopardy. If it did not set out upon that basis we should know how to deal with it."

He is again speaking of unity in the sense of the united Empire, and not in the sense of the Government of the United Kingdom. In the right hon. Gentleman's speech on the introduction of the Bill of 1886 this passage occurs—

"A supreme statutory authority of the Imperial Parliament over Great Britain, Scotland, and Ireland as one United Kingdom was established by the Act of Union. That supreme statutory authority it is not asked, so far as I am aware, and certainly it is not intended, to impair."

That appears to point to the maintenance of the authority of Parliament over every part of the United Kingdom, including Ireland, to the same degree and extent as it now exists. It appears to me to be a question of the most absolute importance that we should know clearly in which of these two senses we are to understand the intentions of the framers of the Bill, and unless we do we are

debating these questions at cross purposes; until we know in what sense this Bill has been framed, whether any direct control of Parliament is to be retained over the internal affairs of Ireland, or whether Ireland is to become a self-governing Colony, it is impossible that the people of this country can discuss with any profit or intelligence the provisions of this Bill. It has sometimes occurred to me that we may be open to the charge that when we reject every suggestion which is made, every plan proposed for giving Home Rule to Ireland, we are seeking to prove too much, to prove that it is impossible for us to do what has been done by other countries and by our own country. I believe that in other countries it has been perfectly possible to delegate legislative powers to subordinate Assemblies, but I maintain that this has never been done, and I believe never can be done under such a system of government as ours. Here the Executive power, not alone the legislative power, is wielded by a popular Assembly, and here the legislative and Executive powers are combined. If our Parliament were like the Congress of the United States, if our Central Government possessed the power possessed by the President of the United States or by the Emperor of Austria-Hungary, there would be no difficulty in delegating some legislative or Executive powers to an inferior legislative or Executive authority. We have done this in our own dominions. We have tried two experiments. Parliament directly governs our Indian Empire. In India we have established a Government where the Executive is so distinct from the legislative power, where it is so strongly organised, that it is a simple and easy matter for Parliament to delegate considerable legislative powers to the Legislative Council, and vast executive powers to officials in various stations. But the supreme authority of Parliament over Indian legislation is not in the slightest degree impaired, nor, though the powers of Governors of Presidencies and Commissioners of Provinces are vast and enormous, has the Central Authority the smallest difficulty in governing, and through the Government in Parliament controlling the whole tendency of policy in India. We have tried an experiment of exactly the opposite character in our use

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Colonies. There we have established Governments modelled on the form and structure of our own; and, while we retain a certain control over their external policy, we have absolutely abandoned the assumption of exercising any control whatever in their internal policy. Well, so it seems to me must it be in the case of Ireland. This is no prophecy. It seems to me to be the logical consequence of the causes which have produced in our self-governing Colonies practical independence; and those causes will, if you apply them, as you are seeking to do, to Ireland, produce the same consequences. What I desire to know is whether you will give your approval to a policy of Home Rule which would mean that you intend that the future of Ireland shall be as independent of the authority of Parliament as are the Colonies of Canada and Australia. My noble Friend referred to the fact that troops would remain in Ireland, and would remain under the control of the British Government. No doubt that points to a means by which we should still retain some control over the internal policy of the Irish Government. I admit that the presence of your troops in Ireland gives you the power, if sufficient cause arises, to destroy or take back the government which you are creating; but I deny that the presence of troops in Ireland gives you any power to govern Ireland constitutionally. Under the Bill the old system is gone. The Chief Secretary is gone. The Departments now under the Chief Secretary will be manned by officials who are the servants of the Irish Government with which you are supposed to be at issue. How will the troops enable you to govern Ireland under the old system or under the new system? You may issue your orders to the Lord Lieutenant to impose a certain policy on his Ministers, to direct them to retrace the steps which they have taken, or to do something which they are not disposed to do. You may direct your Lord Lieutenant to dismiss his Ministers, and may impose your policy upon him. The presence of the troops will not compel the Irish Parliament to vote Supplies by which the Irish Government may be carried on under this measure. How will it be possible, short of an emergency which would justify putting an end to the existence of this government,

which with so much trouble you are creating, to influence or guide its conduct on any point which falls short of that absolute necessity? I have spoken in general terms, but I would like to give one or two instances to show the practical necessity of retaining some greater control than is provided by this Bill over the conduct and policy of the Executive Government which you are going to create in Ireland. These instances will also give Her Majesty's Ministers, if they think fit to make use of it, the opportunity of showing where in the Bill the Irish Parliament is prevented from doing what I am about to suggest. I will not give any extreme cases, but only a couple of cases that it will be admitted are not unlikely to occur. The existence of religious differences in Ireland is not denied. One effect of these religious differences is that the conduct of the Education Department is watched with a very jealous eye by Irishmen. That fact is recognised in the Bill, for you insert a clause the intention of which is to provide that the Irish Parliament may not deal with what is known as the Conscience Clause. But it is not in the least necessary, if it is the desire of any Irish Parliament, to resort to legislation in order to get rid of the Conscience Clause. The efficacy of the Conscience Clause entirely depends on its administration. The Irish Education Department, like every other Department, would be under the control of the Irish Executive. Supposing instructions are given to that Department, and by it to its Inspectors, not to insist on the strict or conscientious observance of the Conscience Clause, but on the contrary to allow the Conscience Clause to lapse, what will be the remedy for such a state of things? Would not such an order as effectually convert the education of Ireland into a denominational system as any repeal of the Conscience Clause by Act of Parliament? I want to hear from some Member of Her Majesty's Government what remedy he proposes to apply under this Bill if the Irish Government should openly, deliberately, and avowedly adopt the policy of directing the non-enforcement of the Conscience Clause. I will take another instance—one of still greater importance—which is extremely likely to arise. The Land Question is one that excites the

acutest difference of opinion. Differences between the Irish Nationalist Members and the majority of Parliament up to the present time on the Irish Land Question have been notorious. The views of the Irish Members generally on the subject of rent differ considerably from those which have been entertained by the majority in both Houses of Parliament. Their views on rent vary on the part of different Members, from a total denial of the right and justice of rent at all to proposals for the indiscriminate reduction of rent. In view of that state of facts you propose to suspend the power of legislation on land for three years. That is not a very long time, and it would be interesting to know whether we are to infer from this suspension that it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to legislate on the Land Question in the interval. From what fell from my noble Friend just now, I gathered that he thinks that the Irish Land Question is already sufficiently settled. But the question of legislation is not my present point. Legislation is not necessary to enable the Irish Government by an administrative act to virtually effect an agrarian revolution. We know, we ought to know, for we have been told often enough in the other House, that the payment of rent in Ireland can only be enforced by the power of the Government to carry out evictions. The duty, or perhaps, as they may consider, the hateful burden of enforcing the payment of rent by eviction will, after the passing of the Bill, devolve upon the Irish Government, every Member of which has already to some extent pledged himself against the principle. Is it an unreasonable or unlikely anticipation that, without attempting to legislate upon land at all, the Irish Government may, by an Executive Act, decline to use the Executive power at their command to enforce evictions or take any steps whatever to enforce the payment of rent? Or is it not still more probable that they may propose some discriminating conditions which have never received the sanction either of this Legislature or their own. The question I would ask Her Majesty's Government is—Where in this Bill is the provision that would enable Parliament, if proceedings such as these are adopted, to

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pronounce an opinion or take effective action with regard to the supposed action of the Irish Government. I have referred to the Irish Land Question as part of my argument that I am endeavouring to prove that some greater power of control on the part of Parliament over the Executive action of the Irish Government is required. I have another word to say on this subject of a more general character. We have been reminded by my noble Friend that it was proposed in 1886 to deal concurrently with the question of land and the question of government, and the obligation of the Government to deal concurrently with these subjects was stated in the strongest terms. That intention has been departed from. My noble Friend who moved the Second Reading of this Bill, speaking at Newcastle in 1886, said—

“Everybody knows that there have been many feuds in Ireland—old animosities which cannot be expected to die out at once. Foremost among these is the Land Question. The whole force of Irish agitation at one time was against the Irish landlords. That animosity was bitter and strong. I do not for a moment think it would be just and honest in the British Parliament to leave unprotected and uncared for the landlords of Ireland. We have at different times curtailed their rights by Acts of Parliament, and I think it would be a mean and treacherous thing at this moment if we did not defend what we consider their just interests. But I should like to say this in addition—that I believe it would be most unfair on the new Irish Assembly to leave this question of the land unsettled.”

We have heard to-night the explanation of the change of policy of the Government by my noble Friend. Since 1886 the Ashbourne Act has been extended and the Act of 1891 has been passed. Does my noble Friend intend to convey that in his opinion those two Acts are a final settlement of the Irish Land Question? It is perfectly well known that the amount provided in both these Acts is entirely inadequate to effect the transference of more than a fraction of the land of Ireland from the landlord to the occupiers. Nor is it entirely a matter of the amount which may be sufficient to effect such a transference. The landlord may be perfectly willing to sell, but the tenant, especially under existing circumstances, with the prospect of this Bill passing, may not be willing to buy. What protection is it to the Irish landlord that he is willing to sell or that the Government is willing to advance the

money, if he cannot prevail on his tenantry, acting on the advice of their leaders, to buy? Does my noble Friend for one single moment mean to attempt to persuade the House that the existence of the Act referred to places the Irish landlords in a position of such security that it is safe now to do what in 1886 he said it would be "a mean and treacherous thing to do"—namely, not to defend what he considers the just interests of the landlords. I freely admit the right of everyone among us to change our opinions upon any question of policy or expediency; it is a more serious thing to change our opinion and our action on a question which has been admitted to be one of duty and of honour. Whatever may be my opinion of the expediency or policy of the course which has recommended itself to Her Majesty's Government, I cannot think that my noble Friend has given any adequate consideration to the obligations of duty and of honour which he and his Colleagues undertook in 1886, when he puts forward the useful, but tentative and incomplete measure of 1891 as relieving him of the obligations to the Irish landlords which he acknowledged in 1886. On that point I cannot refrain from saying a word upon some other extraordinary denials, and I think I may say evasions, of former declarations—denials and evasions to which we have been accustomed in connection with this measure. I have adverted to one which is inexplicable to me in relation to the Land Question, but that is not the only one. The Prime Minister said at Edinburgh in 1885 that it would be unsafe to deal with the Irish problem unless the Liberal Party were in a majority independent of the assistance of the Irish Members. That declaration was made with the usual adjuncts, and the Edinburgh audience were assured that this warning was given seriously and solemnly. It was not given once but twice. Though I have had the honour of having had correspondence with the Prime Minister on the subject, there is one further extract which I did not use then, and which puts the matter in a more concise shape than we are accustomed to get from the Prime Minister—

"I have said everywhere that I trust you will return a Liberal Party able to sway the destinies of the country in the coming Parliament, because, especially taking into view those necessities that may arise in connection with

the government of the Sister Island, nothing, I think, could be more dangerous to the public weal than that they should be handled in a Parliament where there was no party strong enough to direct its action according to its judgment and conscience, without being liable to be seduced from the right path by the temptation which might be offered to it by the vote of the Irish Members. But that, I understand, is the summit of the hopes of the Tory Party in this Election; not that they may obtain such a national verdict as will enable them, possessing the confidence of Parliament as a whole, to direct their course, but that they may obtain such an amount of strength in a minority as, with the assistance of a large Irish contingent, may be made into a majority. Gentlemen, I must say—I am entitled, I think, to say—that is not a state of things which we could accept as a Party. But I may go further and say it is not a state of things that would be safe or honourable to the country."

I took the liberty on some occasion or other to refer to those statements. The attention of the Prime Minister was called to my remarks, and he informed his correspondent that my reference was inaccurate. I sent him passages, not the one I have read, but longer ones from former speeches, and I obtained the following explanation:—

"You have converted a statement growing out of a particular position of Parties and affairs under my view at the time into a general principle applicable to all positions of Parties and affairs."

Now, I think that those denials, and I may almost say evasions, constitute an unfortunate incident of our public life. They are, it seems to me, calculated to diminish the weight and authority of declarations which are made by responsible men. I ask this House whether any declaration on a certain point could be made in terms broader and wider and clearer than those I have read. Whenever in future we have to deal with similar declarations on similar important points, it will become necessary for us, before attaching the smallest consequence to them as a guide to future conduct and action, to pause and consider "what is the particular position of parties and affairs" which is in the view of the speaker at the time. There is another instance to which I may allude. The Prime Minister, speaking at Liverpool—I do not recollect the date—said he would not be a party to Irish Members voting and speaking on English and Scotch affairs when they had their own Parliament to manage their own affairs. The Prime Minister has not denied the

accuracy of the quotation ; but he has given an interpretation of it. I doubt whether that interpretation is a satisfactory one. As I gather, the explanation is that he would not be a party to forcing such an arrangement on unwilling Englishmen and Scotchmen ; but that, as I understand, is the very thing the Prime Minister has done. I believe that in the Division which took place on the retention of the Irish Members for all purposes, the Government only carried the change by the assistance of the Irish Members. If that is not forcing this arrangement upon unwilling Scotland and England, I do not know what interpretation to place upon the words. I have endeavoured to give you one or two instances in which it seems to me to be absolutely necessary that some greater control should be conferred on Parliament to control the acts of the Irish Executive. But it is unnecessary to refer to hypothetical cases. I think we ought to know what is the attitude of Her Majesty's Government in regard to the representations of the minority in Ireland. Do they believe that every class but one lives in dread of this Bill ? Do they believe that these fears are insincere or unfounded ? Or do they believe that they are sincere and well-founded, but yet do not care, and are willing to take the risk. I will put the landlords on one side for a moment. I do not suppose anyone will doubt that the landlords have reason to dread this Bill. As to the Protestants, I should like to ask any Member of this House—I would not appeal only to the Protestant Members, I would appeal to my noble Friend the Secretary of State for the Colonies himself (the Marquess of Ripon)—whether he would like the alternative of being ruled by a Government under the orders of the Irish hierarchy, or the alternative of being ruled by a Government elected by a Party returned under the influence of Irish-American Fenians, dynamiters, and moonlighters ? My noble Friend who spoke before me says he does not believe that the Protestants have anything to fear. Of that I apprehend that they may be better judges than my noble Friend. Then what are we to say to the apprehensions of the merchants, the men of business in Ireland ? What is the attitude of the Government towards them ? If the Government are

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right and these men are wrong, they have more to gain from this measure than any other class in Ireland. If the Government are right, and this is a measure which is going to bring contentment and prosperity to Ireland, it is these men who have most to gain. Do the Government suppose that these men are fools ? Do they think that they are altogether ignorant of the conditions, political, or otherwise, under which they can safely and successfully conduct their business ? My noble Friend himself cannot profess to think that he knows more about the buying of flax or selling of linen than the Belfast manufacturer, and does he suppose that these men, avowedly shrewd men of business, who attained their present position by their common sense, their shrewdness, and their ability, are absolutely incompetent to form an estimate of the political conditions under which they now carry on, or in future are to carry on, their trade. These classes—landlords, Protestants, merchants, manufacturers, professional men, men of business—all tell you, without exception, that they have confidence in and rely upon the justice and the power of the Imperial Parliament. Can you show to them within the four corners of this Bill a means by which the Imperial Parliament will in future be able to exercise any power whatever for their protection ? If you can show them that, notwithstanding the granting of local autonomy to Ireland, you do reserve power in the hands of the British Parliament to protect minorities against injustice, oppression, and wrong, then I do not say you remove altogether the distrust of your Bill, but you will go a long way towards removing the feeling of absolute dread and apprehension which now pervades the minority in Ireland. But for one reason it is to me a subject for wonder why Her Majesty's Government should have adopted this particular mode of extending self-government to Ireland, when what seems a better and an easier way lay before them. My noble Friend said something this evening about local self-government, but, unfortunately, he was stopped in the middle of his quotation, in which he said he was going to prove that the noble Marquess (Lord Salisbury) expressed an opinion that the extension of local self-government to Ireland would

be much worse than Home Rule. It is a very curious fact that the Government of the noble Marquess introduced a Local Government Bill, but it appears to me that a better and safer and easier way might have been found within the lines of an extension of local self-government. All our institutions hitherto have been gradual in their growth, and never has there been wholly absent from them, even in Ireland, the germ of local self-government. In very recent times we have seen an enormous development of the principles of local self-government. In our County Councils and in our County Borough Councils we have seen great and powerful bodies created possessing now very considerable executive and administrative powers. No one can say even now how far this principle may be yet capable of extension; but to whatever extent it may grow, in the course of its growth it destroys nothing, it takes no power away from our Central Government or from our Imperial Parliament. It grows side by side with our Parliamentary institutions. It is like the case of the action of a father who, as his sons grow up and show more and more capacity for business, entrusts a larger and larger share of the management of his affairs to them; or like the case of an employer who, as his business increases and he feels less inclined to devote himself to details, delegates constantly to managers and subordinates a larger amount of power and responsibility. But the course you prefer resembles that of a father who is compelled by his son to sign during his lifetime a bond assigning a considerable proportion of his income and an appreciable amount of control, whether, with or against his will, in the management of his affairs; or like the conduct of the subordinate managers of a firm who insist upon their employer converting his business into a limited liability company, and appointing all of them co-directors with equal power and authority to himself. The reason for this course of conduct on the part of the Government is not far to seek. No proposal to extend local self-government in Ireland would have purchased votes. In an evil and unhappy day the Irish Party accepted at the hands of Mr. Parnell the principle of Irish nationality; and in still more evil day, without consulting

his followers, the Leader of the Liberal Party committed the great bulk of his own Party to the same principle. The votes which were then bargained for are now to be had at no lower price, and this appears to me to constitute the only explanation why the Government did not make an honest attempt to solve the Irish difficulty by the extension to Ireland of the measures which had been found effectual in England and Scotland. I will say nothing upon the subject of finance, partly because I feel I am very imperfectly acquainted with it, and partly because it seems to me not especially fit to be discussed in your House. Neither have I said anything as to Ulster, though Ulster is one of the minorities I have referred to. It is said that Ulster is prepared to resist this measure by force if it passes into law; but I do not desire to say anything upon that. I should prefer that your decision should be based upon your own judgment. All threats of violence on one side or the other should be left out of consideration. All I would venture to say is that the attitude of Ulster is such as to be a subject of the utmost gravity, though the responsibility for the position there is perhaps to be borne more by the Government than by your Lordships. The attitude of Ulster is one of the utmost gravity, and a vast responsibility rests upon those who ignore it, and treat as vague and idle the protests and the solemn declarations of men who have never yet given us reason to believe that they do not mean what they say. I will not detain you any longer as to the principles and details of this Bill. The Prime Minister, in the last speech he made on this subject, summed up the other day what he took to be the Unionist views of the case. There was some element of exaggeration, some distortion, some touch of caricature in the right hon. Gentleman's recital of the pleas which the Unionist Party urged against this measure, but on the whole it was not very far wide of the mark. This is his enumeration of our pleas. "It will separate the people." We do say that in our judgment the bitterness of religious animosity in Ireland will not be lessened, but exaggerated by leaving the people to fight out their differences without the controlling power of an authority which, however correct it may have erred in other respects,

has in recent times, at any rate on the religious question, endeavoured to do strict and impartial justice. Mr. Gladstone says our next plea is that the Bill will destroy the Constitution. This is an exaggeration of our plea. We do not say it will destroy our Constitution; we do say it will introduce into it innovations which are opposed to its spirit and principle. "It will break up the Empire." That is a misstatement of our contention. We say it will break up the United Kingdom, and relegate Ireland to the position of a self-governing Colony. "It will annihilate financial control." That is a question which I have not touched upon, and shall not touch upon to-night. "It will make an Irish delegation supreme in our affairs." That is a plea by which we abide in its entirety. "It will lead to the virtual slavery of the minority." That, again, is the language of exaggeration. "Lastly, the controversies within the walls of Parliament will become worse instead of better." We fully believe in and adopt that plea. The work in this Bill is only half done. This measure will deprive the minority of political power to which their position and their character fully entitles them; but this minority will not have been silenced, for you have taken care that the loyal minority—the minority to which you have been accustomed to appeal in your times of difficulty and danger—shall still be heard, if not in Ireland, at least here. You have done your best to transform those who were your friends into your bitterest foes, but you have still left them a foothold in this Parliament and arms with which they can fight the battle here in which they are disarmed at home. Under those circumstances the controversy which has too often disturbed our Parliamentary discussion between Englishmen and Irishmen will in all probability be renewed with greater bitterness and intensity after this measure has been passed into law. We have been accused of freely indulging in prophecy. I do not know which of us has claimed that gift, but no doubt statesmanship does consist in the gift of foreseeing, so far as our imperfect faculties will admit, the consequences of certain acts and certain policies. Principles may be important; details may be essential; but what the

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statesman has to look at are the probable results. We have, as the Prime Minister thinks, a distorted vision of the measure. You also have your visions. We think we see not only the evils and horrors which will result from this Bill, but we have a vision of a happier Ireland under other conditions. Our vision, I admit, is not clothed in any radiant colours, but we see the prospect of a continuous growth in the material prosperity of Ireland which has marked the history of the country in recent years—a growth of material prosperity which we believe was never more rapid than at the time when it received an unfortunate check last year. We believe that contentment and order will in the end follow in the steps of material prosperity. If we have the distorted vision of the facts of your policy which the Prime Minister describes, we are entitled to think that your Utopia is still more wild and improbable than ours. They see in the future visions of order, but it is order evolved out of the deliberations in Committee Room No. 15. They see the increase of material prosperity, but it is a material prosperity unaided by capital, which is already leaving the shores of Ireland. They see a vision of justice for Ireland, but it is justice which has been learned in the Courts of the Land League. Prophecy is as necessary to commend their scheme as it is to condemn it. We believe that the picture we draw is drawn on truer lines and in more faithful colours than their picture, which is so much the work of the imagination. They must acknowledge, at all events, that their remedy is a critical and a capital one. If it does not succeed one of the patients surely dies, while the other must be left sorely afflicted almost unto death. Believing that it is "better to endure the ills we have than fly to others that we know not of," we elect—and we hope that the people will support us in electing—to abide by the Union of the United Kingdom, which we believe was decreed by Nature, and to which laws and treaties have only given a written sanction and record. I beg to move that the Bill be read a second time this day six months.

Amendment moved to leave out ("now") and add at the end of the motion ("this day six months.")—(*The Duke of Devonshire.*)

*THE MARQUESS of ZETLAND said, that he had listened with the greatest possible admiration to the noble Duke who had moved the rejection of this Bill, and he could not but feel it to be somewhat presumptuous on the part of so humble a Member of their Lordships' House to reply to those arguments which had been used with so much eloquence and power. He had listened with the greatest possible interest to the speech of the noble Lord who had introduced the Bill. It was not his intention to follow the noble Lord over the very wide area he traversed, but he would confine his remarks to the Bill which had been introduced into this House, and he confessed that he had searched, and searched in vain, for any convincing arguments for such a change as would take place if this measure were passed into law. If he might venture to make an allusion to the speech of so great a statesman as the Prime Minister of England he would say that in his opinion a strong argument had been adduced in favour of Home Rule in the speech in which Mr. Gladstone introduced his Bill in 1886, but it was useless to compare the state of things then to the state of things in 1891. He was willing to admit that in 1886 the condition of Ireland was such as would disgrace any civilised nation of the world; that the government of Ireland by this country had been tried and failed, and it was absolutely necessary that something should be done; and on this ground was founded the proposal for Home Rule. But many things had been done since 1886 by his right hon. Friend (Mr. Balfour). Crime in the country had diminished to such an extent that they had been enabled to hand over the country to their successors in a state of comparative peace and contentment, and much in the same condition as Scotland is now and has been for many years. As an illustration of the suppression of crime, it appears that when Her Majesty's Government realised the state of affairs they found they could conscientiously suspend those safeguards which they thought it desirable to retain for the purpose of protecting those living and acting in the country and give greater freedom to the criminal classes of Ireland than they had hitherto had. He had pointed out that the crime of the country diminished almost to its normal condi-

tion, and measures were taken for the development of the resources of the country and encouraging the industries of the people. They had every reason to believe that the prosperity of the country had increased, and he had been informed by those residing on their estates in the worst parts of the country that a slow but sure change for the better came over every class. He said, under those circumstances, not a vestige of argument remained that the government of Ireland by this country was impossible. He had searched for any sound and solid argument in support of what was called the protection of the loyal minority, and he had seen none. He had searched for any sound or solid argument for the protection of those servants of the Crown, who had been doing their duty, and I have found none. Then, coming to the new administration in Ireland, he would not detain them with the future formation of the Lower House of Parliament, but it was proposed that there should be two Houses of Legislature of Ireland—that the one should be a safeguard of the other. Looking at the formation of the Upper House, they found it was to be elective, and Members were to be elected by persons paying a rent of £20 and upwards. Now that had been tried before, and failed. Their Lordships were well aware what a farce trial by jury became at a certain time in Ireland. The qualification to serve on a jury was a £20 valuation, and he believed he was correct in saying that a jury under those qualifications was unfit to perform their duty, and ultimately the qualification had to be raised, and it was now £40 in the country and £10 in the town. He believed he was correct in saying that in the rural districts the persons with the £20 or £30 qualification were the very persons who suffered most from intimidation at the hands of the National League of Ireland. Many of them had been compelled to join it, and he said instead of being a safeguard, the Upper House would rather add emphasis to the deliberations of the Lower. Under those circumstances he asked what they proposed to do with those faithful servants to the Crown who had done their duty so well in the past? To begin with there was the Civil Service of Ireland, the Imperial servants of the Crown, they had claims which had been

derived from long custom, and they had in many cases given up other occupations, in order to make the Service their occupation for life, and having arrived at the time of superannuation they might justly expect to receive in the future that which they had had in the past, compensation for the services rendered to the country. What was the state of affairs under this Bill, the newly-created Government of Ireland would have entire control over those individuals. He believed he was correct in saying that after five years it would rest entirely between the Treasury and the newly-created Government in Ireland whether they will be permitted to retire at any time during the five years, and if so they would receive but small compensation should they be forced to serve five years, and should they at the end of five years be permitted to retire, they would be placed in a similar position. If they should not retire, then they would be at the mercy of the Administration, who would have the power to make whatever terms they pleased. He confessed it seemed to him that that looked like a breach of faith. The remarks which he had made with regard to the Civil servants applied to the other persons; everybody knew what this country owed to the Royal Irish Constabulary, who performed their duty in an exemplary manner. He had himself had much experience during his Viceroyalty, and he felt himself in a position to say that no force at any time or in any country more thoroughly enjoyed the respect or admiration of the law-abiding citizens of the country. He believed their sympathies were with the people, and when the country was destroyed by the potato famine the Royal Irish Constabulary contributed no less a sum than £1,300 for the relief of their fellow countrymen. Not only that, but they gave us their services free of charge, and it was owing to their aid that we were able to bring about a scheme to combat the potato famine in the land. Then their Lordships must consider that these men have in many cases arrived at a time of life when it will be impossible to embark in a fresh career, and they have insured their lives under the impression that they will not be disturbed, and he considered they were treated in a most shameful manner. He understood the noble Lord to say other

The Marquess of Zetland

employment might be found, and he supposed he (Lord Spencer) liked to think there may be other employment found for the Civil servants. But that was not the case here. There were some who believed that something like a political millennium would take place on the passing of the Bill, but it was not likely. They must look to the probable rather than to the possible consequences of the Bill. It was possible that some of those individuals that he (Lord Zetland) had referred to would consent to serve under the future Government, but he confessed to him it was extremely improbable. He could not but characterise the proposals of the Government as being experimental, and in their character revolutionary and unjust. He was not expressing his own opinion only when he said he objected to the principles of a measure which would tend to the severance of the Legislative Union of the two countries. This was not a measure of finality. It was a natural question to ask by whom was this legislation required. He might take it it was not the landlords. It had been amply demonstrated by the public at large; it had been amply shown by the large demonstrations in the North of Ireland, where all the wealth, capital, and commercial enterprise of the country was to be found, that the proposals of Her Majesty's Government were not wanted. Those demonstrations had not been confined to the North of Ireland. Demonstrations of a similar character had been held in Dublin and in the South. Nor had these demonstrations been confined to the Protestants. And similar demonstrations have been held where the delegates have been elected by the people, and resolutions have been carried with the same unanimity. In this great City they had witnessed a scene which they would never forget: when the delegates were sent to this country to free them from this measure which would bring destruction on their country and ruin on themselves. As regarded the feeling in Ireland, he had himself travelled largely about the country and endeavoured to make himself acquainted with the wants and wishes and requirements of the people, and during his travels he had received innumerable petitions and addresses and he had never on any single occasion received a petition or an address

or heard a speech delivered containing anything which could by any possibility be taken as meaning anything derogatory to the Crown. He knew the chief troubles of Ireland were the effect of the political agitator who poisoned the ears of the people. He had seen in County Clare an instance of intimidation at the house of a farmer. He interviewed the man, and saw a hole in the window made by a bullet, which, though meant for him (the farmer), had passed through the heart of his young daughter. There were three brothers in the house, and yet not a single scrap of evidence was forthcoming as to the murder. They might talk of the doings of tyrants and dictators in bygone ages, but never in the world's history had cruelty, tyranny, or intimidation been brought to such a pitch as it had been by the organisation which was set on foot by those individuals whose past offences the Government were now prepared to condone, and in whom they now professed to feel such confidence that they are about to entrust to them the destinies of the country. The Government were now prepared to throw over and destroy all that in the past had been faithful and loyal and true in Ireland in order to hand over the government to these men who had done all they could to make the government of the country an impossibility, and who had never on any occasion done anything whatever to ameliorate the condition of the people. Such a state of things as this might well be described as passing the wit of man to understand. It is positively certain that the capital and all that makes a country prosperous and happy will take itself elsewhere; as a natural concurrence the manhood of the country, which is dependent on capital for its livelihood, will also leave. It was not his (Lord Zetland's) intention to say how Irish labour would be received in English markets, but he would ask, under the circumstances, how Her Majesty's Government proposed to continue the Government in Ireland? It seemed to him the taxes would be increased. The English taxpayer would inevitably be called upon to aid a people impoverished by the results of legislation sought to be placed on the Statute Book by an unholy alliance between law-breakers and the remnant of the once great Liberal Party. He rejoiced that the measure had come

before their Lordships for consideration, and he believed the course they would take upon it would be sanctioned by the public at large. He was entirely unable to understand what liberty would be conferred on Ireland by the proposals of the Government, unless, indeed, it be the sham liberty of the Land Leaguer, the robber, and the assassin; and he was totally at a loss to know what justice there could be in proposals to hand over to law-breakers of the past the future care of the lives, limbs, and property of that loyal minority in Ireland whose lives, limbs, and property both Parties had in the past been equally anxious to preserve.

***VISCOUNT POWERSCOURT** said, as a constant resident in Ireland, they in Dublin and its neighbourhood looked upon the Bill with dread impossible to describe. He spoke on behalf, not only of the Dublin tradesmen and merchants and others, but all the artisans and labourers in the district. They all looked upon the advent of the Bill as a blight which would stop all improvements and all industries in Ireland. Tradesmen had told him that the shadow of the Bill ruined trade, and that in Dublin there was nothing going on. A Cork tradesman, giving his opinion on the subject, said there was not a man in the country with £20 in his pocket who wanted the Bill. If this Bill passed, which they hoped it would not, all improvements such as the light railways would come to an end, because it was quite impossible that such projects could be carried on by the finances of Ireland without the aid of Great Britain. He failed to see how Ireland was to prosper, and the people of Ireland were beginning to find out that under Home Rule the country would not prosper. The more they realised that the only effect of the Bill would be to increase the burden of their taxation the more were they inclined to oppose it. Trinity College had spoken pretty plainly on the subject. Mr. Gladstone brought in an Education Bill for Ireland under which he proposed to obliterate the Chairs of Philosophy and History. Naturally that did not suit the intelligence of the country and the Bill was thrown out. The Dublin people and others are becoming more and more convinced that this Bill would result in national bankruptcy.

*LORD BRASSEY said, he should give his heartiest support to the principles on which the Bill was founded, but he would not pledge himself to support all its details. The Bill embodied the only available plan for dealing with the Irish Question. They might have governed Ireland by coercion. They had the power to do so if they had thought fit. Speaking at Portsmouth, Mr. Parnell said—

"It is impossible for 3,000,000 of Irishmen to contend against 2,000,000 of other Irishmen and the tens of millions of the United Kingdom."

Later in the same address Mr. Parnell gave the reasons why coercion was impossible—

"You can," he said, "silence us in Ireland, but you will have to accompany our silence in Ireland by our silence in the House of Commons."

In other words, they must disfranchise Ireland. English statesmen had shrunk from that alternative. The Act of 1884, unchallenged by the Conservative Party, added more than 500,000 votes to the electorate of Ireland; it was an addition of 200 per cent. The results were immediately seen; out of 102 Members returned for Ireland 86 were Home Rulers. That was a national pronouncement which no Liberal Leader could venture to disregard. They had dealt with the grievance of religious inequality. They had dealt with the Land Question in a succession of measures strongly opposed, but which had been found by experience satisfactory in their operation. There were other grievances, which as yet they had not attempted to remove. The time had now come to deal with the grievance known as the Castle system. Its operation was described by Mr. Chamberlain at Islington on June 17, 1885, perhaps with some exaggeration, in an eloquent passage—

"I do not believe that the great majority of Englishmen have the slightest conception of the system under which this free nation attempts to rule a sister country. It is a system founded on the bayonets of 30,000 soldiers, encamped permanently as in a hostile country. It is a system as completely centralised and bureaucratic as that with which Russia governs Poland. An Irishman at this moment cannot move a step, he cannot lift a finger, in any parochial, municipal, or educational work, without being confronted, interfered with, controlled by an English official appointed by a foreign Government."

He said, with Mr. Chamberlain, the time had come to substitute for that system an Irish Parliament for purely Irish business. It was no sufficient answer to the complaints of the Irish people that they have had in Parliament a Court of Appeal at which they might at all times command a hearing. The Irish Nationalists had been represented. They had been over-represented. But the Irish Members had sat side by side with more than 500 British Members. What was the problem for which Parliament was called upon to provide a solution? It could not be more clearly stated than by Mr. Charles Stuart Parker in his *Life of Sir Robert Peel*—

"The sphinx of history," he says, "is once more putting the question, yet unsolved. With organised agitation, and with an overwhelming voting power of tenant farmers (such as existed in the Irish counties before 1829 and exists again since 1884), how shall Irish popular demands be reconciled with 'securities,' no longer for a Protestant Established Church (for that, as Sir Robert Peel foresaw, is gone), but for the Legislative Union (which he thought might also go), for enforcement of the civil rights of landlords, for individual liberty of action, and generally for good government, as understood by the majority of the United Kingdom."

Two attempts had been made by Mr. Gladstone to give Local Government to Ireland. Each of his Bills had been an embodiment of the same principle. In both they had a Legislature created for purely local affairs, more limited as to its sphere of action than Grattan's Parliament, but having the power of appointing its own Executive. It was contended that no Executive which could be appointed by an Irish Parliament would be fit to be entrusted with the responsibility of government. The objection to an Irish Executive rested upon a deep distrust of the Irish character. It could not be denied that there had been much lawlessness and disaffection in Ireland; but let them ask themselves whether that regrettable state of things had not been created by poverty and acts of misgovernment. Was it not true, as Mr. Bright once said, that "everything can be made of an Irishman in every country but his own"? That cautious and profound statesman, Sir Cornwall Lewis, made a just estimate of the political capacity of Irishmen—

"Before I went to Ireland," he said, "I had very strong opinions as to the influence of race on the Irish character. But when I came to

look at things more closely and to see all the demoralising influences to which they have been, and are, subjected, I asked myself whether a people of Germanic race would have turned out much better; and I really could not answer in the affirmative. . . . *Ceteris paribus*, I would sooner have a German than a Celt, and a Protestant than a Catholic; but I have no doubt that a peasantry of Catholic Celts may be so governed and placed under such moral influences as to be peaceable, industrious, and contented."

While declining to take a pessimist view of the political capacity of Irishmen, he desired that the changes contemplated should be made with prudence, and, as Mr. Parnell was contented to allow, by gradual stages. Failure need not be anticipated, but they should be prepared for every contingency. Under the Bill it was proposed that the whole administration of the Local Government should be supervised by the Lord Lieutenant, advising with the local Executive, but subject to instructions from the Imperial Cabinet. Imperial unity and control would be preserved by the Irish Peers in this House and by representation in the House of Commons. Two Irish Exchequer Judges were to be appointed under the Great Seal of the United Kingdom. It would be no infringement of the principle of the Bill to retain the appointment to a large number of the higher judicial offices. Under the Bill it was proposed to maintain the fine force of Royal Irish Constabulary for a period of six years. It was certainly not desirable that it should be disbanded until the peace of Ireland was thoroughly assured under the Local Government. The Constabulary might be maintained as a *gendarmerie*, forming part of the Regular Army, and paid out of the Army Estimates. That was one of the many wise recommendations of the Devon Commission, on which no action had been taken. Turning to Clause 9, under the original Bill of 1886 the Irish Members were not retained in the Imperial Parliament. Their position had been reconsidered in deference to a general wish. If retained, the Irish Members must sit in Parliament for ever and a day. The in-and-out plan was impracticable. The anomalous situation would be considered mitigated if the Parliamentary representation of Ireland were reduced to a proportion like the proportion of its contribution to the Imperial Revenue.

If this were done, the Irish Members would be about 35 in a total of 670. Such a representation would be quite sufficient to sustain the unity of government and the Imperial supremacy of Parliament. It would probably be more beneficial to Ireland than the present excess of Members, while giving the Irish Party less power than they at present possessed to set up or to overthrow Ministries. The Land Question was the most difficult of all the questions with which the Government had to deal in Ireland. It was not touched upon in the present Bill. It was said, and said truly, by Aristotle, the father of political science, "The protection of property is the principal care of statesmen, it being the question on which all revolutions depend." Every Royal Commission had recommended a large conversion of the Irish occupiers into owners, with the assistance of the State. The principle had been accepted by statesmen on both sides. It was obvious that the policy of land purchase could only be carried through by agreement on the part of responsible statesmen on both sides. Not only in relation to land, but in regard to the whole of the complex and difficult Irish Question, was it not true that until some general agreement was obtained on the leading principles it was impossible that the work of legislation could be completed? The late Government, although strongly opposed to Mr. Gladstone's proposals in 1886, did not hesitate to proceed on similar lines when they came into Office. They began with an expenditure of £10,000,000 under the Ashbourne Acts. They made a further proposal to raise £33,000,000 for the same purpose. The principle of State-aided land purchase having once been adopted we must go on to the end. That was the opinion of the Lord Chancellor. His noble and learned Friend on the Woolsack, addressing the Eighty Club in 1889, said—

"I think it would be poor kindness to the Irish Legislature to leave them the task of dealing with the Land Question."

It was only by agreement on both sides that such an arrangement could be adopted, and until such an agreement had been arrived at it would be impossible that our legislation in regard to Ireland could take a final shape. When the principles had been fixed the task of

framing a measure could be entrusted, as it was suggested by Lord Rosebery in a speech delivered at Northwich. He suggested when the general principles had been fixed a Royal Commission should be appointed consisting of some of their most distinguished lawyers and permanent Civil servants of the Crown, to whom should be entrusted the framing of the measure in all its details. However protracted the delay, if the policy now proposed should in the end prove successful, nothing could deprive Mr. Gladstone of the credit which was his due for his services to Ireland. In conclusion, let it be remembered that, in dealing with Ireland, Parliament had to deal not only with the inhabitants of an island of limited extent, but with the far larger numbers of Irish descent, who were settled in the United States and the Colonies, and whose hostility was the source of political difficulties, only to be removed by a policy of conciliation. All experience, whether in Europe or in our own Colonies, was in favour of the policy. It was idle to talk of separation, and to argue that Ireland, under limited self-government, could be used as a base for hostile operations. With all the armed force and every military position in the Imperial Government's hands, with its fleets filling Irish harbours, how could Ireland lift up a finger? Separation was not desired by Irishmen themselves. They were not so unintelligent that they should fail to see the advantages to their country of being joined to and protected by a powerful Empire of great resources. It was the hope, it was the confidence of the Government, that when their new plan had been established there would be no desire for separation, but rather that the Union of the Empire would be cemented by indissoluble bonds of common interests and reciprocal regard. He desired to give a hearty general support to the Bill now before the House.

THE DUKE OF NORFOLK said, the noble Lord who had just down had comforted himself for having supported the Bill by putting forward the many Amendments he proposed to move if the Bill reached the Committee stage. He congratulated the noble Lord that he would not be called upon to carry into practical effect the promise which he had given the House. They all knew what was to be

Lord Brassey

the fate of this measure, but he did not intend to trouble them again with the arguments which were well known. The title of the Bill itself—it was entitled a Bill for the Better Government of Ireland—showed what it was. It was promoted for the purpose of putting power into the hands of a political Party who lost no opportunity of showing how unfit they were of undertaking the responsibility. It put the power in the hands of two opposing factions. One of the factions had no means or will to reconcile its opponents, and no power to bind the hostile factions into one people. To the Protestants of Ireland the power would be wielded by those they felt they could not trust, to the Catholics of Ireland it dangled before them the dangerous temptations of power that could only be grasped by an unholy alliance condemned by the Church, and whose Leaders had openly defied the Decrees of the Holy See. It came in such a shape that showed that capital and enterprise were already leaving, and on leaving the House of Commons the very last words said about it were words of protest from those whom it was supposed to benefit against the Financial Clauses, and that was why it was not so much as the last word, but rather that it was a second contest that would take place in Ireland, because it had this Bill for foundation and encouragement in the action which brought the Bill about.* That was one of the reasons which made them feel how futile were the hopes of those who looked for relief from this measure. He did not wish to take up too much time, but he thought there were two instances he would bring to their minds. One was the feeling that 'the Bill was to be amended, and so bring to an end the struggle and agitation which had gone on so long; and the other feeling that England ought to expiate her acts of evil government and repent; and, therefore, this Act was an Act of tardy reparation and justice. Surely they could not admit for a moment that this Bill was the price and badge of victory of the Union. The noble Earl who moved the Second Reading assured the House that the Irish would not be so foolish as to let the agitation further, because they knew that separation was hopeless, and that the Bill were the Armies of Ireland.

That was a very strange way of introducing this olive branch. There might be among the Home Rule Party some who understood well enough that there might be a question between separation or civil war, and those who had found in the past that agitation paid so well might get up an agitation for its own sake without really thinking of the bribes they dangled before their dupes. The point need not be discussed whether they intended to go on from demand to demand, though they had given their own assurance that that was their intention, without even paying their Lordships' House the compliment of waiting to see how they were going to dispose of this measure. At a meeting at Dublin on the 9th of August, Mr. Redmond stated that such a measure of Home Rule could not be regarded as final and satisfactory by the Irish people. Noble Lords opposite might say that represented the views of merely a fraction of the Irish people; but it showed to what sort of people the administration of the government of Ireland was to be entrusted. At another meeting, on the 2nd August, Mr. Healy criticised the attitude of the Parnellite Party, and said that the Home Rule measure must be regarded as a compromise—that people must not suppose that in this world they could get everything they wanted at once, and that they ought to know that a compromise must be accepted in this matter and be glad to accept this Bill. Mr. Healy went on to say that the Irish people could not expect, after 700 years of slavery, everything they deserved in one day or in one year. He said they must be content with laying one stone upon another, laying a good foundation, and trusting that by-and-bye somebody would put on the roof; that they must proceed quietly and certainly with their work, and in that spirit, animated by those views and supported by their countrymen, they proposed to proceed to the end. He could hardly understand the contemptuous indifference to the feelings of the Gladstonian Party in England, which must have been present to Mr. Healy's mind when he made that audacious statement. It meant that the Irish Party were using that Bill as a foundation on which to build up an edifice from which to attack us. It meant that the *Federative* would be on the floor of the

House of Commons, turning out Government after Government for the purpose of forcing them to listen to Irish demands for fear of offending the Irish Representatives. He need not dwell further upon the absurdity of this measure being looked upon as final. He did not deny that there had been much of evil in the past in the government of Ireland which we had to make amends for; but the remedy was not, having taken from them all power of managing their own affairs and having sapped and undermined their strength, to give them this pretended boon at a time when it was sure to be used only by one Party against another in that unhappy country. He well knew what the Roman Catholic Church had suffered in Ireland, but he held the conviction that the Church in Ireland could look with trust and confidence to the Government of this united country to meet every fair and just demand and to right anything which might be wrong. Much might also be achieved by a steady policy in the direction of developing the resources of the country. No one could deny that during the few years that the late Government were in Office they showed a practical determination in this direction. The alliance of the Irish Nationalists with the Gladstonians was much to be condemned; and all must feel that such a union was a disgraceful chapter in the public history of our country. What answer should be given to that disgraceful episode in public policy? Their Lordships were helping to shape that answer by the course they intended to take on this Bill. It was for their Lordships to give the nation time to reflect on what it was doing, time to take care that this did not become an accepted policy, and in order to see whether the people were really prepared to follow Leaders in such a disgraceful use of power. The throwing out of this Bill by a large majority would make the people of this country pause and consider that in the Constitutional safeguards with which the wisdom of our forefathers had provided us we might look for, perhaps, a slow but a wise and general unfolding for the everlasting good of the people, and that this would be better than the fads of statesmen who, seeking to gratify their personal ambition, put the nation and the Empire in the jeopardy in which it had stood of late. He trusted

that their Lordships would, by a large majority, throw out the Bill.

LORD MUSKERRY said, when he had the honour of addressing their Lordships in February last he told them he had been for nearly 18 years a constant resident in Ireland. He merely reminded them of this to show their Lordships he had a practical knowledge of the subject he was speaking about. To his mind, this Home Rule Bill showed on the part of those responsible for it either a criminal disregard for the welfare of the country and its inhabitants, or an utter ignorance of Ireland and the Irish, together with a childlike trust and belief in the representations of the Irish so-called National Party. A few years ago there had been three Parties in Ireland—Conservatives, Liberals, and those who now called themselves Nationalists—the latter Party hating, or professing to hate, England and all things English, except English money—that they did not hate. At the present time there were three Parties—Loyalists, Nationalists (with their feelings towards England unchanged), and a third Party, and a very large Party—he meant those who were content with and appreciated the Rule they were living under, with its safeguards to life and property, and who dreaded the results that they knew would follow Home Rule. But these people were afraid to give their real views—afraid of the National Party as represented in every district and small village in Ireland by those who had everything to gain and nothing to lose, by those who were too idle to work, and who kept the honest and industrious man in terror for his property—aye, and for his life—should he venture to disagree with them. Now, what were the grounds for giving Ireland Home Rule? The wish of the majority? Well, nearly everyone who had any stake in the country—merchants, traders, professional men, and landowners—were utterly against it. And were the majority in favour of it? He said the National Members in Parliament did not represent the majority, as they claimed, for, as he had said before, a large number of the people of Ireland were afraid to show their real feelings. The Ballot, he assured their Lordships, was very little protection in Ireland. “Ireland, a nation!” That was the great toast of the National Party—“Ireland, a nation!”

The Duke of Norfolk

If Ireland was a nation she had a right to the following: The right to choose her own form of Government, and to say whether it should be a Monarchy or a Republic; the right to separate from Great Britain now or at any other time; the right to her own Army and Navy and foreign policy; and the right to absolutely control her own trade and taxation. If they granted Home Rule on the ground of her being a nation they could not refuse separation hereafter if it were demanded. As to Ireland's nationality, he would quote Mr. Gladstone (as reported in *The Daily News*, June 26, 1886)—

“Are you aware—probably many of you are—that of the population of Ireland by far the greater number are of British descent?”

Now as to the commercial progress of Ireland under the present rule: In 1852 the Revenue of Ireland was £4,500,000; in 1885 it was £8,000,000, an increase of 77 per cent. In 1852 the tonnage of shipping entering Irish ports was 5,000,000; in 1885 it was 13,000,000, an increase of 160 per cent. In 1852 the Excise Duties of Ireland were £1,500,000; in 1885 they had grown to £4,500,000, an increase of 200 per cent. In 1849 the amount in the Savings Banks of Ireland was £1,200,000; and in 1887 it was £5,340,000, an increase of 340 per cent. In the Post Office Savings Banks (being the popular banks with poorer depositors) the amount in 1870 was only £583,165; in 1888 it had grown to £3,128,000, an increase of 450 per cent. in 18 years. Surely that showed progress, and that the present mode of government was doing good to the country. They could rule Ireland if they would—she only wanted a strong and resolute Government in order to be prosperous and happy. At Aberdeen, in 1871, Mr. Gladstone said—and let their Lordships remember that since then many Acts had been passed, such as the Land Act, Arrears Act, Franchise Act, Relief Act—all to please the Nationalists—the right hon. Gentleman said—

“I have looked in vain for the setting forth of any practical scheme of policy which the Imperial Parliament is not equal to deal with, and which is to be brought about by Home Rule. . . . There is nothing Ireland has asked, and which this country and this Parliament have refused. This Parliament has done for Ireland what it would have scrupled to do for England and for Scotland. . . . What are the inequalities of England and Ireland? I

declare that I know none, except that there are certain taxes still remaining which are levied over Englishmen and Scotchmen, and which are not levied over Irishmen; and, likewise, that there are certain purposes for which public money is freely and largely given in Ireland, and for which it is not given in England or Scotland."

And now, to show their Lordships the state of Ireland before the Union, under a Home Rule Parliament, he would read an extract from the speech of Lord Clare, the then Lord Chancellor of Ireland. Advocating the Union, the noble and learned Lord said (on the 10th February, 1800)—

"I will now appeal to every dispassionate man who hears me whether I have in anything misstated or exaggerated the calamitous situation of my country, or the coalition of vice and folly which has long undermined her happiness, and at this hour loudly threatens her existence. It is gravely inculcated, I know—'Let the British Minister leave us to ourselves, and we are very well as we are.' 'We are very well as we are.' Gracious God! of what materials must the heart of that man be composed, who knows the state of the country, and will coldly tell us 'we are very well as we are?' 'We are very well as we are.' We have not three years of redemption from bankruptcy or intolerable taxation, nor one hour's security against the renewal of exterminating civil war. 'We are very well as we are.' Look to your Statute Book—Session after Session have you been compelled to enact laws of unexampled rigour and novelty to repress the horrible excesses of the mass of your people; and the fury of murder and pillage and desolation have so outrun all legislative exertion that you have been at length driven to the hard necessity of breaking down the pale of the Municipal Law, and putting your country under the ban of military government; and in every little circle of dignity and independence we hear whispers of discontent at the temperate discretion with which it is administered. 'We are very well as we are.' Look to the old revolutionary Government of the Irish Union, and the modern revolutionary Government of the Irish Consulate, canvassing the dregs of that rebel democracy for a renewal of popular ferment and outrage to overcome the deliberations of Parliament. 'We are very well as we are.' Look to your civil and religious dissensions—look to the fury of political faction, and the torrents of human blood that stain the face of your country, and of what material is that man composed who will not listen with patience and goodwill to any proposition that can be made to him for composing the distractions, and healing the wounds, and alienating the miseries of this devoted nation? 'We are very well as we are.' Look to your finances, and, I repeat, you have not redemption for three years from public bankruptcy, or a burden of taxation which will sink every gentleman of property in the country. . . . We raise a Revenue of more than £230,000 on British goods imported into Ireland; and in return the Revenue raised by England on the

importation of Irish produce is little more than £10,000. And what are the offerings of gratitude and duty on our part in return for these benefits and advantages? A declaration of war by any Foreign Power against the British nation is the signal for faction and rebellion in Ireland. The received maxim is, not to forego the opportunity of foreign war to press forward Irish claims, and ripen every difference and discontent with the British Government into a ground of permanent and rancorous national hostility; insomuch that, in time of difficulty and danger, Great Britain, so far from deriving support or security from her connection with Ireland, feels it as a millstone hung upon her neck. . . . Another argument against a Legislative Union is, that it will drive your nobility and gentry from their own country, and practically impoverish the Metropolis. With respect to emigration, look to the number of Irish emigrants who now crowd every village in Great Britain, and have been driven to seek an asylum there from the brutal fury of the Irish people and the cold-blooded treachery of their own domestics, palpably fomented and encouraged by Irish faction and Irish treason. And let any dispassionate man say whether the evil of emigration can ever be greater than it is at this day. If we are to live in a perpetual storm here; if it is to remain at the discretion of every adventurer, of feeble and ostentatious talents, ungoverned by a particle of judgment or discretion, to dress up fictitious grievances for popular delusion, and let loose a savage and barbarous people upon the property and respect of the Irish nation—what gentleman who has the means of living out of this country will be induced to remain in it?"

In that passage their Lordships had a picture of Ireland before the Union. No one could say it was a pleasing one. Were they going to throw her back into the same condition? Many wise and able men had built up and consolidated this great Empire year by year, and reign after reign. Were their Lordships going to be the first to commence the process of dismemberment and destruction? Let them remember that the men at whose instance this most unpatriotic measure had been brought forward had made no secret—when out of England—of their hatred for, and their wish to injure, England. He saw noble Lords opposite who had been Her Majesty's Viceroys in Ireland. One of them, at least, must well know the sentiments expressed as to England by many of the present Nationalist Members of Parliament. The noble Lords have had a very short stay in Ireland—as, he regretted to say, had been the custom with most Viceroys since the time of Queen Elizabeth—for their Lordships would know that Sir Walter Raleigh, in his history, said—

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"Our Princes have commonly left their Deputies in Ireland three years, whence, by reason of the shortness of their time, many of them have returned as wise as they went out; others have profited more; and yet, when they began but to know the first rudiments of war and government fitting the country, they have been called home, and new apprentices sent in their places, to the great prejudice both of this and that estate."

But even that short stay ought to have shown noble Lords sufficient to prevent them supporting this Bill. Or were Party interests to be supreme before Ireland's good—before the safety and welfare of England and the Empire? This Bill was to destroy the Union of England and Ireland. Pass it, and who could say what would be the next tie they would be asked to sever? They dared not pass it! No one who had any regard for his country could entertain the thought of doing so. And as for Ireland, if, as Churchmen said, they were responsible hereafter for deeds done on this earth, already a heavy reckoning lay with those at the head of the Government for crimes committed and blood spilled during the past few years. He implored their Lordships not to let the crime of passing this Bill be added—for crime it would be, and a cowardly crime; for besides the immense injury to all Ireland, they would thereby forsake and desert those who had always been their loyal and faithful friends, and had trusted in the honour of the British Government. The most charitable way to account for this Bill ever seeing the light was to think of its author or authors suffering from aberration of the intellect! No Government had any right, either for Party purposes or to satisfy the outcry of sedition, to plunge a whole country in ruin; and he told their Lordships—and, as they need not to be reminded, he knew the country well—that as certainly as they granted Home Rule to Ireland so surely would arise the same condition of things that Lord Clare had described in his speech 93 years ago.

EARL COWPER said, the Bill had been so thoroughly discussed that it was rather difficult to find new arguments or to touch upon points which had not been touched upon before. Following the great Debate which had lately taken place in the other House, their Lordships, no doubt, felt rather bewildered, and were rather in the position of men who

Lord Muskerry

could not see the wood because of the trees; but their Lordships in that House, from the fact of their removal from the ordinary strife of politics and from their elevated position—from being, as it were, set up in a balloon—could take a clearer view. It struck him that those who advocated this measure had never succeeded in establishing the fundamental point which ought to be the base of their whole argument—that there was a real demand in Ireland for Home Rule for its own sake. He knew it had been adopted there by a large Party, but that was under peculiar circumstances. He would not go back as far as the Union; he would take a point within the recollection of those who were middle-aged or oldish people. He would take the Fenian movement, with which the noble Earl on the Front Bench the Leader of the House had so successfully grappled, in 1865, and would ask whether that movement had anything in the world to do with Home Rule—whether it did not, in fact, aim at the foundation of an Irish Republic? Was it not the fact that, till Mr. Parnell took up Home Rule in combination with other things, it was never made a cry at all? It was by working on the very natural wish of the Irish farmers to pay as little rent as possible that Mr. Parnell and his friends were enabled to get such a hold of the Irish people, assisted and reinforced by the Fenian Clubs that still existed throughout the country. No wonder, then, that when Mr. Gladstone adopted Home Rule in 1886 he found a large—nay, an overwhelming—body of Irishmen in its favour. He maintained that there was no evidence to show that there was ever such a longing on the part of the Irish people for a Parliament to manage their own affairs as there was among the Hungarians or in the Spanish Provinces. On the contrary, he said the genius of the Irish people was not in favour of, and did not induce them to have any great wish for, Local Government to manage their own affairs. It was a nation fond of centralisation. This was the mark of a nation either in its infancy or its decadence. The Land League was one of the most despotic authorities that ever existed. That organisation showed the genius of the Irish people. It was not in the nature of the Irish people to wish for a Parliament to manage their

own local affairs, though it was in their nature to wish to be an independent nation. No one had seriously maintained that a Parliament in Dublin would be able to do more for the Irish people than the Parliament at Westminster, which for many years past had shown a sincere desire to remedy every practical grievance experienced in Ireland and more so every day. The argument for a Parliament in Dublin was not that it would be more than a Parliament in Westminster, but that they would be meeting the wishes of the Irish people by giving it; and as he maintained that it was not really the wish of the Irish people, that argument fell to the ground. Nobody would ever make him believe, nor was there any evidence to show, that the Conservative Government ever contemplated bringing forward anything in the nature of Home Rule, or anything which would satisfy the demands of the Irish Nationalists. He could quite understand Lord Spencer being convinced that there would be the greatest difficulty in putting down Irish disaffection; but it had been shown that much could be done by firm government without a single innocent man suffering in the slightest degree. Their Lordships knew that at the end of the six years of the late Government the policy which they had pursued was not really unpopular in Ireland. It was impossible to say that the small majority obtained by the present Government from the whole of the United Kingdom was got together by disgust at so-called coercion. That small majority could be accounted for by the promises made to the agricultural labourer and to various others. In most cases when a measure was brought forward there were strong reasons for as well as against it; and what their Lordships had to do was to weigh the advantages against the disadvantages. But he honestly believed that in this case the advantages were almost none, and that there were serious disadvantages and serious evils to be apprehended from the Bill which, in the opinion even of those who proposed it, could not be denied. In the first place, it could not be denied that to a certain degree the Executive of this country would be weakened in time of difficulty. Surely, if we were engaged in a death struggle with any Foreign Power it must weaken us. These Islands were made by Nature to belong to one another;

and, therefore, they ought not to have two different Parliaments and two different Executives. One of the reasons why Mr. Pitt promoted the Union was that the power of these countries might be consolidated, and that they might be able to present a united front to the enemy. What would be our position if night after night Resolutions were passed in an Irish Legislature declaring against the Sister Country and in favour of an opponent—France or America, or any other Power? Was it not merely possible, but extremely likely, that the Irish majority might be in favour of our enemies and against ourselves? And how could we stop it? What would be our position if there were Debates in a Parliament in Dublin against the Mother Country and in favour of our opponents? If Ireland were disaffected, how much more difficult would our position be made in face of an enemy! Now, at any rate, we had a splendid force of Constabulary in Ireland, and a population of 1,500,000 or 2,000,000 who, whatever might have been the case 100 years ago, were now thoroughly loyal. If we abandoned them and gave them over into the hands of their enemies, was it possible that they would not have bitter feelings against us? It was not in human nature that they would not. He would not enlarge on the shame of abandoning those people. Government by majority was perhaps the best; but when there were two Parties strongly divided from one another, and one was considerably larger, it was quite in the nature of things that the smaller would be oppressed. It was impossible to say that this Bill had been sent up to their Lordships after thorough discussion in the other House. They knew that only about a fourth of it had been discussed, and that the rest was passed without any discussion whatever. The Closure had been compared to the guillotine; but the guillotine was a neat, beautiful, well-acting instrument, which was a great deal too good to be compared to the clumsy process, which was more like the clumsy process of beheading which used to take place in former days, by which the victim was horribly mangled before he was despatched. What was the opinion of the people of England regarding this measure? Even at the last Election there was no demonstration in its favour, and the people

had not been consulted on many of its most important provisions. They had not been consulted, for instance, in regard to the retention of the Irish Members. On the contrary, they were led to expect that the Irish Members would be retained only for Imperial purposes, but their retention for all purposes had never been before the country at all. Then there was the question of Imperial control. On every Gladstonian platform in the country it had been said that there was to be such and such control. That part of the Bill had been shown up, and no one could say that the Imperial control now proposed was of much good. He was convinced, as he thought were most of their Lordships, that if the people were to give an opinion now they would give it against the Bill. In every free country of the civilised world there was some check in order to prevent any fundamental change in the Constitution. We were not accustomed to look to foreign countries for any lesson in Parliamentary Government, because we thought that we knew very much more about it; but if a gigantic alteration like this was to be made in a single Session, by the aid of the Closure, without adequate discussion, and by the vote of a small majority, our Constitution, instead of being complicated and ingenious, would become one of the crudest and most dangerous description. If for the future the Closure was not to be the exception, but the rule—if the Second Chamber was to be abolished, or only to exist on the condition that it performed no functions, they would be in such a state of anarchy that they would be obliged to adopt some check like those of other nations in order to prevent violent changes in the Constitution. But the danger was upon them. There might be a better check than a Second Chamber. Like many of their Lordships he had always been in favour of reform in regard to the House; but when the coach was in full gallop was not the time to think whether it was fitted with the best possible brake; they must use the one they had got to the best possible advantage. For the sake of the people of this country, especially when nine-tenths of them were of opinion that the Bill would be most disastrous to England, and to the Empire, and most of all to Ireland, their Lordships ought to insist

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on this Bill being referred to the country. An attempt might be made to show that the House of Lords had always thrown out popular or Liberal measures, and this Home Rule Bill will be called a Liberal measure, because it was supported by the bulk of the Liberal Party. He admitted that there was an overwhelming majority in the House against the present Government; but Mr. Gladstone had created many Peers, and seven years ago there was a Party of 100 or 120 Liberal Peers constant in their attendance and well able to hold their own in Debate. Where were they now? He remembered the time when the first disastrous Home Rule Bill was sprung upon the country, in 1886, and the great schism took place. The Liberal Party was then simply annihilated. At the first meeting of the Liberal Unionists, in 1886, everyone present remarked that it was exactly like one of Lord Granville's dinners with Lord Granville left out. So many Liberal Peers had joined the Unionist Party that if the Conservative Party were to stand aside and take no part in Friday's division the Liberal Unionist Peers alone would put the Government in a minority, and these Peers, be it remembered, had hitherto voted in favour of every Liberal measure, and were still prepared to support every real, sound Liberal measure that might be brought forward. He knew that they were about to take a most important step. It would be madness in that House to go against the real opinion of the country, and generally it would be a dangerous course for their Lordships to oppose the Representatives of the people. But this was an occasion when the danger was not so great. He appreciated fully the responsibility which they were about to undertake; but he believed that the course which they intended to pursue was one which they ought to follow, even if there were danger of their sacrificing themselves altogether, and that they should no longer remain as one of the Estates of the Realm. He believed, however, that there was no such danger ahead, and that their rejection of this Bill was necessary for the safety, honour, and integrity of the country. The vote which he would register on Friday against this Bill would be given with a clear conscience, and with almost greater satisfaction than on any former occasion.

***LORD RIBBLESDALE** said, he would not follow the noble Lord into the very interesting inquiry he had instituted into the exact quality of the Irish nature, its morbid inclination to follow Leaders, and its morbid disinclination for anything like self-government. Nor did he intend to follow the noble Lord into the numerous and somewhat complex considerations of other kinds which he had presented to them. But his noble Friend had laid very natural stress upon the isolation of Ulster and upon Ulster's apprehensions. There was one point, however, which he had not touched upon. Seven years ago there was a very general agreement as to the Ulster question, that if Ulster persisted in her objections to Home Rule her case would have to be dealt with by separate treatment of some kind, but he would point out that an offer of separate treatment had been actually made to Ulster and had been rejected by the Representatives of that Province. He did not contend that this showed any acquiescence on the part of Ulster in the policy of Home Rule, but it was a tribute to the soundness of the ground upon which this Home Rule policy was based, that ground being the determination of the Irish people, independently of province or creed, to stand or fall together. Much had been said about the character of the Irish Members. In his opinion their character had been commented upon somewhat harshly. He was asked, "How can you think of handing over the government of Ireland to such men as these?" In reply he would point out that they did not propose to hand over the government of Ireland to the Nationalist Members, but to the people of Ireland, who knew that it would be to their interest to send Representatives to the Irish Parliament who would behave with prudence and moderation and honesty. The attitude of the Opposition and others towards the Irish Members had never been quite fair. When an Irish Member talked savagely the Opposition at once said, "There is the real man," but when he talked fairly and moderately they said, "He speaks falsely." The Opposition always looked back to days which were not these days, to days when the cause of the Nationalist Members was a desperate cause, to speeches which were delivered in Kansas

City, or Cincinnati, or, as the noble Duke had reminded them, in Committee Room No. 15. But the Opposition turned deaf ears to what Irish Members said in another place in the year 1893 when they were brought face to face with the great responsibilities which the Government were proposing to entrust to them. Irish Members spoke fairly, reasonably, and in his opinion perfectly honestly. Passing to the general consideration of the principle of the Bill, he must, like other noble Lords, apologise for the use of quotations. Whether it was that people had spoken so much, or that people had spoken so well, he was always knocking up against his own views expressed by somebody else far better than he could hope to express them for himself. He would, however, give their Lordships his word that these quotations would be as few as possible, and that he would use them, not with the object of bringing home inconsistencies, but of illustrating his argument. Indeed, he might observe that after a diligent study of the literature of the subject from the earliest times, he was tempted to ask in regard to such terms as consistency and inconsistency, "Who, then, shall be saved?" He would begin with Mr. Chamberlain. Although he once declared that he could not allow such antiquities—picturesque antiquities he admitted—as their Lordships' House "to control the destinies of a free Empire," everybody liked to hear what Mr. Chamberlain had to say. Mr. Chamberlain, always a great specialist on the Irish Question and the rights of property, in more recent years had become the consulting, if not the resident, physician of noble Lords opposite. He did not think he had very lately laid down specific lines of treatment for Ireland beyond that a Unionist Government was to come back to Office; but he did so in 1885, and this was what he said ought to be done for her case—

"While we have to conciliate the national sentiment of Ireland we have to find a safe means between separation on the one hand, which would be disastrous to Ireland and dangerous to England, and on the other that excessive centralisation which throws upon the English Parliament and upon English officials the duty and burden of supervising every petty detail of Irish local affairs, which stifles the national life, which destroys the sense of responsibility, which keeps the people in ignorance of the duties and functions of government, and which produces a perpetual

feeling of irritation while it obstructs all necessary legislation. That is the problem, and I do not believe that the resources of statesmanship are exhausted, or that it will be impossible to find a solution."

How clearly and concisely put ! might not these have been the instructions to the draftsman of this Bill ? His noble Friend Lord Thring would have known exactly how to deal with them. Mr. Chamberlain was right. The problem was not insoluble, the resources of statesmanship were not exhausted, and this Bill was the solution. He agreed with the noble Duke who had moved the rejection of the Bill that every man had a right to change his opinion on any question of policy and policy, and he was free to admit that he had completely changed his mind upon this Irish Question since 1885 and 1886. He was glad, however, of this occasion to give his reasons for this change. His position then was one which he imagined was common to many Liberal Unionists. Significant as the Irish elections of 1885 and 1886 were, he was not satisfied that Ireland was telling Parliament what she wanted, or that she really knew what she wanted. He distrusted the sentimentality with which, as it seemed to him, an economic and administrative problem had been invested. He was sceptical about the long brutality of Great Britain and the slow martyrdom of Ireland. He hardened his heart, and, what was more important in such matters, his head, against the national sentiment contention. He had thought if some enchanter's wand could send up the prices of Irish stock and agricultural produce 50 per cent. and keep them there, no more would be heard of Home Rule. He used to say, let Ireland be freed from intimidation and agitation by a vigorous administration, and, given such an administration a fair trial, she would shake England by the hand and say, "You have freed us from an intolerable state of things." He asked for a further sign before he would believe that we were face to face, not with a surface discontent, but with a pervading national sentiment. The sign was given when six years of Unionist government—the very kind of government he wished to see tried—was tested by an appeal to the Irish electors last year. What was the result ? Ireland grateful, Ireland rational, Ireland freed

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from intimidation, freed from agitation, returned a Nationalist majority substantially the same as in 1885–6. In the light of this solid Nationalist vote in 1892, what was the teaching of those six years ? Opinions naturally differed. This, for instance, was the comfortable opinion of a prominent Member of the last Administration, who might be taken to represent the average Unionist view. He asked an attentive audience what was the position in 1893 after seven years' experience, and he genially answered himself thus—

"Under the firm and courageous administration of my right hon. Friend (Mr. Balfour) the necessity for Home Rule, as far as social order is concerned, has proved to be nothing but a bugbear, nothing but moonshine."

He would not follow that gentleman either into the nature of moonshine or bugbears, but he would like to get at what was understood by "social order ?" As his noble Friend Lord Spencer had said, the real test, the only test, of social order in communities which enjoyed the privileges of free institutions was not whether the governors, but the governed, were satisfied. Social order must take its roots in the consent and affection of the people. If he was right in his interpretation of social order, and he hardly thought his contention would be disputed, where were they landed ? On a desolate shore for this prominent Unionist and his seven years' experience. His whole proposition—and the proposition involved all that was understood by Unionism—fell to the ground. The verdict passed upon the seven years' experience he pointed to by the Irish electors last August proved, not that there was no necessity for Home Rule, but that the opposite policy, the firm and courageous administration of his right hon. Friend (Mr. Balfour), had failed to establish social order. What was the consequence ? the inevitable conclusion ? Why, it was this : the necessity for an alternative policy. There were only two ways of dealing with the Irish Question—the way of noble Lords opposite and the way proposed under the Bill. And here he found himself in very tolerable disagreement with his noble Friend (Lord Cowper). The Unionist policy had been administered for seven years, and at the end of it they were no nearer than at the beginning to securing

the elementary conditions of social order. Now, could this failure be in any way accounted for by extraneous causes? it was only fair to inquire. The noble Marquess had a great chance in 1885, if he could have seen his way to settle the Irish Question in concert with Mr. Gladstone, and in accordance with the wishes of the Irish Parliamentary Party. But he could not see his way to do that. He had another great chance in 1886. His resources were considerable, and even unusual. He had a resolute majority in the House of Commons, a magnificent majority in the House of Lords; the power of the purse, the power of the Press, and influential and instructed opinion largely with him, able men at his back, inside and outside his Cabinet, inside and outside his Party. This was no Cabinet of compromise, or caretakers, as in 1885. There was to be none of the natural and innocent vacillations of 1885. The faintest shadow of turning towards the Irish Parliamentary Party was to be as an accursed thing. The Government was in earnest. The noble Duke had said the Irish Question had never been before the country. [The Marquess of SALISBURY: The Bill.] The Bill involved the Irish Question. The noble Marquess himself, speaking at the Conservative Club in 1887, declared that the word "Ireland" summarised the politics of the moment. They were summarised in that word all through the six years of firm administration, and at the polls in 1892. Upon the whole, those six years were good years. There were fair harvests and fair agricultural prices. At a not inopportune moment for the noble Marquess the stars in their courses declared themselves Unionists. It seemed as if the Irish Party was breached and must share the fate of a house divided against itself. All this was good, and Mr. Balfour certainly ruled and governed Ireland with courage and determination. If his circumstances obliged him into exceptional legislation, his inclinations led him into exceptional beneficence. The cup was sweetened. He had only to point to the Light Railways, and Drainage Acts, and the work of the Congested Districts Board, which showered all sorts of good things on the Irish peasantry, from Scotch seed potatoes to bantam poultry. He did

not believe all he saw in the newspapers, but he liked to believe this, that in one of the poorest districts a pig—the only individual, he understood, in Ireland who paid his rent—was named Arthur James Balfour, after the Chief Secretary. That surely was an eloquent tribute to resolute government. In short, he believed they had seen resolute government as well done as was possible. But it would not do, because they had not the people of Ireland with them. Failing the millennium of Unionist government or the disfranchisement of Ireland, they had to reckon with the Irish people. Unionists asked for time. How much more time did they want? The see-saw of coercion and concession was no new discovery. It was the old miserable habit that had prevailed during the best part of the century. Moreover, the average duration of Ministries during the last 50 years was several months under four years, and therefore the late Government had in that respect an exceptional opportunity. But, granted that they had perpetuity of office, what had they to rely upon? Local Government, he would be told, was to make straight paths for their feet, the rough places smooth, satisfy Irish sentiment. But the Irish people did not want it. The Unionists themselves did not believe in it, and the days of miracles were over. Its author, speaking with perfect frankness, said that, as a means of substituting a good for a bad state of society, he did not class it with his Land Bill, his Railway Bill, his Congested Districts Board Bill, or his Coercion Bill, and he added—

"I do not anticipate any of the advantages for Ireland which she has derived from any of the four Bills to which I have referred."

So much for Local Government from the point of view of the Unionists. If ever there was a quack remedy for a sore disease that was one. How could they hope to get rid of the people of Ireland? They might have once, but they gave them the franchise in 1884. Their Lordships' House did not divide against that measure, and the noble Marquess himself seemed to have recognised it as a turning point from which there was no going back. Speaking at Newport in 1885 in regard to the renewal of exceptional legislation, the noble Marquess said—

"You have passed an Act of Parliament giving supreme power to the great mass of the Irish people. To my mind, the renewal of exceptional legislation against a population whom you had treated legislatively to this marked confidence is so gross in its inconsistency that you could not possibly hope to renew any legislation which expressed on one side a distrust of what on the other side your legislation had so strongly emphasised."

That was the noble Marquess's view of the importance and significance of the position in 1885 as it was affected by the Franchise Act of 1884. "Supreme power" and "marked confidence" were strong expressions—perhaps too strong for 1884, but not too strong when taken in relation to the Elections of 1885, 1886, and 1892. The Government had given these facts full value in the Bill, just as the noble Marquess wished to give them their full value in 1884. They disliked gross inconsistencies as much as the noble Marquess, and they held that a people who had been treated legislatively with marked confidence were entitled to have their opinions considered as to how they would and how they would not be governed. His general conclusions were that Unionist policy in Ireland had failed; that this failure could not be accounted for by lack of time, as in its essential features it had had nearly a century's trial; and that failing perpetuity of office by Unionists or the disfranchisement of Ireland (both of which were impossible), it had no better hope of success in the future. Mr. Pitt avowed the great object of the Act of Union was the tranquillisation of Ireland and the attachment of her to this country. Ninety-three years was a long trial, and the experience formed thereon was not formed on insufficient experience. Most would admit—whatever abstract or ideal virtues might reside in the idea of a legislative Union—that that Union had failed in achieving the objects Mr. Pitt had in view. Having failed in attaching Ireland, had the Union succeeded in legislating for her? The prime plea of Unionism was that Westminster could do all or more for Ireland than she could do for herself. To hear some people talk it might be imagined that the Imperial Parliament not merely satisfied the claims and needs of Ireland but even anticipated them. If those claims had been satisfied—and he would

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not dispute that Parliament had honestly tried to do so—it had been always at England's own time and at England's own convenience; according to English ideas and even prejudices, and not according to Ireland's. Catholic Emancipation took 30 years; and from the Devon Commission in 1843 it was nearly as long before anything resulted from it. Instances might easily be multiplied, but he would come to later days—to September, 1886, and remind the House of the instructive history of Mr. Parnell's Tenants' Relief Bill. Mr. Parnell gave reasons for the necessity of revising judicial rents, and explained that the Bill was a temporary measure to meet the existing emergency. He advised Parliament to consider it seriously and to deal with the emergency, or he would not be responsible for the social and agrarian trouble which might follow. After being denounced by the Secretary for Ireland as a measure of gross injustice and confiscation upon the landlords, after doubts had been thrown upon the gravity of the crisis, this Bill was hounded out with the greatest contumely in the House of Commons by a majority of 95. The Government then appointed the Cowper Commission, which early in 1887 reported confirming the views taken by the Irish Members as to the distress in Ireland due to the great fall in prices, and as to the necessity for a reduction and revision of judicial rents. But although the Conservative Government dealt with the Land Question in 1887 they gave no effect to those recommendations in their Bill. The Bill was introduced in the House of Lords, and the Government declared that judicial rents were not to be revised or the question of judicial rents re-opened. In the Commons, however, the Liberal Unionists compelled the Government to give way on the subject of a revision of judicial rents fixed prior to 1886. And what happened in the Lords when the Commons Amendment came up? The noble Marquess still held the revision of judicial rents to be confiscation, but he accepted the Amendment. Because he said that, if he did not do so, he would lose the Ulster vote.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I never said anything of the kind in my life.

*LORD RIBBLESDALE said, that he would read from *Hansard*. The speech

was delivered on the 11th of August, 1887, and was as follows:—

“They would have had to face this political contingency—that some time or other a Dissolution would have taken place, and an election would have been made, in which, owing to the overwhelming pressure of a secondary controversy the votes of the loyal people of Ulster might for a time have seemed to be upon the side which the Government believed to be absolutely fatal to the interests of the Empire.”

The Bill then, as amended, was passed, but what had happened in the meantime? There had been agrarian agitations. The Plan of Campaign had been organised, and the Government was obliged by the state of the country to renew the exceptional legislation which appeared such a gross inconsistency in 1885. “Delays have dangerous ends.” In this case they had dismal consequences, as they forced the noble Marquess on the one hand into a measure of confiscation, and on the other into an inconsistency. Sir Robert Peel in 1829 said that something must be done for Ireland. Something always was being done. Since 1869 Parliament had not wearied in the doing of it. Ireland had been the objective, as Mr. Chamberlain said the other day, of innumerable Bills, all of which, at all events, had been kindly intended. Yet the stock of Ireland's grievances accrued, and her discontents—as Lord Clare said—kept pace with her prosperity. He should be told it was all the work of the Irish agitator and the Irish priests. It was no more the Irish agitator and the Irish priests than it was the Irish landlord or the Irish climate. They were the incidents, not the essentials, of the Irish question. The essentials of the Irish question were dealt with by the Bill their Lordships meant to throw out, on the Second Reading. Lord Carnarvon, whom he might style the Lord Fitzwilliam of this century, once said that the failures in Ireland had been so many that their wrecks lay strewn all about, but that he should not lightly believe that a combination of good government in Ireland, and of good feeling in England was a hopeless task. It was because he did not wish to see another failure added to the already long list, and because he believed that such a combination was not a hopeless task, that he should vote sincerely for the Second Reading of the Bill. In 1829 a witness before the House of Lords said that the

Irish Roman Catholics were more desirous of a settlement than a triumph. He believed that that was true of the Irish people in 1893. Which did their Lordships desire, a settlement or a triumph? Was it the triumph of throwing out this Bill? That was a foregone conclusion, for on Friday, half-an-hour before the Division was taken, not a patch of scarlet on the Benches opposite would be visible. But their triumph would be short-lived. It was not a long way through the Lobbies back into the House, and when their Lordships came back after the Division the Irish question would still demand a settlement.

*EARL CADOGAN: My noble Friend began his able if somewhat discursive speech by a statement that there is in some quarters a morbid inclination to follow Leaders. I am not inclined to dispute the knowledge which my noble Friend may possess of that interesting game with which my noble Friend and his friends opposite must be so well acquainted; but I am entitled to ask whether all the Members of the Government who have spoken to-night share this morbid feeling of following the Leader, and whether we are to take the statements made by at least one Member of the Government as representing the views of Her Majesty's Government as they have been hitherto expressed. I was not in the House when Lord Brassey addressed your Lordships, but I am given to understand that among the interesting statements he made were the following. Speaking as a Member of the Government he proposed that there should be more Exchequer Judges, a reduction in the number of the Irish Members to 35, that there should be a change of the constabulary into a *gendarmérie* under the Imperial Government, and, finally, until a general agreement has been arrived at no settlement can be accomplished; and he proposed that a Royal Commission should issue on the subject of Home Rule. I think we are entitled to ask whether in the chameleon-like course of this Government measure we are to discuss these fresh proposals which have been made, or whether the Government are intending for one more day to adhere to the proposals within the four corners of the Bill. My noble Friend went on to speak of our attitude towards the Irish Members. He said that we had treated them

with contumely, that we had listened carefully to the rhetorical excesses to which they had given way in Ireland, and had not paid attention to the more Constitutional language they had used in another place. But one of the chief points of our indictment of this measure is that the Government of Ireland is to be conducted, not in England, not in London, but in Ireland and in Dublin; and if we are to form an opinion of the character of those who are to form the Government of Ireland under the new state of things proposed, surely we are as much entitled to form that opinion from the language which hon. Members used in Ireland as from that which they more prudently make use of in another place. The whole case, indeed, for this Home Rule Bill should be taken and considered as argued on the two speeches with which the Debate opened. We may conclude that the noble Earl opposite, with all his great experience of Irish affairs, was in a position to state as fully as possible all the points which could be made in favour of the course which the Government recommend the House to pursue; and I think that no one will deny that a more crushing reply and a stronger indictment of any measure never were uttered than that which followed in the speech of the noble Duke. We who have followed the course of the noble Earl during past years have fully realised the debt of gratitude which we and the country owe to him for the manly, straightforward, and courageous manner in which he performed the duties of Viceroy of Ireland during eight long years. We have seen with regret and dismay the gradual deterioration of his political course during the last two or three years. We recognise what influence his opinion must have on Irish affairs, and naturally we have watched with considerable regret the action which he has seen fit to take. There was something like an Oriental refinement of cruelty in the fact that it has fallen to-night to the noble Earl to stand forward as the author in this House of a measure which reverses every line and every principle of the policy which he followed during the brighter part of his career, and which he ought to know is fraught with danger to those interests which he for so many years supported. I am one of those who hold that the cardinal and chief object of this Bill as

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laid down by Mr. Gladstone—namely, to establish a Legislative Body for Ireland sitting in Dublin as distinct from Imperial affairs—is a proposal as to which we have no mandate except one of rejection. One word on the view of the country as indicated by the General Election. In the early part of the Session, a noble Lord on this side of the House alluded to the undoubted fact that at the Election of 1892, in Great Britain, a majority was returned in opposition to the policy of Her Majesty's Government. In reply to that the Leader of the House reminded us that in 1892 that majority had considerably diminished, that it was much smaller than in 1886, and he drew from that fact the argument that, inasmuch as so large a reduction of the majority had taken place between 1886 and 1892, before long that majority would be converted into a minority. Did not the noble Lord understand or see that the fact of the diminution of the majority in 1892 as opposed to 1886 tells exactly the other way? In 1886 the country had before it a Bill for the establishment of Home Rule in Ireland. During the seven years which followed it is perfectly true the abstract question of Home Rule was before the country, and it was discussed whenever men met to discuss public subjects. But when the Election took place in 1892 there was no Bill before the country, and the argument which I deduce from that is this—that the abstract question of the management of Irish affairs by Irishmen, which had been before the country, might possibly receive the assent of the country; but that the moment you attempt to convert these abstract theories into concrete proposals, the moment you attempt to formulate in a Bill the policy you have described in generalities, then you not only fail, but you fail also to receive the support of the right-thinking men of the country. The country has begun to realise the situation. Probably if you were to poll the country through you would find that the idea of Home Rule, after having seen your measure, resolved itself into something like this—in order to give to the Irish self-government in Irish affairs this Bill proposes to hand over to the Irish the practical control of British and Imperial affairs. The country cannot be surprised if, in these circumstances, while we reject the main proposals of

the Government, we also want to inquire into the steps which were taken for carrying out the policy you now ask us to adopt. In the speech of the Prime Minister on the introduction of the original measure he laid down five propositions as cardinal principles, from which, he said, there ought to be no departure. He made use of explicit language; he said, "To these propositions we have endeavoured closely to adhere." The noble Earl (Earl Spencer) enumerated only three of them. They were 1st, Imperial unity; 2nd, equality of all the Kingdoms; 3rd, equitable repartition of Imperial charges; 4th, any and every practicable and adequate provision for the protection of the minority; and, finally, the 5th one is, if not finality, at all events a real and continuous settlement. With regard to four of these points, I shall have little to say. Respecting Imperial unity, it appears to me to be a curious cardinal point to lay down preparatory to bringing in a Bill for separating the two countries. With regard to the second, equality, I hardly think it can be contended that it exists under provisions which allow one country to enjoy the privilege of legislative independence in its own country, to have a Parliament of its own, and also allows the citizens of that country the privilege of sitting in the Parliament of another. With regard to the third point, relating to Imperial charges, I shall say nothing, because it is a matter not to be discussed in this House. With regard to finality, I have only to say it has been proved by the speeches made to-night by the mere mention of the consecutive measures to be passed dealing with land and other questions, that in Gladstonian legislation no such thing as finality is apparent. As to the condition that practical provision shall be made for the protection of the minority, it is clear there is only one way in which the minority in Ireland can be protected, and that is that the supremacy of this Parliament, which, after all, is the most important safeguard, and that which embraces all others, shall be fully and thoroughly carried out and maintained. The Prime Minister was good enough to say that this demand was "not an unreasonable one." Mr. John Morley has told us that this Bill "is saturated with it," and it is

upon the reality and validity of these special provisions that the stability of the whole measure depends. It is fair to say, in regard to supremacy, that neither as to its necessity nor the manner in which it is to be enforced and carried out, do the Members of the Government and their friends appear to be agreed. I venture to ask this House to allow me to refer it to two short extracts in a speech made by the Prime Minister, in which he admits the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament. One was in 1880, and he repeated almost the same words, and same sentiment, in 1882. On two occasions he gave expression to the same views. The Home Secretary, speaking in 1889 of the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament, said it would remain intact, and on another occasion that it remained undiminished, and that was emphasised by Sir William Harcourt. Those were the opinions of Her Majesty's Government on the subject of the Imperial Parliament. On the other hand, Mr. John Dillon said they would try Gladstone, and see if his Bill would give over the government of Ireland to the Nationalists of Ireland, and restore to the people of that country the privilege they held 100 years ago to manage their own affairs. Mr. John Redmond and Mr. T. P. O'Connor said it was their ultimatum that the Irish Parliament must be supreme, and free from interference from the English Parliament. I think that, at least, shows a considerable difference of opinion with reference to the question of supremacy, and I call attention to it because it is my intention to show that the supremacy is not sufficiently provided for, and if it is not so it is because the Government were not permitted to carry out their views by their Irish allies. The question of supremacy was confined entirely to the Preamble of the Bill; that was a course that did not commend itself to both Parties of the other House, the result was that after considerable discussion an addition was inserted in Clause 2 for the mention of the supremacy of the British Parliament. Her Majesty's Government would not even agree to insert the words "a subordinate Parliament." In Clause 5 it is obvious that the central figure in the whole of the system is the Lord Lieutenant. The noble Earl will not treat him as one of those organic details

by which the Prime Minister is apt to designate the great principles of the Bill. The position of the Lord Lieutenant is one of extreme difficulty and complexity, and if these difficulties and complexities are insurmountable, as I maintain they are, they are sufficient to wreck the whole of this Bill. Everything turns on the Lord Lieutenant and his action. The Office of Lord Lieutenant never was a sinecure, or one which afforded much pleasure to its holder. I had occasion a short time ago to call the attention of the House to the difficulties in which the present Viceroy found himself placed by being prevented from carrying out the directions he had himself laid down for his own guidance in being obliged to receive certain addresses which he had refused previously to receive. Her Majesty's Government inserted a provision in the Bill that the tenure of Office of the Lord Lieutenant shall run for six years. They will be extremely fortunate if they find any Viceroy who survives the occupation of that position six weeks. The supremacy of the Imperial Parliament can only be vindicated in one of two ways. The Lord Lieutenant must either veto the action of the Irish Parliament, or the British Government must repeal the Acts after they have been passed, or legislate over the heads of the Irish Parliament. The Lord Lieutenant is to exercise the veto in the first place on the advice of his Irish Cabinet, in the second place on the advice of the Imperial Government, and in the third place he is required to act on his own responsibility. It will be extremely difficult for the Lord Lieutenant to decide what Acts and Bills would have to be vetoed and what would not. It must be noticed that the cases in which he is to act upon his own responsibility are those of the greatest difficulty and the greatest emergency. By Clauses 3 and 4 the Irish Legislature is placed under certain disabilities with regard to the subjects it may deal with and its power of initiating Bills. I believe it was Mr. Morley who said in the other House that we might take it for granted that the Lord Lieutenant would not break the law, and someone else said that he would not act either as a knave or a fool. In fact, there seems to be some angelic theory set up about the Lord Lieutenant, just as there is an angelic

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theory with regard to the Irish Members who are to form his Cabinet. But in spite of all the powers given to the Lord Lieutenant it is proved to be possible that the Irish Government might, after all, act under this Bill entirely independently of the Lord Lieutenant or the Imperial Government. It has been suggested that the Irish Parliament might pass a Bill infringing the limitations of Clauses 3 and 4, and that they might tack that Bill on to an Appropriation Bill and send it up to the Lord Lieutenant. The Lord Lieutenant would then either have to submit to a stoppage of supplies or to assent to a Bill which would infringe the provisions of Clauses 3 and 4. That would not be a state of things which would secure the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament. It has been said that there is a similarity of position between the Governor of a colony and a Viceroy. The Governor of a colony is directed to veto all Bills infringing certain matters; he has power left him to reserve those Bills for the assent of Her Majesty and the Imperial Government. It was proposed in the other House to enable the Lord Lieutenant to reserve similar Bills; but there is no such power under this measure, and the Lord Lieutenant must either assent or veto. I should like to quote the opinion of a gentleman long resident in New Zealand. Sir John Gorst said there was such a state of things in New Zealand 30 years ago that it cost millions of money and thousands of lives. There was one difference in the case of the Colonies and the proposed Irish Executive. Under Clause 9, Irish constituencies will be represented in Parliament, but there is no Act under which the Colonies can be represented in Parliament, and the result will be this—that the Irish Members will by their votes control the majority in the Imperial Parliament, and they may control the decision of the Government with regard to Bills referred to them from Ireland, and the Lord Lieutenant in such cases will be controlled by the very men whose decisions he has tried to control. So much for the supremacy of Parliament. As the noble Duke said, supremacy is of two kinds—Legislative and Executive. Her Majesty's Government have hardly appreciated the difficulties of administration in Ireland. There has been plenty of legislation in past years

for Ireland, but, undoubtedly, the chief difficulty is with regard to exercising the Executive functions of the Government in Ireland. This Bill confers no power to enforce the administrative orders of the Imperial Government or the decrees of the Imperial Courts. I can find no power which provides the Lord Lieutenant for enforcing any power he may receive from home. Every Civil servant, every officer, every official in Ireland will be appointed by the Irish Government, and, as far as I can see, we have no sort of control over the action they take, whether it be in accordance with Acts of Parliament or not. There is one more point with regard to the position of the Lord Lieutenant—namely, his control over the military forces in Ireland. In the other House, when the matter was under discussion, it was found that the Prime Minister differed from the Home Secretary. The Lord Lieutenant or the Magistrates are able to call out any troops quartered at any time in Ireland, and the result will be that the Magistrates appointed by one Government would have the right and power over military belonging to another Government. This is a matter worthy of the serious attention of the House. If under the Bill the right to control the military forces remains with the Irish Government, what becomes of the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament? I think I have said enough to justify my contention that the exercise of this supremacy, which is one of the chief safeguards provided by Her Majesty's Government, is, to use a mild expression, a sham and a delusion, and I submit that this fact is absolutely fatal to the proposal of the Government. It is the question upon which the whole system turns, and I have thought it right to call the attention of the House and the country to what the Prime Minister has called an "organic detail," but on which depends the success or failure of the entire measure. Upon the general question of the action of this House with reference to this Bill, I have nothing to add to what has been so ably and eloquently stated by the noble Duke. I have no doubt as to the result of the Division on the Bill, nor have I any doubt as to our duty in connection with the Bill, nor as to the mandate which the country lays on us to deal with it. In my belief this Bill was

never intended to pass this House. It is hardly any secret that the passing of this measure through the House of Commons was the price paid for Irish votes, in order to carry the Newcastle Programme, and in order to obtain a new lease—I will not say of power, but of Office for Her Majesty's Government. It was an unholy compact, made with the knowledge that it would be our duty to prevent the Government from performing their part. This is, perhaps, a strong accusation to make, but it is sustained by the facts. We have seen the measures which have been adopted to pass this Bill through the other House, measures which were calculated to make it absolutely impossible for your Lordships to receive any Bill so carried. The proposals so made were such as could not find favour in your Lordships' House, and we have seen during the last few weeks that the Government in the House of Commons have absolutely refused to accept Amendments even when they carried out intentions which they had expressed themselves, and when they were quite unable to advance any arguments against the Amendments proposed. The Bill comes to us with its policy reversed, with its provisions modified, and with its character transformed at the will of the Irish Members. The noble Duke has referred to-night to the results which may follow the rejection of this measure. I do not deny that the results may to a certain extent be said to be serious and such as we cannot contemplate with confidence; but, if this be so, the Government are responsible. You found Ireland when you came into Office in 1886 relatively prosperous, contented, and happy. You found it reviving under a system of so-called coercion, which was practically dormant in its provisions, which simply contained a power to enforce the law against those who were disposed to disobey the law. You found restored confidence, an increase of wealth, and a state of things generally that gave brighter hopes for the future. You have altered all this; you have put back the hands of the clock, and upon your heads be the responsibility. The noble Duke read to-night the expression used by the Prime Minister in enumerating the objections which he said had been brought against the Government measure. Those

expressions were to a certain extent exaggerated, but they were none the less descriptive on the whole of the objections which we have to the Bill. Mr. Gladstone said that if these objections were sound it must go hard with the Home Rule Bill. In our deliberate and conscientious opinion these are sound objections, and we believe it will go hard with the Home Rule Bill when its principles and details are explained to the constituencies, as they will be by every Member of the Unionist Party within the next few weeks. It will go hard with the Bill wherever, freed from the galling bondage of Party slavery, and influenced only by a patriotic desire to promote the best and highest interests of the Empire, Englishmen are permitted to examine into and give judgment on the monstrous provisions contained in this Bill. It will go harder still with the Bill when that day of reckoning arrives, which cannot now be long delayed, when the doom of your policy will be finally sealed by the verdict of an indignant and outraged people.

Further Debate adjourned till To-morrow.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (SCHOOL ATTENDANCE) BILL.

Reported from the Standing Committee without further Amendment; the Report of the Amendment made in the Committee of the Whole House to be received To-morrow.

EDUCATION (SCHOOL ATTENDANCE) (SCOTLAND) BILL [H.L.]

Reported from the Standing Committee without Amendment; and to be read 3^a To-morrow.

COMPANIES (WINDING-UP) BILL [H.L.]

Reported from the Standing Committee without Amendment; and to be read 3^a To-morrow.

SHERIFF COURTS CONSIGNATIONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Reported from the Standing Committee without Amendment; and to be read 3^a To-morrow.

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FERTILISERS AND FEEDING STUFFS BILL.

Reported from the Standing Committee with Amendments; the Report thereof to be received To-morrow; and Bill to be printed as amended. (No. 266.)

METROPOLIS MANAGEMENT (PLUMSTEAD AND HACKNEY) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1^a; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 267.)

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Twelve o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 5th September 1893.

MR. SPEAKER'S INDISPOSITION.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to the continuance of his indisposition:—

Whereupon Mr. Mellor, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

QUESTIONS.

THE RELIGIOUS RIOTS IN INDIA.

MR. A.C. MORTON (Peterborough): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether he can furnish the House with a statement setting forth the number, with dates and other particulars, of riots between Mahomedans and Hindoos in British India arising out of or connected with cow killing, festival processions, or other matters of religious difference, during the period commencing with the 1st January, 1880, to 1st June of the present year?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. G. RUSSELL, North Beds.): I stated last Thursday, in reply to a similar question by my hon. Friend the Member for North Ayrshire,

that the Secretary of State was not in possession of the full information which would enable a Report for five years to be prepared ; but that the Government of India would be asked to submit, with Reports on the recent riots, a general Report on the questions of administration involved.

THE MOEL ISPRI AND CHAMPION MINES.

MR. PRITCHARD MORGAN (Merthyr Tydvil) : I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, in the case of the Royal mines known as the Moel Ispri and Champion mines, situate near Dolgelly, the Crown has power at Common Law, or otherwise, to prevent the removal of fixed machinery (erected solely for the purpose of extracting gold) from these Royal mines ; and, if so, whether, in the interests of the State and the industry, they will exercise such power ; whether the Woods and Forests Office intimated to the late lessees, or their representatives, some time since, that the Crown claimed at Common Law (or otherwise under the rights of the Crown) the right to prevent the removal of such machinery ; what was the date of the first application by Mr. J. R. Roberts and another, of Dolgelly, gold miners, for a lease to work the above-mentioned mines ; what was the date when Mr. J. R. Roberts received intimation that the lease would be granted to him ; what was the date of the sale of the machinery referred to ; on what date did the former lease terminate ; what was the cause of the delay in granting the lease to Mr. Roberts and another ; and will explain why the Woods and Forests Office, when requested by those interested in the gold mining interest at Dolgelly either to grant a lease before the sale or to intimate that they would grant a lease to any person who purchased the machinery, did not accede to such request ?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Sir J. T. HIBBERT, Oldham) : The Crown has not the power to prevent the removal of machinery from the mines in question. The leases are either determined or in process of surrender and the late lessees are empowered to dispose of the machinery. When the leases were in existence the Woods and Forests Office intimated to the lessees that the Crown claimed the right to pre-

vent the removal of the machinery. The date of the first application by Mr. T. H. Roberts and Mr. Pritchard Morgan for a lease to work the above-mentioned Mines was 29th December, 1892. The application of Mr. T. H. Roberts and Mr. N. T. Williams was dated the 10th June, 1893. The offer of a lease was made to Mr. T. H. Roberts and Mr. N. T. Williams on the 22nd ultimo. The machinery was advertised to be sold on the 24th ultimo. The lease of the Moel Ispri Mine was determined on the 20th December, 1892, and an agreement was entered into for the surrender of the other leases as on the 5th April last, but the formal completion of the deeds of surrender has been delayed. There were several causes for the delay in offering a lease to Messrs. Roberts and Williams. An opportunity was given to those who had provided the machinery to obtain fresh capital for continuing their operations, and when that failed considerable delay took place in obtaining replies to the references given by Messrs. Roberts and Williams. The Woods and Forests Office has acted throughout with a desire to save the machinery from being removed ; but it could not have given a general undertaking to grant a lease to any persons who might purchase it without knowing their names and qualifications.

STEPNEY UNION.

MR. WOOTTON ISAACSON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) : I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is in possession of any further information respecting the case of Samuel Ely Hobbs, a dock labourer, lately residing at Love Lane, Ratcliff, who died at the Bromley and Stepney Sick Asylum ; and whether an additional doctor to the Union, comprising the parishes of Limehouse, Stepney, and Ratcliff, is to be appointed ?

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Sir W. FOSTER, Derby, Ilkeston) : The Local Government Board have received the depositions taken by the Coroner at the inquest in the case of Samuel Hobbs, and have been furnished with a reply of the Guardians. Dr. Downes, one of the Board's Inspectors, has also made inquiries as to the case. He has seen the relieving officer and Mr. Godding, who

was acting as the substitute of the medical officer, and the dispenser. He finds that the application for the attendance of the medical officer in the case was made on Thursday, 17th August, at 10 o'clock in the morning, and that the acting medical officer, although there was nothing to show that the case was an urgent one, visited the patient about 1 on the same day. Mrs. Hobbs, who has also been seen by Dr. Downes, admits that this was the case. She further states that she went to the dispensary in the afternoon for the medicine prescribed and obtained it. A reference to the dispenser's book shows that the medicine was made up on that afternoon. Mrs. Hobbs accounts for the discrepancies between her present statement and her statement before the Coroner by saying that she was very much confused when giving her evidence. The district medical officer of the Stepney Union is required to devote his whole time to the duties of his office. He receives a salary of £350 per annum. Dr. Downes ascertained from the acting medical officer that the number of cases which he has to attend at their own homes has averaged about 15 a day. I cannot say upon the facts at present before the Local Government Board that the duties of the medical officer are more than can be efficiently performed by one person who devotes his whole time to the attendance on the sick poor.

POST OFFICE ACCOMMODATION IN LIMERICK.

MR. O'KEEFFE (Limerick): I beg to ask the Postmaster General if his attention has been directed to a Memorial forwarded some months ago from the traders and representatives of the largest houses in William Street, in the City of Limerick, requesting that the Post Office in that street may also become a Telegraph Station; and whether he will favourably entertain the application?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. A. MORLEY, Nottingham, E.): There are already two Telegraph Offices within a short distance of the Post Office to which the hon. Member refers, and I regret, therefore, that I cannot favourably entertain the application.

Sir W. Foster

HAULBOWLINE DOCKYARD.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he is aware that the ship *Discovery*, which arrived at Haulbowline on the 29th ultimo with a steam pinnace on board for Government use, had to proceed to Cork to unship it owing to the defective condition of the crane at that dockyard; and whether a suitable steam crane will be included in the machinery about to be erected at Haulbowline?

*THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Sir U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH, Lancashire, Clitheroe): The crane in the yard at Haulbowline was not powerful enough to lift the launch of the *Discovery*. Among other machinery proposals shortly to be considered at the Admiralty is one for a crane of greater strength at Haulbowline.

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL'S ANNUAL REPORT.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): I beg to ask the Postmaster General what is the cause of the delay in the issue of his Annual Report; and whether it is intended to issue that Report before the end of September instant?

MR. A. MORLEY: The Annual Report of the Post Office was laid on the Table of the House on the 31st ultimo, and ordered to be printed. It will be issued to Members in the usual course as soon as the supply of copies has been delivered by the printer.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS IN NEW SOUTH WALES.

SIR C. W. DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): To ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will cause to be laid before Parliament a copy of the Parliamentary Electorates and Elections Act which has now passed through the Parliament of New South Wales, and which includes the whole of the Electoral Law of the Colony within one consolidation Statute, with new self-acting provisions with regard to the redistribution of seats every five years.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. S. BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): Yes, Sir; it will be laid on the Table of the House.

THE AMERICAN MAILS.

CAPTAIN DONELAN : I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he is aware that, by promptly utilising the special mail service, American letters landed at Queenstown ex *Etruria* at 7.30 p.m. on Friday last were delivered in London and other large English centres sufficiently early on Saturday to allow ample time for reply by the outgoing steamer *Lucania* on Sunday ; and whether the terms offered for the continuation of this special service have been accepted by the various Companies interested ?

MR. A. MORLEY : I am aware of the facts mentioned in the first paragraph. I have also come to an understanding with the various companies concerned for the continuance of the special service up to the 31st December next.

CAPTAIN DONELAN : I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether his attention has been called to a letter in to-day's *Daily News* from a London merchant, stating that his American correspondence did not reach his office until after 1 o'clock on Saturday afternoon, though it was due at 10 a.m.

MR. A. MORLEY : No, Sir ; I have not seen the letter.

MR. SWEETMAN (Wicklow, E.) : I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether, in his late offer to continue for another four months the special postal service from Queenstown to London, he has offered the London and North Western Railway Company 3s. a mile for express trains, and has offered the Great Southern and Western Railway of Ireland only 2s. a mile for a similar service ; and, if he has done so, whether he is willing to inform the House of his reasons for offering less to a Railway Company in one portion of the United Kingdom than to a Railway Company in another portion of that Kingdom for similar services ?

MR. A. MORLEY : The answer to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. The reason why a payment of 2s. a mile was offered to the Great Southern and Western Railway Company was because that was the rate originally mentioned by the Company, and corresponded with the payment quoted by the Company for special trains in the opposite direction.

POST OFFICE ACCOMMODATION IN SOUTH CARNARVONSHIRE.

MR. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Arfon) : I beg to ask the Postmaster General what is the reason that no Post Office is established at Penmorfa, in South Carnarvonshire ; whether he is aware that the village itself contains 81 houses and a population of about 300, besides being the centre of a large and well-populated agricultural district, and also contains the parish church, Board school, and two chapels, and is a polling station ; whether the neighbouring village of Pentrefelin has a Post Office, although it is not one-half the size of Penmorfa ; and whether the inconvenience will be remedied ?

MR. A. MORLEY : This question was recently considered on the application of the hon. Member. The post to Penmorfa and the neighbourhood is little more than self-supporting, and an office could not be established at Penmorfa without actual loss to the Revenue. The number of letters left to be called for is very small, and Penmorfa is already supplied with a letter-box. A shopkeeper in the village has a licence for the sale of stamps. The village of Pentrefelin has a sub-Post Office. In the present circumstances, I cannot see my way to meet the request of the hon. Member.

CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES ABROAD

SIR G. BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale) : I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs when he can lay upon the Table the further instalment of Returns relating to the majorities necessary in Foreign Legislatures for the ratification of constitutional changes, promised on 18th May ?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir E. GREY, Northumberland, Berwick) : Replies have now been received from every country except Venezuela. They will be laid on the Table as soon as possible.

DEMURRAGE CLAIMS IN BRAZIL.

SIR G. BADEN-POWELL : I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Brazilian Government have yet made any reply to the representations of the British Government in regard to claims for demur-

rage, &c., on behalf of the *Fulwood* and other British vessels against the Brazilian Government?

SIR E. GREY: A reply has recently been received. The Central Railway Company of Brazil have expressed their willingness to count as lay days and to pay for the days spent by the *Alpheus Marshall* in quarantine, there being an express stipulation to that effect inserted in her charter-party. As there was no such stipulation in the charter-parties of the other vessels, the Company will not admit a corresponding obligation. This information has already been sent to the persons interested.

THE BENGAL TENANCY BILL.

SIR H. MAXWELL (Wigton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India, with reference to the statement that the survey of Behar is an outcome of the Bengal Tenancy Act of 1885, and any questions respecting the permanent settlement must be considered to have been determined by the passing of this latter Act, whether the official draft of the Bengal Tenancy Bill, circulated in the vernacular in 1883, contained any reference whatever to any provincial survey, or any reference to any survey at the expense of the landlords and tenants (even in local areas), except in cases where the landlords and tenants demanded it, or where there were existing disputes; whether the statement of objects and reasons for the Bengal Tenancy Bill, signed by Mr. Ilbert, contained any such reference; whether the Government, when pressed on the 12th March, 1885, to republish the Bengal Tenancy Bill in vernacular as amended in Committee, declined to do so, on the express ground that almost all alterations were excisions favourable to Zemindars, and not new clauses; and whether one of these alterations empowered the Government to impose heavy fresh taxation on the Zemindars to meet the costs of the Behar Cadastral Survey, as well as an annual tax of nearly 5 per cent. on the gross rents of their lands, to meet the costs of the maintenance of the record of right?

MR. G. RUSSELL: The original draft Bengal Tenancy Bill mentioned a record of rights, but did not contain any reference to a "Survey"; and, as has already been stated in my reply to the hon.

Sir G. Baden-Powell

Member for North Ayrshire on 7th August last, the two conditions quoted refer only to cases in which the Local Government act without the previous sanction of the Governor General in Council. The answer to the second paragraph of the question is, No; and to the third paragraph, Yes. The Bill as amended in Committee merged into one chapter: (a) "Settlement of rents," and (b) "Survey and record of rights," and extended to all three heads the powers of settling the proportion of cost to be paid respectively by the Zemindars and the ryots, which, in the original Bill, had been confined to the "Settlement of rents."

VACCINATION OF SCHOOL TEACHERS.

MR. HOPWOOD (Lancashire, S.E., Middleton): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education by what authority the Department declines to admit as pupil teachers young persons who have prepared themselves for the profession, and are in all respects fitted for appointment, on the ground that they are not vaccinated; is there any Statute making the above a condition precedent; can the Education Department exclude from the schools any child as scholar on the ground that it is not vaccinated; and is he aware that by law no one over the age of 14 years can be compelled to be vaccinated?

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (MR. ACLAND, York, W.R., Rotherham): There is no statutory authority in this matter; but it is laid down in the Code, which has been approved by Parliament, that candidates for admission as pupil teachers must produce a medical certificate in a form prescribed by the Department. If this form does not show that the candidate has been successfully vaccinated, it has been the practice of the Department for many years, under successive Governments, to refuse admission. I do not think it desirable to alter these arrangements pending the Report of the Royal Commission. It is the case that no one over 14 can be compelled to be vaccinated. The Education Department have no power to exclude any child from a school on any ground whatever.

THE WELSH EDUCATION SCHEME.

MR. KENYON (Denbigh): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he can state what provision has been made in the Welsh Education Schemes to enable boys and girls, more especially being children of poor parents, to pass from the primary to the new secondary schools, and thence to University Colleges and institutions of higher technical instruction; and how far the Address to Her Majesty, passed in the House of Lords, will affect any such provisions?

MR. ACLAND: The usual form of the Welsh County Schemes, under the Intermediate Education Act, provides for a system of county schools throughout the county to meet the wants of its various districts. There is a County Governing Body, through which the whole system is to some extent under central control, and there are Local Governing Bodies. Under the supervision of these bodies, very considerable sums are allotted in the various counties. First, for County Scholarships for scholars from public elementary schools; 2nd, for county bursaries to cover travelling and lodging, or other incidental expenses of poor scholars; 3rd, for the county exhibitions which the boys and girls who do well in the intermediate schools may hold at Universities and University Colleges. In the case of the Cardigan County Scheme, to which, I assume, the hon. Member refers, the Address passed in the House of Lords has swept away the whole of these provisions which are contained in Clauses 48 and 81 to 87, for carrying scholars from elementary and intermediate schools, for giving bursaries to poor scholars, and for taking the most successful scholars from the intermediate schools to University Colleges, and other places of higher instruction.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon): I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he received any authoritative demand for this scheme?

MR. ACLAND: I believe the whole of the provisions which were swept away by the House of Lords had the fullest consent of everybody concerned in the scheme.

AFFAIRS IN SOUTH AFRICA.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to a statement of Mr. F. R. Thompson, a gentleman who has been ten years in the Colonial Service and is well acquainted with South Africa, in which that gentleman states that Lo Bengula's Impis have massacred some 10,000 unoffending Mashonas within the past few years; and whether he will ask Mr. Rhodes to send an estimate of the number of Mashonas massacred by the Matabeles within the past 10 years?

MR. S. BUXTON: My attention has been called to the statement in question; but Her Majesty's Government do not see that any advantage is to be gained by communicating with Mr. Rhodes in reference thereto. The system of raiding the Mashonas appears to have become, to a great extent, a thing of the past even before the Mashona country was occupied by the Chartered Company; and Her Majesty's late Government, acquainted as they were with all the facts, entered into a Treaty of Peace and Amity with Lo Bengula, and maintained friendly relations with that Chief. Indeed, it may be said that the existence in past years of the system of raiding the Mashonas was the principal evidence which supported the doctrine that Lo Bengula ruled Mashonaland, and was, therefore, entitled to grant the land and minerals to the promoters of the Chartered Company. The Company were granted this Charter as a commercial and administrative Body, and not with a view to institute crusades against the Matabele, as seems to be suggested in the question.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: There is no such suggestion in the question. Am I to understand, from the answer given by the hon. Gentleman, that he does not deny the statement in the question that in the past few years 10,000 of these unfortunate Mashonas have been massacred?

MR. S. BUXTON: I do not deny that the Mashonas have been raided; but I say that these raids have for years come to an end, and that subsequent to them the late Government entered into this Treaty with Lo Bengula.

WORMWOOD SCRUBS PRISON.

MR. MACDONALD (Tower Hamlets, Bow): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that political agents, acting on behalf of the Conservative Party, have been permitted to attend at the Wormwood Scrubs Prison, that on July 4 two agents occupied one of the waiting rooms within the precincts of the prison, and that various officials were requested to attend the said agents and explain their political opinions, their names being marked accordingly; whether these arrangements were made with the knowledge and consent of the Governor of the prison, and, if not, by whom they were made and who was responsible; and whether he will cause full inquiry to be made into the whole matter without delay, so that the facts may be laid before the Revising Barrister, who will shortly be sitting for that district?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. ASQUITH, Fife, E.): I am informed by the Deputy Governor in charge that two agents of the Conservative Association applied in June last to be allowed to see the officers of the prison with a view to completing the register. They were informed that they could only see those officers who wished to have their names registered, and that if they attended at the ordinary waiting room, which is outside the inner gate of the prison, the officers might be informed they were there. They came on July 4, the officers were informed, and were told that anyone who wished to see them could do so. No officers were requested to attend—their attendance was purely voluntary. These arrangements were made with the knowledge and consent of the Governor. There does not appear to me to be need for further inquiry, nor is the matter one of which the Revising Barrister could take cognisance. But I think that the practice of allowing the agents of either political Party to visit the prison in this way is open to objections, and it will not be permitted in future. If the agents wish to see the officers they must visit them in their houses or quarters.

THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

MR. KEARLEY (Devonport): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what is the customary or regulation period of leave allowed annually to Admirals holding the appointment of Admiral of the Port at Devonport and other naval centres; and whether, during the recent tenure of this post, His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh conformed to the Service Regulations in this respect; and, if not, what was his total absence on leave or otherwise each of the three years he held the appointment, and also that of his predecessor in the office?

*SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: The amount of leave granted to the Commander-in-Chief at the Home Ports is at the discretion of the Admiralty. It is governed first by the exigencies of the Service, and, secondly, by the reasonable requirements of the officers. His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh was subject to, and complied with, the Regulations with regard to leave while holding the appointment of Commander-in-Chief at Devonport.

MR. KEARLEY: I would like to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he can give me specific details as to the amount of leave that the Duke has had year by year during the three years that he has held his appointment?

*SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: If hon. Members will read the last paragraph of my hon. Friend's question they will notice that he himself recognises that if the Commander-in-Chief conforms to the Service Regulations no further question arises.

MR. KEARLEY: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered my question. I ask him can he state specifically whether His Royal Highness, while holding this command, has not had, on an average, six months' leave every year?

*SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: Certainly not; and for such absence on leave as the Duke enjoyed the Admiralty are responsible, and they are prepared to bear that responsibility.

MR. A. C. MORTON: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the Regulations allowed of all these absences; and, if they did, what is the good of having an officer appointed at all?

***SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH :** I do not know what my hon. Friend means by referring to "all these absences." The Duke of Edinburgh was most assiduous in the performance of his duties.

MR. KEARLEY : Am I to understand that the right hon. Gentleman objects to giving the total absence year by year of His Royal Highness whilst holding this command?

***SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH :** If my hon. Friend desires further information on the subject he will put a question upon the Paper.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) : I desire to ask whether it is usual to publish the absences of other commanding officers; and whether there is any reason why there should be a special inquisitorial inquiry about the Duke of Edinburgh's absences?

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (King's Lynn) : I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it is not a fact that the Duke of Edinburgh, having now become a Foreign Prince, has ceased to belong to the British Navy?

***SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH :** A similar question has been put upon the Paper by the hon. Member for Peterborough, and the hon. Member has very kindly postponed it at my request. In reference to the other question, it is unusual to publish the number of days' leave of absence of the officers in command. If the hon. Member will put a question upon the Paper I will consider whether an answer can be given to it.

MR. KEARLEY : I will put a question upon the Paper on the subject.

THE GRAND JUNCTION WATERWORKS.

MR. WOOTTON ISAACSON : I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been drawn to a notice issued by the Grand Junction Waterworks Company to alter and adopt, at a considerable expense to householders, the existing service, so as to render it suitable for a constant supply; and whether the Government will now bring in a Bill to compel Water Companies to charge by measurement the water used in all houses over £100 per annum?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. H. H. FOWLER, Wolverhampton, E.) : I am aware that the Grand Junction Water Company have issued notices of their in-

tention to give in a certain area a constant supply of water and require the owners and occupiers of premises in that area to provide the necessary fittings. This is only an extension by this Company of the system which has been very generally adopted by the London Water Companies—according to the latest Returns, 553,000 houses, or about 70 per cent. of the whole number supplied by the Water Companies, being on constant supply. A proposal that houses over £100 per annum should be relieved from the present mode of assessment to water rates is not one that I could recommend.

MR. WOOTTON ISAACSON : Is not the right hon. Gentleman aware that the inhabitants of houses of over £100 a year rent are frequently absent for several months of the year, and consequently consume no water during such periods?

MR. H. H. FOWLER : The charge for water supply is a statutory charge, and is based, not upon the amount of water consumed, but upon the rateable value of the houses. This mode of assessment was arrived at in the interest of the working classes, and is adopted generally throughout the country.

INSANITARY DRAINS AT WINDSOR BARRACKS.

SIR W. HART DYKE (Kent, Dartford) : I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if it is true that the insanitary condition of the drains at Windsor Cavalry Barracks has been reported several times during the last two years; whether, since December last, three very strong Reports condemning the whole system of drainage have been presented by War Office officials; whether the sum so urgently demanded to put the barracks in a secure sanitary condition has been struck out of the Estimates for 1893-4; whether, during the last few weeks, an expert from the War Office has been sent down who has ordered small temporary repairs, leaving untouched the deeper drainage, the real seat of the mischief; and whether, in spite of these Reports, and the urgent representations of the medical officer in charge, it is intended to allow the regiment now quartered in these barracks to remain on a spot so condemned as dangerous for at least seven months

longer, before any radical alterations are made?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling, &c.): Several Reports have been received on the drainage of the Cavalry Barracks at Windsor. The first, from the General Officer commanding, complaining of the system, was received in December, 1892. Two others were received from him on July 26 and August 23, 1893. When the Estimates were considered the first Report of the General Officer commanding of December 8 only had been received. Two have been received from the War Office Sanitary Inspector, one dated August 1 and the other August 29. The system of drainage appears to be old-fashioned and bad in principle, but the health of the troops has not in any way suffered. The Sanitary Inspector, who in his inspection used the smoke test, states—

"I found no direct escape of gas from the drains into the building, but the bad smells are sufficiently accounted for by the proximity of filthy latrines and numerous escapes of lighting gas within the building. It is probably unnecessary to explain that small escapes of gas, undetectable by a light, are often the cause of smells closely resembling those from drains. In this case, from the evidence of persons living in the building, I am convinced that many of the complaints have been due to the escape of gas which occurs in several parts of the building."

After recommending certain alterations and repairs, which are now being effected, he states that he cannot help thinking that hitherto the smells have been rather offensive than dangerous, and that when the above-mentioned alterations have been made the air of the officers' house will cease to be offensive, and that no special steps need to be taken till the drainage comes to be reconstructed in due course. The plan of reconstruction of the drainage system is being considered, and the question of the occupation of the barracks is under the consideration of the military and medical authorities.

SIR W. HART DYKE: This is a matter involving life and death, and therefore I hope the right hon. Gentleman will excuse me if I appear to be pertinacious. It is in the officers' quarters that the old and miserable drains terminate in a cesspool. Do the Government propose to put an end to the danger that

Sir W. Hart Dyke

arises from this system of drainage, or to allow it to continue?

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The whole system of drainage at the barracks in question is under consideration. The evil smells complained of are only perceived in the officers' quarters, and what can be done to put an end to them will be done at once.

TROOPS IN SOUTH AFRICA.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what Imperial military forces are now available in South Africa for the protection of British colonists in Mashonaland?

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The troops now in South Africa number about 3,300 men. Whether these may be held to be available for the purpose of the hon. Gentleman is a question upon which opinions may differ.

THE GUARDS AND EGYPT.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether a battalion of the Guards is to be ordered for service in Egypt this Autumn?

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It was contemplated to relieve one of the Line battalions in Egypt by a battalion of Guards, but that proposal will not be given effect to during this season.

THE MAXIM GUN.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War how many black powder .303 cartridges can be fired from the Maxim machine gun before the barrel becomes unfit for accurate shooting?

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No experiments have been carried out which would enable me to give the hon. Gentleman the information he desires.

GUNNERS' QUARTERS AT SHOEBURY-NESS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the huts at Shoeburyness, in which 100 gunners with their families are quartered, were constructed during the Crimean War, and are in such a condition as to be unfit for habitation; and whether steps will be taken to provide

proper accommodation for the gunners and their families?

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN : Some of the huts at Shoeburyness, containing accommodation for 34 unmarried and 24 married soldiers and their families, were constructed about the time of the Crimean War. Although old, they can hardly be said to be unfit for habitation. It is desired to get rid of all such huts as soon as possible, and this is gradually being done.

MR. HANBURY (Preston) : This is the second question which has been asked in regard to the insanitary condition of military accommodation, and the Army Reports are full of such statements. What is the reason why these things are not attended to at once. I must say this neglect is most unfortunate?

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN : There has been no neglect. The huts are not insanitary. They are old and worn out, and the sooner they are replaced by new ones the better it will be.

THE IRISH POST OFFICE UNDER HOME RULE.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT : I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what is the present value of, or what sums have been expended upon, the property of the Post Office in Ireland, which will under the Government of Ireland Bill be handed over without repayment to the new Irish Government?

SIR W. HARCOURT : If the hon. Member will procure a copy of the Bill he will find that there has been no such transfer, that the property remains in the hands of the Imperial Post Office, and that no question of repayment will arise.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT : The Chancellor of the Exchequer has perverted my question. I asked for the value of such Government property as will be transferred.

SIR W. HARCOURT : I do not understand how it will be transferred when the Bill does not transfer it. It will be in the hands of the Imperial Government.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT : Ultimately?

SIR W. HARCOURT : Yes, ultimately. I have already stated that the way for the hon. Gentleman to obtain an answer is to obtain a copy of the Bill.

MR. GOSCHEN : But may we not take it that the policy of the Government is to hand over the Post Office to the Irish Government, and that that will be the ultimate result of the passing of the Bill?

SIR W. HARCOURT : I am afraid that I can only reply that my right hon. Friend should also procure a copy of the Bill.

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston) : Does the right hon. Gentleman mean to assert that there is no possibility, under the powers of the Bill, that the Post Office may be transferred to the Irish Government? What kind of property is there power to transfer?

SIR W. HARCOURT : Well, I must distribute some copies of the Bill amongst the gentlemen opposite. It has been before them 82 days. They should know what it contains.

MR. TOMLINSON : Yes, but it has been altered.

DEER FOREST COMMISSION.

MR. WEIR : I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that Mr. Gordon, land valuator, one of the Deer Forest Commissioners now engaged in Caithness, has for a number of years acted as valuator for many of the landlords in that county; and if he will inquire into the circumstances of the case?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Sir G. TREVELYAN, Glasgow, Bridgeton) : Mr. Gordon is a land surveyor and valuator who has been long established in general practice, and as such has, no doubt, been employed by the owners of land. He was placed on the Commission on account of his professional qualifications, which have proved to be of great value in carrying out the work. As it is a usual custom in the case of professional men who serve on Commissions where their professional knowledge is made use of, the Treasury has granted Mr. Gordon professional remuneration.

MR. WEIR : I beg to ask whether the right hon. Gentleman is aware that, in consequence of Mr. Gordon having

acted for so many years in the interests of the landlords, the Highland people have lost all confidence in him?

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it is a fact that a communication was received from the Scotch Office in London by the Commission stating that no exceptional payment would be made to Mr. Gordon, and whether he is aware that the fact of Mr. Gordon receiving payment apart from the other Commissioners has caused very grave dissatisfaction, and, in fact, has led to suspension of the work of the Commission?

MR. WHITELAW (Stockport): I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it is not a fact that the majority of the Members of the Deer Forest Commission are notorious advocates of the programme of the Highland Land League?

MR. WEIR: In reference to the question, may I ask whether the majority of the Members of the Commission are not Tories and landlords' representatives?

SIR G. TREVELYAN: Whatever be the political opinions or the positions in life of the Members of the Commission, I believe it to be as good a Commission as could have been constituted, and it has done its work most thoroughly. With regard to the question of the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy, I should be glad if he could give notice of it. I hope he will put it down, after having asked it now.

NAVIGATION OF LOCH BROOM.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, having regard to the fact that the Treasury Committee of 1891 on Railways in the North-West of Scotland, consisting of Major General Hutchinson, R.E., C.B., Rear Admiral Sir G. S. Nares, K.C.B., and Henry Tennant, Esq., reported Loch Broom, Ross-shire, to be encumbered with islets and rocks, and that this Report has been repeatedly quoted in this House as a reason for refusing the promised grant in aid of the Garve and Ullapool Railway extension scheme, while the Admiralty charts show no islets or rocks in the course of vessels sailing to and from Ullapool, and the sailing directions, as well as the Admiralty officials, state that Loch Broom is

Mr. Weir

remarkably free from rocks and islets, a Committee of careful and competent persons will be appointed to inquire into the accuracy of the Report referred to?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I do not think the Government could find a Committee of more careful and competent persons than that which has already reported.

*MR. WEIR: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the Secretary to the Admiralty has distinctly stated that Loch Broom is not encumbered with islets and rocks, while the Report of the Committee, to which the right hon. Gentleman refers, distinctly states that Loch Broom is encumbered with islands and rocks, and the Admiralty charts show no islets or rocks in the course of vessels sailing to and from Ullapool? May I hope the right hon. Gentleman will take some steps to set the matter right?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I think Sir George Nares is a person who could form an opinion on the subject better than I or the hon. Member.

*MR. WEIR: Then am I to understand that the Secretary to the Admiralty is incompetent to give an accurate opinion, and that the Admiralty charts are inaccurate?

MR. WHITELAW: Does the right hon. Gentleman not know from his own experience that there are no islands or rocks to interfere with the navigation of Loch Broom, and also that, of the three gentlemen who formed the Committee, not one of them went near Loch Broom in order to find out the state of matters for themselves?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I am loth to speak of my personal experience of the navigation of Loch Broom, but I should certainly say there were a good many islands at the mouth of Loch Broom.

*SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: I may be allowed to say that my answer, to which my hon. Friend has referred, was in reference to rocks interfering with navigation.

*MR. WEIR: But the Admiralty charts show no rocks in the course of vessels.

IRISH SUNDAY CLOSING.

SIR T. LEA (Londonderry, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in

view of his statement to a deputation last Thursday that the present position of the Irish Sunday Closing question is a scandal to Parliament, and that the Bill dealing with the question has come down from the House of Lords, the Government will give the necessary time to complete the measure in this House?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. J. MORLEY, Newcastle-upon-Tyne): It is quite true that I borrowed the language of my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister, and also of the Leader of the Opposition, in describing the state of this particular measure as a scandal, and that, I think, is my view. But my hon. Friend knows as well as I do the great difficulties which we are under in the way of finding time, and he must have heard yesterday the declaration that the Government cannot undertake to find facilities for passing or furthering any private legislation. I was reminded the other day of the circumstances that in 1878, when the Bill concerned became law, it was passed almost as late as the period at which we have now arrived, because Sir Stafford Northcote, the Leader of the House, gave facilities for it. I find these facilities were effective because there was a practical concordat or agreement between the parties concerned in the Bill, and I simply throw out this hint to gentlemen sitting in the quarter of the House and elsewhere, whether some sort of agreement could not be come to now upon one or two of the outstanding details of the measure.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): I ask whether the small minority who were opposed to that Bill did not resist it to the close, and that there was no compromise?

MR. J. MORLEY: If that is so I was misinformed, but I was told on authority almost as good as the hon. Member's own. If there is no chance of any such arrangement now I am afraid the difficulty will be very serious.

SIR T. LEA: I desire to ask the right hon. Gentleman, if there is no chance of passing the Bill this Session, will he consent to place it on the same level as another measure—the Evicted Tenants Bill—referred to yesterday, and put it down as a Government measure for next Session.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): I desire to know, Sir, if the Chief Secretary, when he talks of the scandal to Parliament, means that it is a scandal to the present Government for not finding time for the Bill.

MR. J. MORLEY: I do not think that is a question I ought to answer. The language which I quoted was used by the Leader of the Opposition and by the Prime Minister from time to time during the period of years during which this Act has been constantly renewed instead of being made a statutory enactment. In answer to my hon. Friend the Member for South Derry, I cannot undertake to put it on the same footing as the other measure mentioned without consideration, but, as I assured him the other day, the Government are most anxious to pass this Bill, and the course they may take next Session in respect to it will have consideration if nothing is done this Session by gentlemen themselves.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: With respect to the necessity for the promoters of the Bill to come to terms, I would like to ask whether the promoters, first of all, did not consent to the exemption of the five exempted cities from the Bill in order to pass it, and whether they did not still consent to three cities being exempted from the measure in order to facilitate its passage?

SIR T. LEA: The Bill has been qualified, and is now a practical compromise.

MR. J. MORLEY: These are argumentative questions, and we cannot discuss a matter of this kind in questions and answers across the floor of the House.

MR. SEXTON (Kerry, N.): In reference to a suggestion, of which I am not aware, that there has been a practical compromise, I wish to ask whether the right hon. Gentleman is aware that many of the Irish Members are strongly of opinion that this is a matter which should be reserved for the Irish Parliament?

MR. J. MORLEY: I am aware that is so, but I may say that in my own view it would not be undesirable to get the measure passed even now if we could find time.

SIAM.

SIR R. TEMPLE asked whether Her Majesty's Government would object to any Commercial Treaties being concluded by Siam with any Foreign Power, which infringed the most-favoured-nation privileges possessed by England under existing Treaties?

*SIR E. GREY said that, according to the information at their disposal, there was no intention of infringing the provisions of our Treaty with Siam. That being so, he had nothing to add to the statement which he made to the House on the previous day, and that which was made by the Secretary of State in another place.

HOME RULE BILL.

*MR. HOZIER asked when the House would be called upon to consider the Lords' Amendments to the Home Rule Bill?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby) said, he supposed the hon. Member had some authority for stating that the House of Lords were about to amend the Home Rule Bill?

*MR. HOZIER: Do the Government wish the Bill to pass without amendment in its present unworkable condition?

[No answer was given.]

EVICTED TENANTS.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL asked the Chief Secretary for Ireland whether, in view of the sacrifice of the Evicted Tenants' Bill for another year, the Government were willing to consider the re-enactment of the 13th section of the Land Purchase Act, under which tenants were reinstated under perfectly fair terms?

MR. J. MORLEY said, he could not answer that question offhand. If the hon. Member could give him an assurance that hon. Gentlemen opposite would approve of the re-enactment of the clause, the matter might be considered.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, he supposed that hon. Gentlemen opposite would not object, because they had approved of the provision.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—COMMITTEE.

SUPPLY—considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE
DEPARTMENTS, 1893-4.

CLASS I.

1. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £142,176, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1894, for the Erection, Repairs, and Maintenance of Public Buildings in Ireland, for the Maintenance of certain Parks and Public Works, and for Drainage Works on the Rivers Shannon and Suck."

*MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) moved to reduce the sum by £500, arguing that, as the Government had forced the Home Rule Bill through the House, and thereby separated the financial arrangements between the two countries, it was unfair to call upon the taxpayers of Great Britain to pay for the acquisition of new sites and for the erection of new buildings in Ireland necessary to the government of that country. The matters referring to the Coastguard and Inland Revenue might be left, but his objection certainly applied to the erection of new Constabulary barracks and other buildings. The cost of this new work should be left to the Irish people under the new Parliament, and if the Government had had the strength of their convictions they would have taken that course. It was very unfair that his constituents should be taxed in this regard; and although he acknowledged that they must pay for the present what was necessary to maintain the buildings, it was not reasonable that they should be called upon to supply new sites and buildings for the purpose of carrying on this work.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A, Purchase of Sites and Buildings, be reduced by £500."—(Mr. Bartley.)

*THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Sir J. T. HIBBERT, Oldham), who was indistinctly heard, was understood to say that the services referred to would remain under Imperial control. He hoped the hon. Member would be satisfied with having made his protest, and he was obliged to him for not having occupied much time.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.) urged that it was the custom of every Government to ask for more money for England than was expended there. In the last Appropriation Account, £16,000 was saved in respect of this Vote, and £8,000 was expended.

THE CHAIRMAN pointed out that the whole Vote could not now be discussed.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said, that the hon. Member who moved the Amendment had had strong support in his arguments from the Member for North Kerry (Mr. Sexton), who had urged that certain things in which the Irish Members were interested ought to be left for the consideration of the Home Rule Parliament. That was not his own position. He would like to know why it was necessary to provide new Constabulary barracks at Rathfarnham, County Dublin, in respect of which he saw an item of £250, as the present one was a very substantial building?

MR. GOSCHEN (St. George's, Hanover Square) said, he must protest against the statement of the hon. and gallant Member as to the practice of the British Government in regard to Irish Estimates. The hon. Member's statements were not borne out by the figures which the Government had laid on the Table. While he admitted that the expenditure on Irish objects must now be more carefully watched than hitherto in view of the contingency of the success of the Government in their Home Rule policy, he would be most unwilling to see Ireland treated in the meantime in any churlish spirit and without due consideration being given to her just claims. He would, therefore, advise his hon. Friend to be content with the protest he had made, and not to take a Division upon his Amendment.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT, in reply to the hon. Member for South Tyrone, said that the ground was not required for a new Constabulary barracks, but merely to make the present one more secure and complete. As to the Estimates for Ireland for this year, he had kept them down as much as possible, so as not to have any surplus in respect of particular items of expenditure; but so much depended upon the state of the labour market and other circumstances that it was impossible to make an estimate of the exact sum required.

MR. JACKSON (Leeds, N.) said, with regard to the item for £700 for a site for the Inland Revenue, he presumed it was for the purchase of some existing premises, and that some of the money would be spent upon alterations?

SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, that was so, and that there would be a considerable saving when the alterations were made.

COLONEL NOLAN said, that the late Chancellor of the Exchequer could not act in an impartial spirit between the English and the Irish taxpayer. He naturally worked for his own side. The Irish people considered that both Parties, Conservative and Liberal, tried to rob them in different ways.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is not now discussing the item before the Committee.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) remarked that, after having severed as far as it could by the Home Rule Bill its connection with Ireland, the House was asked to go on pouring capital into Ireland. It was proposed to spend money in acquiring Inland Revenue premises at Rathmines. In six years, if the Home Rule Bill passed, the House would have nothing to do with Inland Revenue in Ireland, and it was perfectly ridiculous to ask the House to make capital expenditure on the purchase of premises for which, after a few years, it would have no use whatever. If the House was to give up certain duties in Ireland it ought not to be called upon to pay anything in the form of capital expenditure on the establishments required to levy the duties. If the Government needed fresh premises they could hire a house.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): I entirely agree with the doctrine laid down by the ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen), that it becomes our duty as British Representatives to look with the greatest possible care at all new expenditure in Ireland, and all the more because we now have it on the authority of the Government that the principle on which repatriation of expenditure between Ireland and Great Britain is to be carried out is that Ireland should pay what it pays now. On that basis everything we spend in Ireland is capitalised for the benefit of Ireland and credited to Ireland. If we are now the gainers we shall not only now have to pay for our present generosity,

but shall have to pay permanently. We have, therefore, a double interest in seeing that economy is enforced in regard to new expenditure. I agree with those who have spoken that we need not take account of such expenditure as the increase for the Coastguard, but, as regards the other expenditure, Members opposite who have called attention to it have been perfectly within their rights. I meant to ask my hon. Friend the Chief Secretary what will become of these valuable buildings which are being kept up at our expense in Ireland after we have done with them? I really was never able, after the most careful study of the Home Rule Bill, to find out what was the intention in regard to this matter. Take the Vote with which we are dealing. Who will get the £950 after the Inland Revenue has been placed in the hands of the Irish people? I really think that is a question which has a very important bearing on this Vote. Of course, if the Chief Secretary can assure us that our property in all these buildings will remain intact after the Bill has passed, and that we shall be able to make the best bargain we can with the Irish Government, or to sell in the open market, there will be some reason why we should pass over the present demand. I should like to know, however, what will be the position of these buildings after we have paid for them if the Home Rule Bill becomes law?

MR. J. MORLEY: As to the principle which my right hon. Friend (Mr. J. Chamberlain) and the late Chancellor of the Exchequer laid down—namely, that the Committee ought to scrutinise Irish Votes with extra care in view of the possible changes in Ireland, I do not complain of that principle. But, of course, my right hon. Friends will concede that Ireland must be kept going, and these three items are thought to be desirable in the interests of Ireland as the Administration now subsists. In answer to my right hon. Friend's question, I would remind him at the end of six years, and not till then, there is to be a complete review of the financial arrangements and relations between Great Britain and Ireland, and that will be the time at which the value of these buildings will have to be considered. The precise terms on which they will be handed over to the Irish Government

Mr. J. Chamberlain

will be a most important matter for consideration.

MR. GOSCHEN: Will that apply to Post Office buildings?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I must point out that we have now reached a very serious question, because it is evident that there has been a very important *causus omissus* in the Home Rule Bill. The Post Office expenditure, I suppose, is to be reviewed at the end of six years as well as all the others, but I would take the case of the barracks. That, at all events, is a very clear case. At the end of six years the intention of the Government is that we should no longer have any interest in the Constabulary, which would, as soon as possible, be disestablished. What, then, is to become of these enormous barracks and buildings which have been erected at the expense of the United Kingdom? Are they to go to the Irish Government without any return to us? My right hon. Friend says that the matter ought to be considered and settled at the end of six years; but have not the Government made up their minds on the point already? This is another provisional point in the Bill. I very much regret that we had not an opportunity of discussing it when we had the Bill before us; but that is not owing to any fault of ours. I think, under the circumstances, that the right hon. Gentleman opposite will reconsider the advice he gave to the hon. Member for North Islington (Mr. Bartley). I think we ought to vote against every item of expenditure proposed by the Government on buildings in Ireland, inasmuch as the Government have not the least idea what is to become of these buildings.

MR. J. MORLEY: I do not know whether it is in Order, Mr. Mellor, for Gentlemen to rediscuss the Home Rule Bill. [*Opposition cries of "No!"*] If so, I conceive that the whole financial arrangement will be open to rediscussion. I have no objection whatever; and if the 82 days already devoted to the Bill swell out to 100 or 150 days I cannot help it. Only I should like to understand, Sir, whether it is in Order, because, if so, we must provide ourselves with the requisite Papers and materials.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): On the point of Order, I submit that we

are not trying to discuss the financial relations.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! It is perfectly plain that it is not in Order to discuss the Financial Clauses of the Home Rule Bill in this Committee. Of course, the question may be raised whether this is a permanent or a temporary improvement, but it would be out of Order to go into the Home Rule Bill.

MR. GOSCHEN: On the point of Order, Mr. Mellor, should we be entitled to argue that certain expenditure would be desirable if it were in the nature of capital expenditure, and that such expenditure would be unfair to this country? We are now on Estimates involving, to a certain extent, capital expenditure in Ireland. We hope we may be allowed to discuss that from the new point of view, as it is possible that capital expenditure will now have to be treated in a totally different manner from the capital expenditure hitherto incurred. I quite agree that we cannot discuss the financial relations between the two countries—that is to say, as to whether Ireland or England pays too much; but I trust that we may be allowed to take into consideration the different state of things that may arise under the Home Rule Bill.

MR. J. MORLEY: On the principle laid down by my right hon. Friend opposite, there is no reason why we should not on all Votes discuss all imaginary or possible contingencies. I must remind my right hon. Friend that the Bill has not yet passed into law. If the Home Rule Bill had become the Home Rule Act, I could understand the position; but I do not think that on a merely hypothetical contingency it is possible to bring up every item of expenditure. I cannot see how you are going to draw a distinction between capital expenditure and other expenditure, and I am bound to say I must protest against the course that is being followed.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (Manchester, E.): I do not quite understand the line taken up by the Chief Secretary. He admits, of course, that there is a contingency which it is justifiable to contemplate when discussing the Estimates, and that there are other contingencies so absolutely remote, so shadowy, so outside the purview of any practical statesman, that it would be a mere waste of time

for us to take them into account when we are dealing with the Estimates. The point we have to determine now is one which will be closely affected by the financial arrangement to be established by the Home Rule Bill. The right hon. Gentleman did not show his usual apprehension when he said he could draw no distinction between capital and ordinary expenditure. It is evident that such a distinction is absolutely vital. The question of the amount we are to give to Ireland for purposes of the expenditure within the year is naturally outside any Home Rule proposal, and the discussion would be irrelevant if annual items only were involved. But when we come to capital expenditure of large amount, when we are taking out of the Imperial Treasury relatively large sums, and spending them in Ireland, it becomes important to know whether, if Home Rule passes, these sums are to be handed over to the new Irish Government, and also whether there is any probability of the Home Rule Bill passing? Are the Government going to take up the position that, in spite of the vote of last Friday night, the chances of Home Rule are so remote that no sane politician would take them into account? If they declare that this is their view, I should be inclined to agree with them, and I should vote with them in the coming Division. If, however, on the other hand, they take the view that Home Rule is a matter which cannot be long deferred, I say it is absolutely incumbent on us to see that we do not, by rashly voting money now, hand over large capital sums, which will ultimately have to be dealt with, not by the Imperial Parliament, but by the Home Rule Parliament.

MR. J. MORLEY: I may inform the right hon. Gentleman that whilst he was absent his right hon. Colleague advised the Mover of the Amendment to be content with making a protest, and not to take a Division.

MR. BARTLEY said, that since that advice was given the circumstances had changed by the information which had been given to the Committee, and he must reserve to himself the right to divide if he thought proper to do so.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, a very simple question had been put, and the whole Treasury Bench had been puzzled

by it; and because they could not answer it on the spot they desired to raise a point of Order. The Committee was asked to vote £950 for capital expenditure on the Revenue Office at Kilkenny. In the event of the Home Rule Bill coming into operation, he wished to know whose property the freehold would be when the arrangement was made?

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member cannot go into the Home Rule Bill on these items. Of course, I cannot say that it is out of Order for an hon. Member to say—"I do not vote for this, because many years hence, or a few years hence, the building may cease to be the property of the country," but that is not the question we are now on. I wish to point out to the Committee that it is absolutely necessary to keep to the proper context of these items.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: On the point of Order, Sir, I would remind you of a case which arose last year, or the year before. A very vigorous attack was made by the then Opposition on certain proposed capital expenditure upon buildings required for the British Resident at Cairo, the whole basis of the attack being that the British occupation in Cairo was to be of a temporary character, and that, therefore, capital expenditure should not be indulged in.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. H. H. FOWLER, Wolverhampton, E.): I must suggest to the right hon. Gentleman that his memory is not quite accurate. I took part in the Debate to which he refers, and the question was not respecting the temporary occupation of Egypt, but with regard to the erection of a permanent Embassy at Berlin. It was pointed out that we should be put to enormous cost if we erected a permanent building at Berlin, and that it would be cheaper to hire houses for Ambassadors than to erect them. The discussion had nothing to do with the temporary occupation of Egypt.

MR. GOSCHEN: Frequently, and not on one occasion only, the expenditure in Egypt has been discussed from a hypothetical point of view. The Estimates have constantly been argued with reference to the future policy of the Government.

***THE CHAIRMAN:** I was not present during the discussion which has been

Mr. T. W. Russell

referred to between that case and the present. In the present case, we must regard Ireland as it is. It is impossible to go into the question of the possible passage of a Bill which may never pass the House of Lords. That would be introducing into this discussion an element which would raise an enormous question, and one of extreme difficulty, and altogether foreign to the nature of our proceedings.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, the Committee had no right to vote this £950 unless Members knew what was to become of it. They had no right to sit round the House, like Mr. Jabez Balfour's Directors, and take for granted everything that was said. He asked the Chief Secretary for Ireland to whom the buildings would belong if the money was voted?

***MR. GIBSON BOWLES** said, he thought the Act furnished a reply to the hon. Member's question. By Section 35—

***THE CHAIRMAN:** What Act?

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I mean the Home Rule Bill.

***THE CHAIRMAN:** That is clearly out of Order.

***MR. GIBSON BOWLES** contended that Members were strictly within their right in discussing the fate of that portion of the Vote which related to future years—namely, the capital portion. Members were naturally anxious to know what was to become of the freehold premises after the Home Rule Bill had passed. The Government asked them to hand over an enormous sum as a bribe to gentlemen below the Gangway (the Irish Members).

THE CHAIRMAN: I have already ruled that this is out of Order.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES asked whether he was not in Order in giving his reasons for his objections?

***THE CHAIRMAN:** The hon. Member is entitled to give his reasons; but I have already ruled that he cannot go into the details of the Home Rule Bill.

***MR. GIBSON BOWLES** said, his reasons were plain. There was part of this Vote which they never enjoyed the benefit of, and they had a right to oppose it. The Government had taken power to hand over these buildings to others, and he said they on that side were not willing that their capital should be

invested for the purpose of having the buildings handed over afterwards to gentlemen below the Gangway. [*Cries of "Order!"*] He did not for a moment suppose that these hon. Gentlemen would put public money into their private pockets; they all knew that they were always ready to do their duty—they were ready to get as much money as possible; but they on their side had a duty to perform to their constituents, and if they passed this Vote without a Division it would form a precedent that they were willing, notwithstanding altered circumstances, to provide for the needs of Ireland for all time.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.) said, they (the Irish Members) had voted for British expenditure which was necessary, and they were ready to vote against an expenditure that might be considered unreasonable. In this case the sum was small; the need was, he understood, somewhat urgent, and he thought hon. Members might allow the Vote to pass.

MR. HENEAGE (Great Grimsby) said, they were asked by this Vote to lay down a precedent. They had to remember that they were not to deal with Ireland as in the past. The late Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) laid down a good rule with regard to voting money for current expenditure; but when they came to vote it as capital, they should look upon it in a different light. The Chief Secretary (Mr. J. Morley) said he could not see the difference between money for current expenditure and capital expenditure. Surely that was the case of the bankrupt—the man who could not make out the difference between what was current expenditure and what was capital, and who, consequently, went to the wall. That should be considered here, and he would like to know from the Chief Secretary whether this rule was to apply to other cases as well as that which was before them? He did not want to discuss the matter as if they were discussing the Home Rule Bill; but he hoped this was not to be regarded as a precedent.

MR. JACKSON (Leeds, N.) said, he hoped the Secretary to the Treasury would get them out of the difficulty, because the case before the Committee was one which, it seemed to him, emphasised the principle of the discussion that had taken place. He understood the

Secretary to the Treasury to say that the Vote was for the alteration of premises occupied by the Inland Revenue officials at Kilkenny, and rented by them. Why should they not strike out the £500 which, as he understood, was not necessary for keeping the concern going? In view of possible contingencies, this appeared to him to be unnecessary capital expenditure, and such expenditure should be avoided as far as possible. No one would fail in agreeing with him that as the amount of expenditure increased the balance left was so much less. He had no desire to add to the difficulty of the position in these particular matters, but he was bound to say this was a matter of very great importance, and he did feel that this was hardly a time at which to enter upon the purchase of premises for the purposes of the Government. That was the question raised in this case.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, the question was one of providing proper premises for the officers of Inland Revenue at this place. The present premises were in an insanitary condition, and must be given up, and other premises taken. They were getting these premises at a ground rent of £28 on condition that £700 should be spent in alterations.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Is that purchase money?

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT was understood to say that was included. The buildings would require alterations to meet the necessities of the men. But so far as concerned the premises in which the men worked, it was quite impossible they could remain there; the men must leave. The Committee would see, therefore, that there were special circumstances in this case, and he did not think it was a time at which they were entitled to enter into the general question raised by the Home Rule Bill.

MR. HANBURY said, he would like to ask if they were going to spend this money, or a large portion of it, on a rented house?

SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, the house was subject to a ground rent of £28.

SIR T. LEA said, he was not quite sure that he and his friends could take the same view as Members opposite on this matter. They were going to give Home Rule to Ireland. [*Cries of "Order!"*]

THE CHAIRMAN : Order, order ! I have already stated that hon. Members cannot go into the Home Rule Question.

SIR T. LEA said, he bowed to the ruling of the Chair. He merely wished to say that his constituents were anxious to get any advantage they could from this House. They were not anxious to be deprived of its protection, and it was his duty to object to any step that tended to an alteration in the present system of control in these matters.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS (Birmingham, Bordesley) said, what the hon. Baronet had just said might be good enough from the point of view of Irish Members. But the question the Government had been asked was a very simple one, and they ought not to remain in doubt upon it. It was a question involving only a comparatively small sum ; but supposing they should have a question involving £2,000,000 ? It seemed to him that the precedent was a serious matter, and he was inclined to think that, as the Secretary to the Treasury had said as much as he could about the matter, the Chief Secretary should now give them a reply which, he hoped, would be more satisfactory.

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes 60 ; Noes 146.—(Division List, No. 290.)

Original Question again proposed.

MR. MACARTNEY said, he wanted to ask a question with regard to the Royal Hibernian Military School. There had been an outbreak of fever at that institution and a Committee was appointed. He would like to know whether the Committee had reported ; and, if so, whether any proposals made in regard to the sanitary arrangements of the school were being carried out ? It did not appear to him that any money was being taken for the purpose.

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, the Committee had reported, the water supply of the school being said to be very defective. He could assure the hon. Member that the matter was having attention.

MR. JACKSON said, he would like to ask whether any decision had been come to with regard to the proposal to erect new barracks in the Phoenix Park, Dublin ? A considerable sum had been voted, but there had been no expenditure

during the two years that had elapsed. If there had been any change of policy, and it had been decided not to build the barracks, the item put down in the Estimates for it should be omitted.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. J. MORLEY, Newcastle-upon-Tyne) said, this was a matter to which he had paid attention. As the right hon. Gentleman knew, a site had been fixed upon in a corner of the Park for the erection of the barracks. From information he had received, however, he had come to the conclusion that a building on the spot indicated would be very unsightly, and that it would arouse feelings of strong dissatisfaction among the people of Dublin. He had, therefore, thought it would be well to look about for some other site for the purpose—a site which would be equally convenient, and which would not be open to the objection that would be taken in this case. They had found great difficulty in discovering within the Park itself any piece of ground suitable, and his own view was that it would be better to acquire land outside the Park near Chapelizod rather than interfere with the beauty of the Park. At the same time, he quite agreed that this barrack was needed for the Constabulary, and it was especially desirable it should be near the Park. If they could not find a site on the Chapelizod Road they might have to fall back upon some other place in the Park, and possibly the old site. He hoped the hon. Member would not think there was anything wrong in keeping the question open for another year. He did not say it would be kept open for another year, because he believed a decision would be arrived at in a few weeks.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, the right hon. Gentleman had used the word "Constabulary." Did he mean the Metropolitan Police ?

MR. J. MORLEY : Yes, the Metropolitan Police.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.) complained that the money voted for specific purposes was not spent on these purposes. This had been the practice for years, and he thought it was a wrong state of affairs to make such a system habitual. It was giving an enormous temptation to Irish officials to spend this money on whatever they liked. The money was transferred from one object to another in a

perfectly reckless manner, and so long as this was the case the money would be spent irregularly.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) desired to raise a question of some importance to the citizens of Dublin—namely, the condition of the Green Street Court House, and the proposal the Government made in regard to it. There was a sum of £1,000 in this Vote as a grant in aid for the improvement of the Green Street Court House. During the last Session this question was before the House, and it was proved in the Debates upon it that it was a building that could not be improved. The highest sanitary engineers in the City of Dublin declared it to be unfit for human occupation, and yet the Government—or rather because the previous Government failed to bring about a settlement with the Corporation and the County Jury—were now going to throw good money into what was just a pit. It would do no good, the money would be absolutely wasted, and on that ground he proposed to move to disallow this Vote altogether. Green Street Court House was a Crown Court House, and it was also a City Court House. That was to say Crown cases were tried there by the Judges of Assize, and the Recorder of Dublin sat there almost permanently trying civil bills and criminal cases from the city. Many years ago a proposal was made to build a new Court House for Dublin. The estimate, in the first place, was £39,000, and the Government proposed to pay one-third, namely £13,000, as their contribution to the cost. The arrangement was that the County of Dublin Grand Jury, in view of the fact that they were interested in the Court House, should pay a second third, and the City, which by the way used the Court House more than either the Crown or the County of Dublin, should pay the remainder. That was an absolutely fair arrangement, and if the Corporation had not allowed political motives to dominate public considerations that new Court House would have been built, and there would have been an enormous expenditure for the benefit of the artisans of Dublin; these cases would not have to be tried in an insanitary building, and a legitimate and fair settlement might have been arrived at. It so happened at the time, however, that there was political trouble

in the county, and the Lord Mayor of Dublin was struck out of the Commission by the Lord Lieutenant of the day. This was ancient history, but it lay at the bottom of the whole case. He did not argue whether it was right or wrong, but because the Government took that step the Corporation withdrew from their part of the bargain and refused to contribute the £13,000 it was proposed they should contribute towards building the new Court House. There was nothing like the Green Street Court House in the Kingdom. He saw an hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Bodkin), who he was sure would agree with the whole of his professional brethren and the sanitary engineers of the City of Dublin that it was not a pleasant place to spend a day in. He (Mr. Russell) had had personal experience of that Court House. It was his fortune to spend nine consecutive days in it as a special juror; he had sat in the Court House on Licensing Sessions, and he could say he had never sat five hours in the place without feeling the worse for it, whilst lawyers had had serious illnesses which their physicians directly traced to the insanitary condition of the building. What was proposed to be done? Because the Government could not arrange with the Corporation and the Corporation chose to play this dog-in-the-manger policy it was proposed to patch up this old building. Lord Chief Justice O'Brien last year used these words, which he quoted from *Hansard*, containing the Report of the previous references to this matter—

“If the responsibility for the Court House was conjoint the disgrace equally belonged to the Corporation and the Government. To-day it was impossible to move or breathe in the Court. The place was pervaded by a mephitic atmosphere. If he did not find before the next Commission that some practical move was taken to remedy the state of things, he would summon a meeting of the Common Law Judges and take counsel with his brethren as to whether they could not go elsewhere.”

This matter was raised by him (Mr. Russell) in a question to the Chief Secretary (and which contained the above quotation) on the 15th February, 1892. A little later on the Member for Mid Tyrone (Mr. M. J. Kenny) asked the then Chief Secretary the right hon. Member for Leeds (Mr. Jackson) a question on the subject, and he gave the following extract in his question:—

"When the jury was sworn one of the jurors complained of a great draught in the jury box. The Lord Chief Justice said the special jurors of Dublin should not be allowed to get the influenza, and ordered that the windows should be closed.

To order the window to be closed was one thing, getting it closed was another.

"One of the jurors tried to close the window near the jury box, but was unable to do so.

"The Lord Chief Justice: This is scandalous. This state of things is an outrage upon civilisation."

On the 1st March, 1892, one of the Members for Kerry (Mr. Kilbride), on behalf of the Member for Mid Tyrone (Mr. M. J. Kenney), asked the Chief Secretary the following question:—

"If it has been arranged that the Commission of Oyer and Terminer and General Gaol Delivery hitherto held in the Green Street Court House, Dublin, will in future be held in the Four Courts, if the criminal and civil business of the Recorder of the City of Dublin is to be discharged as heretofore at Green Street; whether Mr. W. Kaye Perry, C.E., has reported to the Lord Chief Justice that Green Street Court House is unfit for human occupation; and whether the Irish Government refused to do anything to replace the present Court-house unless there is a local contribution of two-thirds of the total amount of the estimated cost?"

The Chief Secretary (Mr. Jackson) replied—

"No general arrangement of the nature indicated in the first paragraph has been come to; but it has been decided to hold the next Commission sitting at the Four Courts. This decision does not include the business of the Recorder. Mr. Kaye Perry has, I understand, reported to the effect indicated. It is not the fact that the Irish Government refused to do anything to replace the present Court House. As I have already stated, they are willing to ask the Treasury to revive the charge sanctioned in 1883, which was accepted at that time as satisfactory by all parties concerned, but from which the Corporation of Dublin subsequently withdrew."

He thought that that was sufficient proof, at all events, of the insanitary state of this Court House, and yet in face of all these facts the Government proposed to give £1,000 to patch up this wretched building. It was simply throwing away the money. It was perfectly impossible to patch up the Court House. It was situate in the worst part of the City; it was inconvenient, so far as the locality was concerned, to the lawyers; it was inconvenient to the general public, and it was not safe for the public. The building ought to be demolished and a new Court House erected, but the Government

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were proposing to simply cover this wretched wound. They would not make the place sanitary by the expenditure of this £1,000, and he did not know how much the Corporation were proposing to spend upon it.

MR. J. MORLEY: £2,000 in addition to this £1,000.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL did not care how much or how little was spent upon it; it would be impossible to make it a decent place for people who had to spend their time in it. This quarrel to which he had referred took place in 1883—in the pre-union of hearts days; and would it not be worth while for the Chief Secretary to see whether it was not possible to renew the old arrangement, or to make some new arrangement upon this question? Considering the use which the Government made of the Court House he regarded the proposal made by the Government in 1883 as a perfectly reasonable one. The Recorder sat in Green Street for eight months out of the 12, disposing of City cases; and the City of Dublin ought to pay a larger contribution than the Government, which simply used the Court House now and then; and if the County of Dublin had responsibilities in connection with the matter they ought to be compelled to meet them. The County did not stand in the way of carrying out the proposal of 1883, and he did not think any difficulty would arise in connection with the County of Dublin Grand Jury. The Committee ought not to sanction the spending of this £1,000 on an object which could never be achieved. The Government were now on the best terms with the Corporation of Dublin, and they ought to endeavour to come to some arrangement with them. For his part he thought the present Corporation was much more efficient than that of 1883, and as the original cause of the quarrel had been removed and the name of the Lord Mayor restored to the Commission, he did not see any difficulty in arriving at a settlement of the question. He begged to move that the Vote be reduced by £1,000 in respect of the Green Street Court House.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That Item B, New Works and Alterations, be reduced by £1,000, in respect of Green Street Court House."—(*Mr. T. W. Russell.*)

SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, they had to look upon all sides of this question. It was not a matter altogether for the Government; in fact, it was a matter in which the Government had very little control. This matter rested more or less with the Corporation, in whose hands was the choice of a site. The Corporation after, he supposed, due consideration, had decided upon the Green Street site, and they had plans prepared which, after considerable discussion and consideration of the two sites, the Board of Works, as representing the Government, had agreed to. The other site discussed—namely, the Four Courts, would have been much more convenient to the Judge and the lawyers, and perhaps to the public men; but in this matter they had considered the wishes of the Corporation. On the 28th of August last, the Lord Chief Justice and several other representative men went through the plans and assented to the proposal, which, as he had said, were agreed to by the Board of Works, and by the Grand Jury also, so that it would be very difficult for the Government to act like a dog-in-the-manger, and say they would have nothing to do with this proposal. He supposed the Lord Chief Justice, and other gentlemen who visited the place and examined the plans, were satisfied that the place could be made suitable for its purpose, and he trusted, therefore, the hon. Gentleman would withdraw his objection to the Vote.

MR. BODKIN (Roscommon, N.) said, he considered that the Green Street Court House was very bad, but at the same time he was strongly of opinion that a great deal could be done with £3,000. It would, at all events, suffice to replace the window fastening, which the Lord Chief Justice, with that moderation of language which characterised him, had described as "an outrage on civilisation." The incident would give some idea of what was meant by outrage when used by his Lordship in the future. Certainly, the argument of the speech of the hon. Member (Mr. Russell) was most creditable. A few moments before he argued that there should be no capital expenditure, because they were going to get Home Rule. The hon. Gentleman said there should be no capital expenditure in reference to the building of a police barrack.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, he wanted to know who would be the owner in certain eventualities?

MR. BODKIN said, the hon. Gentleman objected to the former Vote, because it was capital expenditure. He took his objection to this because it was not capital expenditure. He (Mr. Bodkin) believed they would not be long without a new Court House after they got Home Rule. In the meantime something should be done for all those attending the Green Street Court House, and he believed the best thing that could be done was to carry out the proposal which had been referred to.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): The hon. Gentleman, if he had been more continuously in the House, would not have accused my hon. Friend with being inconsistent. The fact is, my hon. Friend raised the previous point as to the capital expenditure on one ground, and he is now opposing it on another ground. His first objection to capital expenditure was that it would be thrown away, so far as the British taxpayer is concerned, because the property might pass into other hands. His objection to the present capital expenditure is, that it will be thrown away because it is entirely useless. That is not in the least inconsistent. A further argument against this particular expenditure, that it is capital expenditure which ought to be met by the Irish Government, has been supplied by the hon. and learned Gentleman himself, who has stated that when the Irish Government had the power and had our money, they are going to spend a portion of it in building a new and "illigant" Court House, somewhere outside the neighbourhood of Green Street. Well, Sir, I say that under these circumstances my hon. Friends are perfectly consistent. I very much regret that my right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. H. H. Fowler) has left the House, because this is a matter on which I should have much liked to take his opinion. Some years ago, when I first entered the House, I took a great deal of interest in that portion of the Estimates which deals with the expenditure of Metropolitan Court Houses and Courts of Law. I moved a great number of Amendments to the Estimates on that subject. Cir-

cumstances prevented me continuing my investigations on the point, but my right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board took them up, and I venture to say there has been no more eager advocate of economy of the public money with regard to this class of expenditure than he. His contention was that no money ought to be spent on these Court Houses other than by the Local Authorities. I think it a great hardship on my constituents, and on other constituencies, that while we do not get a single farthing from the Government ourselves, while we are made to pay heavier rates because Government officials are so highly paid, those officials come down and draw the rates for Government property, although at the same time we are called upon to pay for capital expenditure in London, Dublin, and other parts of the country. I admit that there has been in the past some reason for sharing the expenditure in the present case, inasmuch as the Government have shared the accommodation. The Assize Courts have been held there, and there is no doubt that is a ground for contributing to the expenditure, although I believe the contribution would be much better made if made in the form of rent for the house for the time for which the Court is used. That claim for expenditure entirely disappears, in view of the fact that has been stated by my hon. Friend behind me. The Judges of the land will not sit in this Court, and, under these circumstances, I cannot conceive why we should go on paying for buildings from which we derive no advantage. I intend to revive this question of Imperial expenditure on local Courts. The most important case is that of London, but we should not be able to deal with London if we did not deal also with Dublin.

MR. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.) said, he did not conceive how the Board of Works in Ireland could lend their sanction for a moment to this extraordinary proposal. He could not for a moment believe that a Board of Works official had led the Government to suppose that by an expenditure of £3,000 the Court House could be placed in a sanitary condition or in a fit state for carrying on the business that was to be conducted there in the future. He should like to know whether the Secretary to the Treasury (Sir J. T. Hibbert) was

prepared to give any guarantee to the House that the expenditure of this money would place the premises either in a sanitary condition or in such a condition that there would be no complaints whatever from the barristers or suitors? The Corporation of Dublin was now trying to escape from the duty which fell on most other Corporations, and nearly all Local Authorities, of providing proper places for the administration of justice.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, that if there were one body more than another that he was inclined to distrust, it was the Irish Board of Works. Ireland was bestrewn with memorials of the failures of the Board of Works. He was very glad to see that the attractions of "another place" had palled upon the hon. Member for North Kerry (Mr. Sexton), and that, having just returned to the House, he appeared to concur with him (Mr. Russell) in this opinion. The mere fact that the Board of Works had authorised or approved of this expenditure did not influence his judgment one iota. Seeing that they approved of it, it was very likely that it was wrong expenditure, and bad. The next reason why this expenditure had been incurred by the Government was the fact that the Lord Chief Justice had been down to Green Street. The Lord Chief Justice and the Board of Works, the Grand Jury and the Corporation, all approved, and, therefore, it was determined to give the money. That was the position of the right hon. Gentleman. Well, no one had greater respect for the Lord Chief Justice than he had in a matter of law, and in some other matters he would take his Lordship's opinion very much sooner than he would take the opinion of most people in Ireland; but, most assuredly, he should not take his opinion on sanitary science. The Lord Chief Justice had to sit in that Court a few days in the year, but the public had to sit there for months. It did not follow because the Lord Chief Justice thought this expenditure better than nothing, that he would not prefer a new building. As to the Grand Jury, he supposed they merely saw the plans, and thought they would be an improvement upon the present Court House. And in regard to the Corporation it was now, no doubt, a more efficient body than it was in 1883, when this squabble took place. There was

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one gentleman on it who had full right and title to speak on this as a sanitary engineer, he meant Mr. Maguire; but he did not think the Corporation, as a Corporation, knew anything about sanitary science, and he should not be inclined to take its opinion upon any improvement of this kind. To his mind, what should be done is this—the Judges should sit in the Four Courts, which they could legally do. The Lord Chief Justice and the Lord Chief Baron had done it—they had refused to sit in the pestilential hole in Green Street, and had sat in the Four Courts, leaving the Recorder and the city business to this Court House. The Government should remove Crown business to the Four Courts and leave the Court House to the Corporation—who had refused to come to terms. The money it was proposed to spend on this Court House was pure and unadulterated waste—throwing good money after bad. Were the Board of Works going to control this expenditure?

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: No.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Then who is to control it?

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT: It is subject to their inspection and approval.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, he had not the slightest faith in the control of the Board of Works of Dublin. He would rather trust the Corporation engineer than the engineer of the Board of Works. If the Board of Works did not control it the Corporation must. He protested against their sanctioning this expenditure of £1,000 without proper Government control.

MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS (Birmingham, S.) said, that in this case a Vote was to be taken for the spending of a considerable sum of money in order to do that which the local ratepayers in England did wholly on their own responsibility. The President of the Local Government Board had opposed this kind of Vote on a previous occasion, and if the right hon. Gentleman was sincere—as no doubt he was—he should now use his influence to prevent an injurious system being pursued by the Government. He (Mr. Williams) objected to the Vote on another ground. It was an expenditure of a considerable sum of money on a purpose which was almost certain to fail. Patching up an old and

unstable and insanitary building of this kind seldom or never answered. He did not say that without some reason, for as a member, for a considerable number of years, of a Local Authority, he had had great experience of the expenditure of money on purposes of this kind. In Birmingham for 40 years very large sums of money had been spent on a certain building. During the past two or three years no less than £9,000 had been spent on it to correct inherent and incurable defects entirely without success. He happened to have been in the Court under discussion once in his life in an entirely honorary capacity, and he was bound to say that he never saw a more miserable place in his life. Though he had no special skill in architecture it was plain that the only possible way to cure defects in the Court was to pull it down right to the ground and erect a new building in its place. He was satisfied that this was a waste of the taxpayers' money. No good at all was likely to result from the outlay proposed, and if the hon. Gentleman went to a Division he (Mr. Williams) should certainly support him.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 60; Noes 142.—(Division List, No. 291.)

Original Question again proposed.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, he observed in the Estimates an item of £4,650 for the building of a wall at the Dundrum Criminal Lunatic Asylum. He knew this asylum, and knew the wall, and was convinced the sum asked for was a most exorbitant one for the rebuilding. But he had risen for the purpose of moving to reduce the Vote for National Education buildings in Ireland by £100, in order to call attention to the insanitary state of the Marlborough Street Training College, which was in a most wretched condition. This College had been in existence almost since the foundation of the National system of education. It consisted, as far as the dwelling-house accommodation was concerned, of two houses, one—that for females—was in Great George Street, and the other in Talbot Street. Since the formation of this College there had been three offshoots from it on denominational lines. The House had voted large

sums of money to it, and large sums had been received to enable the authorities to erect splendid buildings which had been in every way adequately provided. But when they came to the Training College itself it was in a most miserable condition.

MR. J. MORLEY pointed out that the grant for the Marlborough Training College was not included in the Vote under consideration.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL thought it was included in the Literary Schools Vote. The houses in Talbot Street and Marlborough Street were in an utterly unfit sanitary condition, and unsuitable for a College of the kind for which they were used. Some of the female teachers had been seriously ill as a result of the insanitary state of the Great George Street School, and the place had been visited by the Sanitary Inspector. He thought it very unfair if they were going to provide the Denominational Colleges with everything they required and leave the College of the Board itself that the Government were directly responsible for in an insanitary condition. He had the other day received a complaint from the Lady Superintendent that she had been seriously ill, and he had himself inspected the house, and found it in bad repair. Indeed, both houses were in a wretched state, and utterly unsuited for Colleges. So long, however, as they were to be retained, he thought they ought to be put into a proper sanitary condition. He begged to move the reduction standing in his name.

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT: The question raised by the hon. Member does not arise on this Vote. The College is provided for out of the Vote for Irish Education.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, he only wished to know where to raise it. A Training College could not be called a model school. Where could the question be raised?

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT: On Class IV., Vote 11.

MR. JACKSON thought the question could be raised on this Vote if not on this particular sub-head.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, he would withdraw the Motion for the present, and move it again later on.

MR. MACARTNEY said, he wished to call attention to the manner in which the money provided for National school

buildings in Ireland was expended. Last year there was a Vote of £30,000 provided, of which only £24,283 was expended, leaving something over £5,000 unused. The Commissioners of National Education stated in their Annual Report that this undesirable result was in a great measure due to the system under which grants were sanctioned. The Commissioners had no power to control the expenditure of the money. He would like to ask the Government—who he did not suppose desired to perpetuate a system which undoubtedly led to complication of the Estimates—whether they intended to take any action on the portion of the Commissioners' Report referring to this matter, in order that the evils and difficulties resulting from it might be avoided in future?

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, it was quite true that a great difficulty did arise from the uncertainty of expenditure of the money voted for National school buildings in Ireland. The sum voted each year for the last three years had been £40,000, and that had been expended during the first two years, but not in the third year. It depended entirely on the managers of schools whether the money was spent or not. The Board of Works had no control over the managers in the matter of expenditure, and it would be a very good thing if some better plan could be devised for exercising control over the actual expenditure of the money provided for the erection of school buildings in Ireland.

MR. JACKSON said, when he was Chief Secretary he had a good deal to do with this question. He found the Commissioners being pressed for grants which they were precluded from making owing to the limited amount of the grants, and in consequence of that his Government increased the amount to £40,000 a year for three years. To his surprise that sum was only expended for two years, and as in the third year the full sum provided was not claimed in grants, the Vote was then reduced to £30,000. Now it appeared that even that sum was not spent, though the Board of Works stated that sanctions had been given by the National Education Commissioners for nearly £60,000. He would venture to suggest that they had arrived at a point when the sanctioning of a loan

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should be made conditional on a guarantee being given that actual work on the school should be begun and completed within a certain specified time. There should be some such pressure put on the managers of schools, because it was inconvenient for the Treasury not to know the amount of money which would be required each year.

COLONEL NOLAN : There is too much pressure on the managers. They have to raise a certain portion of the required amount by public subscription in order to obtain the grant.

MR. JACKSON : The managers should make sure of subscription to the necessary amount before getting the sanction of the National Education Board for a loan. It would, in his opinion, be a great improvement if the Commissioners made it a condition before sanctioning a grant that the managers of the school should come under an obligation with regard to the time for the commencement and completion of the work.

COLONEL NOLAN said, that the funds for the erection of schools in Ireland had to be raised partly by subscription, and often managers had to wait a long time for those subscriptions. If the course suggested by two previous speakers were adopted it might nearly stop school building in Ireland.

***SIR E. HARLAND** (Belfast, N.) said he wished to draw attention to the condition of Queen's College, Belfast. The success of that College had been most marked in the highest branches of education. He was sorry the Colleges in Galway and Cork did not extend their work so far as could be desired, but that was attributable, he thought, to the terrible agricultural depression of late years. The College in Belfast, however, had made extraordinary strides, not only in the efficiency of its various classes, but in the increase in the number of students attending the classes. But although the City of Belfast had more than doubled in size since the College was founded, with the exception of a detached laboratory and anatomic room, there had been no addition made to the College until last year or the year before, after the matter was fully gone into and representations had been made to the late Government. The late Government agreed to contribute a moiety of the

cost of a suitable laboratory, but the necessary additions had only been partially completed, and he regretted to find this year that there was no sum adequate for the purpose. The late Government thought they went as far as they could in granting £4,300, but the amount really required was £9,000, and this he thought the Government might well supply for the completion and proper equipment of the new building, seeing that the inhabitants of Belfast had from time to time contributed in the shape of exhibitions and prizes no less than £26,000, and that they were now erecting outside students' rooms at a cost of some £5,000. Altogether £31,000 had been found by the outside public—although the public ought not to be called upon, having regard to the fact that the College had been established by Act of Parliament. The success of the College educationally had been most marked. This was recognised every year by public examiners in England who had to examine the students who had matriculated there. Scarcely a year passed without special reference being made to the great ability and talent turned out by this University, and a large proportion of Civil Service appointments was carried off by Belfast Queen's College men. He, therefore, felt that this College deserved the greatest consideration at the hands of the Government, whichever side might be in office. The Vote under consideration amounted to £212,000, and Belfast was now asking for only some £5,000. This was a small sum to ask for when they remembered that Ireland's contribution to the Imperial Revenue was £8,306,576, of which Belfast contributed £3,205,167, or 38 per cent. If Belfast got its fair proportion back again it would receive £76,000. He might say that this classroom question was thrust on them through the Sanitary Inspector condemning the old quarters where the students worked. The students, therefore, were between two stools. They were put out of one set of rooms and yet were not furnished with another. When they had regard to the immense increase of students in the University and the small demand made on successive Governments for the extension of the College, he hoped that the Treasury would see that the necessary

funds were provided next year, so that the Principal and the Professors might look forward to having the necessary accommodation for pursuing their tuition with success. When he told the Committee that in the scientific class-rooms the old fashioned methods of demonstration were continued, that in connection with natural philosophy and applied mechanics there was not even a dynamo or gas engine in use, instruction being given orally in the way of descriptions rather than ocularly with the necessary scientific appliances, it would be seen how necessary it was to improve the equipment of the College.

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, he was ready to admit that the hon. Baronet had placed the case very fairly before the Committee, and no doubt from his own point of view he had made out a strong case. Looking at the matter from a Treasury point of view, however, he did not think the authorities of Belfast College had raised sufficient money from voluntary sources as compared with other districts. The students had raised £4,000 for rooms used for entertainments, though he did not complain of it. The hon. Baronet had stated that the people of Belfast had raised something like £30,000 for the College. That was a very large sum, of course, but in Manchester, in the case of the Victoria University, a far larger sum had been raised by public subscriptions, and the same could also be said of Cork in the case of the Queen's College. He therefore thought the Treasury had some right to ask the people of Belfast to assist themselves, and if that were done he had no doubt that the Treasury would be willing to do something further for the College. A claim for the expenditure of a large sum of money on the College had been laid before the Treasury under the late Government, and it was cut down by them to £4,000, or something like half. That sum had been spent on the College, and a further sum of £1,875 towards fitting and heating apparatus for the laboratories. Therefore the interests of Belfast had been well attended to by the Treasury, and under the circumstances he hoped the Committee would be satisfied with the discussion, and allow the Vote to pass.

*SIR E. HARLAND said, the right hon. Gentleman opposite, when he

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asked the people of Belfast to subscribe towards the College, had overlooked the fact that they had already spent over £30,000 on the College, and he thought that compared very favourably even with Manchester when the magnitude of the two cities was considered. The original Act, by which the Queen's College of Belfast had been founded, provided for the repairing, enlarging, and improvement of the buildings from time to time, and for the furnishing of the College from time to time; and as therefore these means were provided by Act of Parliament, he did not see why the public should be called upon to maintain the College. The new building was only half completed, and looked like a barn, and surely, in these days, when grants were given in aid of every description of education, to make us all ladies and gentlemen, it would be unfair and unjust to grudge an extra £5,000 for a College in which the most useful description of training was carried on, especially as an Act of Parliament clearly provided for this expenditure.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, the hon. Baronet was not asking for aid for a College which had failed in carrying out the intentions of those who founded it. A case could fairly be made out that the Colleges of Galway and Cork had failed, and a good case could be made out against spending any more of the public money on those institutions. But the Queen's College, Belfast, was a highly successful College, and apart altogether from the question of private benevolence Parliament was bound by the Act of Parliament establishing the College to repair, enlarge and improve the buildings from time to time. His hon. Friend the Member for North Belfast had made out a clear case. The late Government had spent so much on the buildings; that expenditure had left the buildings uncompleted, and therefore his hon. Friend was justified in asking for more. In the Report of the Queen's College, Belfast, for the year, the President complained that the College was still far from being properly equipped in respect to laboratories. The citizens of Belfast had contributed £32,000 towards the College, but that was not as much, according to the Secretary to the Treasury, as had been contributed in Cork. In the case of

Cork, however, the money had been left by a wealthy brewer.

MR. JACKSON (Leeds, N.): I think it cannot be denied that the Queen's College, Belfast, has, of all the Irish Colleges, being most successful, and has most largely fulfilled the purposes for which it was founded. Looking at the Act which has been quoted, I think it is clear that responsibility in the matter rests with the Government. The Secretary to the Treasury said the late Government had proposals before them which they cut down by one-half. I believe that is true, and I believe also, speaking from memory, that the reason the proposal of the Irish Board of Works in this matter was cut down was because we thought it desirable to limit the amount to be put in the Estimates for the year to the sum that was likely to be expended in the year. The case laid before us was so overwhelming that it was impossible for us to refuse to do something. Reports from medical officers were furnished showing that cases of fainting had occurred amongst the students, if not amongst the teachers, owing to the unsanitary state of the rooms because of their crowded condition. It appeared to me then that the most practical way of dealing with the difficulty, so as to give the most immediate relief, was to divide the building into two, so that one part might be completed at one operation, and rendered available for use immediately after completion. But I cannot say that there was any positive refusal on our part to accept responsibility for the completion of the whole scheme as submitted. I think that if there is one class of expenditure which might be made in Ireland with advantage it is expenditure in the direction of promoting technical education, and you could find no more useful field for operation of that kind than in Belfast. Of course it is for the Government to make the last bargain they can with the people of Belfast; I do not blame them for trying to get public subscriptions for the College, but I say it would be false economy to refuse to spend £3,000 or £4,000 additional, which would really complete the scheme. Under the circumstances, I hope the Government will lend a favourable ear to the case made out by the hon. Baronet the Member for North Belfast.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EX-CHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby): I rise to call the attention of the Committee to the time which has been spent over this matter.

MR. JACKSON: I did not occupy 10 minutes.

SIR W. HARCOURT: The hon. Baronet opposite spoke for more than half-an-hour. The right hon. Gentleman himself had to admit that all the present Government are doing is carrying out the plans of the late Government, arranged probably by himself, which promise that certain portions of these buildings shall be completed and no more. Here we are wasting time on a matter with regard to which no proposal has been made. The hon. Baronet has not proposed, and cannot propose, that an additional sum should be asked for this purpose. The hon. Baronet quoted an Act of Parliament, and the hon. Member for South Tyrone got up and repeated that Act of Parliament over and over again.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Nothing of the kind.

SIR W. HARCOURT: We have spent over an hour this time, and I must therefore protest against time, of which we have so little now, being taken up with these discussions when no additional money can be obtained at the present time.

SIR J. GORST (Cambridge University): I hope these Estimates will be discussed quite irrespective of Party considerations. The Chancellor of the Exchequer must be aware that in the last Session of the last Parliament the whole of these Estimates were most indecently passed through this House without any discussion whatever. An abortive attempt was made by the hon. Member for Peterborough (Mr. A. C. Morton) to raise discussions, but the hon. Member was snuffed out by his Party—they were so anxious to get to the General Election. We are not in any particular hurry now, and we ought to have legitimate debate on the Estimates. I admit that this item has occupied a long time—[“Hear, hear!”]—but Members of the Government must remember that there are Members who have not had for a long time the opportunity of bringing to account the Executive Government, either the present or the past. I hope

hon. Members will not be prohibited from doing their duty to their constituents, but will make such observations and ask such explanations from the Government as they are entitled to.

Mr. J. Morley rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Original Question be now put."

The Committee divided :—Ayes 147 ; Noes 57.—(Division List, No. 292.)

Original Question put accordingly.

The Committee divided :—Ayes 149 ; Noes 55.—(Division List, No. 293.)

2. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £8,676, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1894, for Payments under 'The Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act, 1883,' and 'The Light Railways (Ireland) Act, 1889.'"

COLONEL NOLAN said, there were one or two questions he wanted to ask. The first was in regard to the Galway and Clifden Railway. Would the Midland Railway Company of Ireland be spurred on to hasten these works. He had not been in favour of hurrying on the Midland Company, but now some three or four years had elapsed since the commencement of the railway, and it was time something should be done. With regard to the Tuam and Claremorris Railway, it appeared a sum of money for that railway would probably not be wanted until the 31st March, 1894, but he hoped there would be no delay regarding the opening or completion of it.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL remarked that it was usual for the Chief Secretary for Ireland annually to give a detailed explanation as to the progress that was made with these railways, and he thought that would be a suitable time to have the statement made.

MR. BARTLEY said, he had an Amendment to this Vote which he intended to move on the ground that under the altered circumstances it was not fair to the people of Great Britain to be asked to go on paying these large sums for light railways in Ireland. He heartily

supported the late Government in their proposals for the construction of these light railways, because he thought it was an excellent means of opening up and developing the resources of Ireland. Under the present circumstances he felt it was not fair, when they were going to alter the whole position of Ireland, that they should continue to vote these large sums, especially considering that there were many poor districts in England which greatly needed to have their resources developed. He moved to reduce the general Vote by £15,000.

THE CHAIRMAN : The Government are only asking for £8,676.

MR. BARTLEY said, then he would move to reduce the Vote by £5,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £3,676, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Bartley.*)

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT was surprised that the hon. Gentleman should seek to break faith even with the Irish people. They were bound to the payment of this money by Parliament. Both items which appeared in the Vote were pledged for this purpose by Parliament. One was pledged under the Public Companies (Ireland) Act, 1883, and then under the Light Railways (Ireland) Act, 1889, they were obliged to provide a sum each year in the form of an annuity. In respect to the progress made in connection with the light railways in Ireland, he thought he could advance good reasons why he should give that account rather than the Chief Secretary. He (Sir J. T. Hibbert) had at Whitsuntide an opportunity of going over a considerable number of these light railways, and, therefore, he spoke not only of what he had heard from other people, but from the actual experience of his own inspection. Speaking generally, he must say that when these light railways came into actual operation they would perfectly justify the hopes and intentions of the late Government in undertaking the construction of them. Many of them traversed congested districts—districts, he might say, which had had no opportunity of receiving communication and accommodation in times past, and which he thought would be served very well indeed by these new railways. There were something like 12 of these railways,

and he went over five or six of them. He would take the information that appeared in his Return. The Donegal and Killybegs Line, which was 13 miles in length, had been inspected by the Board of Trade, and opened for passenger traffic a short time ago. The Stranorlar and Glenties Railway, 24 miles in length, would be opened in August, 1894. The Ballina and Killala Railway, eight miles, was opened last year. The Baltinore and Skibbereen, seven and a-half miles, was complete, and had been opened for traffic, as had also the Bantry Extension, two miles. The Downpatrick and Ard-glass Railway, eight miles, was completed and opened for traffic some short time ago. The Headford and Kenmare line, 19 $\frac{3}{4}$ miles, was opened this month, and on the 15th inst. the Killorglin and Valentia Railway, 26 $\frac{3}{4}$ miles, would also be opened. The Westport and Mulrany Railway, 18 miles, and the Achill Extension, eight and a quarter miles, would be opened in January, 1894. With respect to the Achill Extension, he was glad to learn that arrangements had been all but completed with the Midland Railway Company for taking over the line. The Collooney and Claremorris Railway, 47 $\frac{3}{4}$ miles, would not be opened before August, 1895, but 43 miles were now up to the formation level. The Galway and Clifden Railway, 49 $\frac{1}{4}$ miles, was expected to be open in August, 1894. He agreed that it would be a wise thing if one portion of this railway, which was in an advanced state, could be opened before the remainder of the line was completed. He would do his best to bring pressure to bear on the different companies to push on the completion of these lines. It was important in the interests of the industries of Ireland that they should be completed as rapidly as possible, and no efforts would be spared to try to bring them to an early completion.

*MR. A. C. MORTON: Are not the Railway Companies under a penalty to complete them by the date specified?

SIR J. T. HIBBERT replied yes, or else they had to make out a very good case before any extension of time was granted them. He did not know that he could add anything more, except to promise that, so far as he could help the matter forward, he should do all he could. He did think that when com-

pleted these railways would prove of the greatest advantage to Ireland.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL asked, could the right hon. Gentleman make any statement about the contribution from the baronies, in regard to which he believed he contemplated some change?

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, with regard to the contribution of 2 per cent. from the baronies, he was not in a position to give any definite information to the House, and he did not think it would be wise at present to do so. He might say, however, that the Treasury were conferring with the Irish Government as to the proposals the Treasury had made for a commutation of this 2 per cent. They thought that the commutation should be carried out voluntarily, and not compulsorily, and it would certainly relieve the cesspayers of the different baronies from very severe pressure. He hoped, before they met again in the Autumn, to bring forward their proposals, either by Amendment to the Bill of the hon. Member for West Kerry, or by means of a short Bill.

*MR. A. C. MORTON inquired if these Companies responsible for the construction and equipment of the railways did not lose the grant unless they completed their work by a certain time? If not, the whole thing would be an utter absurdity.

MR. JACKSON (Leeds, N.) expressed his pleasure at hearing the right hon. Gentleman say the late Government, in their policy with regard to these light railways, would be justified by the results. He was glad to learn that the question with regard to the Achill Railway was now almost definitely settled. He supposed it would be taken over and worked by the Midland and Great Western Railway in conjunction with the Westport and Mulrany Railway. It certainly would prove a very important extension; it would be a great benefit to the people of the district, who would be brought within reach of the markets, and he thought it would prove remunerative to the Railway Company. The hon. Member for Peterborough asked whether the Railway Companies were under penalties to complete the work by the specified dates. The position of the Railway Companies was this: By the Order in Council there was a limited time in which to complete the lines, and

unless they were able to give very good reason for this, they would be unable to obtain assent to an extension of the time. That in itself would be one of the very gravest penalties, because they would have spent of their own money probably one-third of the total cost, and they could earn nothing whatever on that capital expenditure until they got the line open; therefore, the Railway Companies themselves had the strongest inducement to push on the work. He was very glad to hear the different railways had approached so near to completion, and their experience, so far, had thoroughly justified the late Government in the arrangements they had made.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; Committee counted, and 40 Members being found present,

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, the hon. Baronet the Member for West Kerry (Sir T. Esmonde) had, he understood, intended raising a question, and had risen before the retirement of the Chairman; but he was not now in his place. He (Mr. Russell) wished to say that nothing could be more satisfactory than the statement of his right hon. Friend (Sir J. T. Hibbert) on this matter. It was a clear statement, to which no one could take objection; it was, he would say in the first place, very satisfactory to those who had taken an interest in the light railways—and especially satisfactory was it to those who believed that those railways would be likely to carry out the ideas of their original promoters. They were told that of 13 railways guaranteed, eight were opened—or, at least, eight would be opened within this month—and five were in an unfinished state. Only one line occurred to him to say anything about—the Claremorris, Collooney, and Swinford branch of the Galway and Clifden Railway. The last they heard of it the contractor and the Railway Company were fighting, and matters were brought to a standstill. He would like to know how the work was progressing, and was it progressing at all?

SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, the works had started again.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, he was glad. Was there, then, a fair chance of the line being opened in the course of 1895?

Mr. Jackson

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: Yes.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, that was satisfactory. With regard to the Clifden and Galway line, it was the longest line, and they could not expect that it would be opened very soon; but he would point out to the right hon. Gentleman that a great deal could be done to the open part of the line. It was most important that the tourist traffic should be developed—the smallest accommodation was important. If 20 miles of the railway was ready for opening, they should be opened. He understood there was a difficulty in the way with regard to a bridge outside Galway.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: Corrig?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, that was the bridge he referred to. It was near Galway. Why should they not, if there was any difficulty, make a temporary bridge outside Galway and run on the trains? He understood from a prospectus which he had seen that something had been done towards the development of tourist traffic by Mr. Crossley; and, as the question was of enormous importance to the district, he thought that might be done. If his suggestion were adopted, a great boon would be conferred upon the locality. He was glad that the policy of the late Government was being maintained by the present one. There was one other question which he thought ought to be referred to. It was a very sad subject—that of the calamity which happened on the Dingle Railway. This line was in the constituency of the hon. Baronet (Sir T. Esmonde), and he regretted he was not here to call attention to the matter. It was one of the saddest railway calamities that had happened in Ireland. He would say that it was an accident of a very singular character; and, as far as he could see, it was due to the state of the railway.

MR. J. MORLEY was understood to say the inexperience of the driver had something to do with it.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, the inexperience of the driver might have had something to do with it; but, in his opinion, it was due in a great degree to the condition of the line.

MR. KNOX (Cavan, W.) said, on a point of Order, he would ask the Chairman whether on 21st July, 1881, Mr. Flynn was speaking on this very Vote, and referring to a matter of this kind—

the bad condition of a railway—when the Chairman at the time (Mr. Courtney) ruled that the question was not relevant to the Vote, being a matter only in the power of the Railway Company, and under their administration?

*THE CHAIRMAN: I was just about to interrupt the hon. Member for Tyrone. There can be no doubt about the ruling referred to by the hon. Member (Mr. Knox). It is necessary for the hon. Member for South Tyrone to bring it home to the Government before he can be considered in Order.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, he was going, not upon the general Light Railway Votes, but under Sub-section A, where £2,500 was voted towards the Dingle Railway—

MR. KNOX rose, but—

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, he hoped the hon. Member would allow him to finish. The railway was badly managed, and they were called upon to vote £2,500 towards it. That being so, he thought they were entitled to raise the question on this Vote.

MR. J. MORLEY, on a point of Order, submitted that the asking for £2,500 did not associate or connect the Government with the management of the line.

*THE CHAIRMAN: It is clear, I think, that the Government are not responsible for the administration or management of this railway. The hon. Member is, therefore, out of Order in referring to the matter.

MR. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.): But, Sir—

*THE CHAIRMAN: I have ruled the point of Order. It is very inconvenient that Members should rise in this manner after I have ruled a point.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, of course, he would accept the ruling of the Chairman. But he did think it was not a proper thing to prevent discussion; and he was sorry that the Nationalist Members should prevent the discussion of a matter of such importance. On the general policy, therefore, he thought the statement of the hon. Gentleman was exceedingly satisfactory and encouraging; and he was glad that the policy inaugurated by the late Government was being continued by their successors.

MR. MACARTNEY said, he recognised, as other Members did, the satisfactory character of the statement which the right hon. Gentleman had made to the Committee, as well as the courtesy with which he received observations that came from that (the Opposition) side of the House. If the right hon. Gentleman's example were followed by other right hon. Gentlemen it would expedite the passing of these Votes. He wanted to ask with regard to the Donegal Railway—Stranorlar to Glenties. This line had made very little progress since March last, when the last statement regarding it was made. The right hon. Gentleman then told them that he was not satisfied with the progress made, and that he would do what he could do in the matter. He did not blame him if his efforts had not been successful, because he was sure there were difficulties, and the responsibility must be laid on the contractors. He told them in March that 34½ miles was the length of the line, and that it had progressed to the extent of 17 miles of the foundation level. Since then, he took it, further progress had been made with the foundation level. He did not know whether the progress had been satisfactory; but he desired to know whether the matters referred to in the Report of the Commissioners of Public Works in Ireland regarding the line had been settled?

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: Yes.

MR. MACARTNEY said, the only other question he had to put was as to the Ardglass line, and the question as to the pier there. Had that question been settled?

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: Yes.

MR. MACARTNEY said, that was all he wished to know.

MR. THORNTON (Clapham) said, he did not understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that he had gone over the Skibbereen line.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: No.

*MR. THORNTON said, he had gone over that railway, and the people there desired him to express their view that the work was very imperfect for the object that was in view. At Baltimore, where the line ran to, the works were unfinished. It was understood that the original design provided greater facilities for the landing of fish. When the boats came in, the fish had to be

thrown up and then removed to the railway, generally in a broken condition. This should be remedied by constructing a pier, and it could be done at a comparatively small cost, as the distance was only about 100 yards, and the expenditure would be a very useful one. At present, £56,000 had been expended without attaining the object desired. He believed an additional £7,000 would do all that was required, and if it were done the undertaking would be carried through and made successful. He would say that, looking at the work which was carried on at Baltimore, with its Fishery School, something was owing to the memory of the late Father Davis.

Several hon. MEMBERS : Hear, hear !

*MR. THORNTON said, it was just to the memory of Father Davis, and what he did in that district towards the development of industry, that the line should be placed in a more satisfactory condition. The Baltimore railway promised to improve the fisheries there, and he was sure they would all like to see it completed and made as useful as possible.

SIR T. LEA (Londonderry, S.) was understood to urge the Government not to starve these Light Railways. In the case of the Donegal and Stranorlar line, which would be of enormous advantage to the chief congested district in the country, he wished to know if it would be connected with the narrow gauge line to Strabane? He also desired to know if there was any prospect of a line being constructed to Falcarragh. It seemed to him it would be a great advantage if they could make the system more complete than it was. Great Britain might object to find the necessary funds for opening up all the congested districts ; but for his own part he believed that the expenditure of British capital was due to Ireland in this direction. It was 10 years since he had brought the matter before the Chief Secretary of that day—the right hon. Gentleman the present Secretary for Scotland—and it had taken the intervening period to get the Government up to the mark. He was thankful to think that they had risen to the crisis they ought to have faced years ago.

Mr. Thornton

SIR J. T. HIBBERT hoped that the Committee would consent to go to a Division on that question so that the next important point may be reached. He agreed with the hon. Member for South Tyrone as to the importance of opening up the district from Cong to Oughterard, and he had made a suggestion to the Railway Company that they should consider the desirability of making such extension. With regard to the Skibbereen Railway, it was a matter for consideration in the future whether the connection referred to should not be completed. No doubt the result of such connection would be very advantageous.

Question put, and negatived.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

CLASS II.

3. Motion made, and Question proposed,

“That a sum, not exceeding £23,095, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1894, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Offices of the House of Lords.”

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES said, that on this Vote it was his unfortunate duty to draw attention to the first of a long series of pluralists who appeared on the Estimates. There were 12 pluralists on this Vote, and by pluralists he meant persons holding two or more places and receiving salaries from two or more sources. The Lord Chancellor was the first and worst pluralist of them all, and therefore he moved to reduce the Vote by the amount of £4,000—his salary as Speaker of the House of Lords. In addition to this £4,000 on the Estimates the Lord Chancellor received £6,000 a year as President of the Supreme Court of the Chancery Division. The duties of the Lord Chancellor as Speaker of the House of Lords were not to be compared in importance with those of the Speaker of the House of Commons. The noble Lord had not the authority over the House of Lords that the Speaker had over the House of Commons. He was not even addressed by Members of the other House in Debate—a circumstance which he (Mr. Gibson Bowles) mentioned to show the inferiority of the Lord Chancellor's position as compared with that of Mr. Speaker. In addition

to that the time occupied by the Lord Chancellor in the discharge of his duties as Speaker of the House of Lords was as nothing compared with the time occupied by the Speaker of the House of Commons. Neither was the strain, mentally and physically, upon the one in any way comparable with that on the other. When they considered the relatively small importance of the duties performed in the House of Lords and the importance of the issues raised in the House of Commons, and practically decided there, and when they considered the large number of gentlemen on the Benches opposite who paid no attention to the decisions of the House of Lords, it must be apparent that the position of Speaker of the House of Lords was in no way comparable with that of the Speaker of the House of Commons. The salary of the Speaker of the House of Commons was placed on the Consolidated Fund to show that he was far removed from all Party affection and Party consideration—that he was, in fact, as said by Mr. Speaker Lenthall, the eyes and ears of the House. Could that be said of the Speaker of the House of Lords? They knew how the Speaker of the House of Lords was chosen. He had never known of one being appointed except for serious and considerable Party services, or services believed to be such. He had another grievance against the Lord Chancellor—the most serious grievance of all—and it was that he was a lawyer, one of those about whom Junius said—

“As to lawyers, their profession is supported by the indiscriminate defence of right and wrong.”

It seemed to him (Mr. Gibson Bowles) that a long course of the indiscriminate defence of right and wrong was not a good preparation for the post of Speaker of the House of Lords. Apart from the dignity of the office and from the fact that the duties of the office were far less onerous than those of Speaker of the House of Commons, it behoved the Committee to consider the kind of man they were certain to get as a lawyer, and to take that into consideration in reckoning the salary. There never had been in living memory a Lord Chancellor who had given satisfaction who had not been accused of jobbery—

MR. H. H. FOWLER : Name one.

***MR. GIBSON BOWLES :** All of them. Under the last Government never a day passed without an attack being made in the Radical Press on the eminent person who filled the position of Lord Chancellor—

***THE CHAIRMAN :** The hon. Member must confine himself to the duties of Lord Chancellor as Speaker of the House of Lords.

***MR. GIBSON BOWLES :** On the point of Order, am I to understand that in moving a reduction of the salary of the Lord Chancellor I am debarred from dealing with the noble Lord in his capacity as Lord Chancellor?

THE CHAIRMAN : Certainly ; there is no doubt about it.

MR. HANBURY : Take the next item, the Sergeant-at-Arms in Attendance upon the Lord Chancellor. Cannot we discuss that except when the Sergeant-at-Arms is in attendance upon the Lord Chancellor as Speaker of the House of Lords?

THE CHAIRMAN : No ; there is no question on this point.

***MR. GIBSON BOWLES** said, he bowed to the Chairman's ruling ; but he failed to see how he could deal with the question of the Lord Chancellor being a pluralist if he was compelled to deal with him as two entities, unless he could deal with him both as Lord Chancellor and Speaker of the House of Lords.

***MR. A. C. MORTON** said, he understood that the Lord Chancellor received £6,000 salary as President of the Supreme Court and of the Chancery Division, that being purely for judicial duties. On that he would ask whether it was possible to discuss anything else besides the noble Lord's duties as President of the Supreme Court—patronage for instance?

***THE CHAIRMAN :** No ; because patronage belongs to the Lord Chancellor as Lord Chancellor, and not as Speaker. The Lord Chancellor has a double capacity, and the capacity before the Committee is that as Speaker of the House of Lords.

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston) : As a point of Order, is the ecclesiastical patronage belonging to the Lord Chancellor exercised as President of the Chancery Division?

***THE CHAIRMAN :** Certainly not as Speaker of the House of Lords.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES asked whether he was to understand that he could not discuss the messengers of the Lord Chancellor, because the Lord Chancellor did not exist in this Vote? He submitted that he was warranted in calling attention to the fact that the Lord Chancellor received these two salaries in his different capacities. He thought his salary of £4,000 as Speaker of the House of Lords was too large. The Lord Chancellor had been constantly denounced in the Press as "The Lord High Jobber"—

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is distinctly out of Order in these references.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Will you allow me to conclude my sentence—denounced as a jobber in connection with the exercise of his patronage as Speaker of the House of Lords and not as Lord Chancellor. [*Cries of "Order!"*] He had a perfect right to refer to that.

THE CHAIRMAN: But, as Speaker of the House of Lords, I do not think the Lord Chancellor exercises patronage.

MR. HANBURY: Oh yes; in regard to the Clerks at the Table.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES said, that history would bear out his statement that the Lord Chancellor had been accused of being a jobber. He thought that the Committee should put an end to one of the two salaries of the Lord Chancellor. He would move to reduce the Vote by £4,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A, Salaries, be reduced by £4,000."—(*Mr. Gibson Bowles.*)

MR. HANBURY said, he should like to make this remark in behalf of what had been said by his hon. Friend indirectly—that there appeared to be some misapprehension as to the amount of patronage that the Lord Chancellor had at his disposal as Speaker of the House of Lords. Judging from the Report of the Public Accounts Committee, the Lord Chancellor, as Speaker of the House of Lords, had a considerable number of officers in that House at his disposal. He appointed the Clerks at the Table with the exception of the Clerk of Parliaments. Therefore, the hon. Member for King's Lynn was quite entitled to point out that if the Lord Chancellor wished to job he had it in his power to do so. He thought hon. Mem-

bers opposite were inclined to be a little ashamed of the accusations they made against the late Lord Chancellor. The Liberal Press had teemed with accusations against the late "Lord High Jobber," as he was called. [*"Order!"*]

MR. WADDY (Lincolnshire, Brigg) rose to Order, and asked what on earth they had to do with the character of the late Lord Chancellor?

THE CHAIRMAN: No; it is not in Order. We are restricted here to the salary of the Speaker of the House of Lords.

MR. HANBURY: I have pointed out that the Speaker of the House of Lords has patronage, and it was in connection with patronage that the late Lord Chancellor was accused—

MR. WADDY: I ask, again, if the hon. Member is in Order in referring to the late Lord Chancellor?

THE CHAIRMAN: No; he is not in the Vote at all.

*MR. A. C. MORTON asked if the late Lord Chancellor could not be referred to for purposes of illustration?

THE CHAIRMAN said, that these references were clearly out of Order.

MR. HANBURY said, that his object in rising was to protect the present Speaker of the House of Lords from the gross insults that were hurled against the late Lord Chancellor by the Liberal Party. [*Cries of "Order!"*]

MR. H. H. FOWLER: I rise to Order. What right has the hon. Member to charge Members on this side of the House with hurling insults against the late Lord Chancellor? [*Cries of "Order!"*]

THE CHAIRMAN: The President of the Local Government Board is entitled to rise to Order. I hope that the hon. Member for Preston will have regard to the orderly conduct of Debate. Whatever his motive may be in persisting in these references, I would point out that no charge whatever has been made against the present Lord Chancellor, and the only question before the Committee is that of his salary as Speaker of the House of Lords.

MR. HANBURY said, the House had a right to protect everybody to whom it paid these large salaries from the violent insults often directed against them. [*Cries of "Order!"*] He was perfectly in Order, and was not going to be put

down by the President of the Local Government Board.

MR. H. H. FOWLER: I rise to Order. The question is as to the salary of the present holder of the Office of Speaker of the House of Lords. I venture to say that this House has no right to discuss the conduct of any previous Lord Chancellor, whether for good or for evil. I say that all that the Committee is entitled to do is to discuss the administrative action of Lord Herschell.

SIR J. FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.): I would ask whether it can possibly be out of Order for the hon. Member to deprecate the holding of more than one Office by the Lord Chancellor on the ground that the tenure of such Office has previously been made a cause of attack?

THE CHAIRMAN: That is not the ground taken up by the hon. Member. As I pointed out, he was out of Order in referring to the late Lord Chancellor in connection with this matter. The only question before the Committee is the position of the present Lord Chancellor as Speaker of the House of Lords.

MR. HANBURY said, it was exactly Lord Herschell's position as Speaker of the House of Lords that he was endeavouring to support. ["Oh!"] He was deprecating any treatment of the noble Lord as Speaker of the House of Lords by any Party in the House similar to the treatment to which the late Speaker of the House of Lords had been subjected. ["Oh!"] He was glad to see that the Gladstonian Party were thoroughly ashamed of their attacks. [*Cries of "Order!"*] He was not going to submit to these interruptions.

MR. H. H. FOWLER: I ask whether the hon. Member for Preston is to defy the Chair in the way he is deliberately doing?

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is distinctly out of Order, and I must request him to discontinue his observations.

MR. TOMLINSON: On the point of Order—

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! I cannot permit this. When I have ruled an hon. Member out of Order somebody else rises and raises the same point in a different form.

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MR. SEXTON: As to a point of Order, does not the Standing Order empower the Chair to direct an hon. Member who defies the ruling of the Chair to withdraw?

THE CHAIRMAN: There is no question about that. But the hon. Member has submitted to my ruling, therefore there is an end of the matter.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT was sorry the hon. Member for King's Lynn had thought it necessary to use strong expressions in connection with the Office of Lord Chancellor.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I was defending the Lord Chancellor.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: I am sorry he should have used strong epithets—

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I was provoked by the denial of the President of the Local Government Board.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, he thought they ought to discuss these things in a reasonable frame of mind, and not throw stones at either the late or the present Lord Chancellor. The salary of the Speaker of the House of Lords had been fixed at £4,000 a year so long ago as 1832; therefore, for 60 years it had been paid, sometimes by a Conservative and sometimes by a Liberal Government, and yet he did not suppose that it had ever been called in question before. The hon. Member for King's Lynn was a new Member, and, to that extent, was justified in going into these matters. But however objectionable the system of holding a plurality of appointments might be, he did not think it would be said of the Offices of Speaker of the House of Lords and Lord Chancellor. The Speaker of the House of Lords stood in a peculiar position. He had not the powers possessed by the Speaker of the House of Commons; but, at the same time, the condition of things which now prevailed had continued for 60 years. Unless there was some real grievance—any objection upon which anyone could put his finger—it was not a wise thing to raise these questions in Committee of Supply. He, for one, should certainly oppose the proposal.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES said, he thought it desirable to raise this question of pluralism, especially in the case of this most notorious and remarkable pluralist the Lord Chancellor. As to the

present arrangement having continued since 1832, he should think that, in the minds of hon. Members opposite, that was a good argument for making the change now. In 1832 there was a larger proportion of work in the House of Lords than at present, and a less proportion of work in the Commons. He had no desire to press his Amendment, however. He was satisfied with having raised the question, and perhaps some day when they had a real Radical Government in power, and not a sham one, these salaries of the Lord Chancellor would be brought down to proper proportions, or one of them would be done away with. He would withdraw the Amendment.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES said, he wished to move to reduce the salary of the messenger to the Crown Office and the messenger to the Lord Chancellor, but after what had occurred he was doubtful whether he could do it, for he understood that the Lord Chancellor was not on the Vote. He could not conceive how the Lord Chancellor could have this messenger if he was not on the Vote.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: He has the messenger as Speaker of the House of Lords.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES: No; it is not as Speaker, but as Lord Chancellor, according to the Estimates. It certainly is not as President of the Supreme Court of Chancery—

THE CHAIRMAN (interrupting): It is out of Order to do indirectly what cannot be done directly. The position of the Lord Chancellor cannot be discussed on this item.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES said, he wished to move to reduce the Vote by £84 for the messenger of the Lord Chancellor, who did not exist in the Vote. If this messenger was attached to the Speaker of the House of Lords it would be a different thing.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A, Salaries, be reduced by £45."—(*Mr. Gibson Bowles.*)

SIR W. HARCOURT said, he did not think this was a question on which

Mr. Gibson Bowles

they should spend much time. If the hon. Member wished to strike out the salary of the messenger of the Lord Chancellor they had better at once have a Division upon the question. He moved that the Question be now put.

Question, "That the Question be now put," put, and agreed to.

Question, "That Item A, Salaries, be reduced by £45," put accordingly, and negatived.

Original Question again proposed.

MR. HANBURY said, he desired to call attention to the disproportion that existed between the salaries of the officers of the House of Lords as compared with the salaries of the officers of the House of Commons for precisely similar work, or, he should say, for a great deal less work. He was one of those Tories who, while he thought that this branch of the Constitution, which some people looked on as anomalous, ought to be maintained, at the same time thought they ought, as far as possible, to relieve it of many excrescences which deprived it of its value. The House of Lords, with regard to the salaries of its officials, stood in an unfavourable position. Though the officials of the House of Lords did less work than the officials of the House of Commons, their salaries averaged at least 30 per cent. more. Take the case of the Clerk of the Parliaments. He received £2,500 a year, whilst the Clerk to the House of Commons received £2,000, or £500 less. The Clerk to the House of Commons had a residence in the House of Commons, but the Clerk of the Parliaments had another £500 in lieu of a house. That the work of the Clerk of the House of Commons was much more important than that of the other official was demonstrated by the fact that it was deemed necessary for the former to reside here, but not for the latter. With regard to the officials of the House of Lords, he had to complain that they were all pluralists or drew salaries "personal to the holder." These were two points in the Estimates which he, for one, was prepared to fight from beginning to end. If a salary was good enough for one man it was good enough for another. There were, he believed, 32 officials on the establishment of the

House of Lords, and no less than 27 of those had asterisks or other marks against their names, showing that they were either pluralists or had salaries personal to them as present holders of the Office. The Clerk Assistant in the House of Lords received £1,200 a year, and the Clerk Assistant of the House of Commons received only £1,000 a year. Take the case of the senior clerks. In every individual instance in the House of Lords, they started at higher salaries than in the House of Commons. All the senior clerks in the House of Commons started at the initial salary of £650; but every clerk in the House of Lords started at £50 higher—namely, at from £700—which was the lowest—to £850. Nearly every one of them, also, for no special reason that he could see, had an extra £150 a year. In one case the extra allowances amounted to £350 a year, and in another case to £450 a year. There were in the House of Lords 12 junior clerks—and all these clerks did the same kind of work as that performed by the clerks in the House of Commons, only much less of it—and the number of junior clerks in the House of Commons was 23. They started at a minimum salary of £100 a year in the House of Commons, and the 23 in that House received only £200 a year more than the 11 in the House of Lords, the total figures being £6,250 and £6,450. It was monstrous that there should be that difference—a difference which ran all the way through the list from the Clerk of the Parliaments to the messengers. The messengers in the House of Lords rose to £170, while in the House of Commons they only rose to £150, the bulk of them receiving £120 per annum. Why there should be this difference he was at a loss to imagine, particularly as the work was a great deal less. Salaries ought to be paid according to the work that the recipients performed, and it ought to be possible to point to the House of Lords as an example in this respect. If the House of Lords did not set an example, how could they expect other Departments of the Civil Service to attend to the matter. The House of Commons was bad enough, but the House of Lords set a shocking example. He was aware that they could not disturb the holders of these offices, but now that they had a Radical Government in power, he

thought that there ought to be some security that when new appointments were made the holders should be paid on a lower scale than the present. They had had Committees inquiring into this matter. He found that one sat in 1889, and brought in two Reports. Would the House believe it, that the whole of the first Report was that the salaries of four housemaids should be reduced to 10s. per week? That was the beginning and the end, and the sum total of the whole of the Report, and in order to carry out that revolutionary proceeding the Committee had to support itself by the Report of the previous Committee which had similarly dealt with 12 housemaids. The language they concluded with sounded strange and mysterious—

“The scheme of the Lord Great Chamberlain (that was, as to the reduction of salaries) has been found to give a better security for the Palace of Westminster, and for the maintenance of order and regularity therein.”

Another matter on which he felt strongly was the number of official residences. There were a great deal too many of them, and they did not know where the expense began and ended. The House of Lords was a notorious offender in this respect. The House of Commons was an offender, but nothing to be compared with the House of Lords. There was in the House of Lords an official called the Black Rod. He was a distinguished Admiral who did not do his work. He had an official residence valued at £500 a year, he drew a salary of £2,000 a year, and he got full Admiral's retired pay. He received fees in addition as an officer of the Garter. Well, when the House of Commons had to be summoned to the House of Lords, Black Rod, who was the proper person to do the summoning, sent to them an official called “The Yeoman Usher of the Black Rod,” who got £300 a year for doing Black Rod's work. He (Mr. Hanbury) was not sure that it was not proper for the dignity of the House of Commons to have the right official to summon them. At any rate, the officials of the House of Lords ought to come under the Rules and Regulations which bound other Departments of the Government. There was a Rule that men in the Public Service should retire at the age of 65. If Black Rod was over 65, then he ought to retire. If he

was under 65, he ought to come and do his work, and not employ a deputy to do it for him. There were other official residences in the House of Lords. The Librarian had an official residence, but the Librarian in the House of Commons had not. The Secretary to the Lord Great Chamberlain had a house—why on earth he could not conceive. Why should such a functionary as that occupy space in this building when they all knew that space was very much wanted here? Similarly the resident Superintendent had a house in the House of Lords. He (Mr. Hanbury) held that these residences ought to be done away with altogether, and that, if necessary, residence salary should be substituted. That would be found economical in the long run. The House of Commons voted these moneys, and the House of Commons ought to have control over the officials in the House of Lords as well as in the House of Commons. At present the regulating Act was 5 Geo. IV., chap. 82—an Act for the Better Regulating of the Office of Clerk of the Parliaments. What was the reason the House of Lords officials were not regulated by the ordinary rules that covered Civil Departments? They were under a special Act of their own. There was no limit as to age. A man might be appointed to a position at any age. There was no qualification for a clerkship in the House of Lords. They should insist upon the ordinary qualifications—that was, they should insist upon the person to be appointed having a Civil Service certificate. Then, again, there should be equality as between clerks of the House of Lords and the Civil Service clerks. That was not the case at present. Then he came to the bargain struck with the Lords as to fees. In return for the Commons voting the salaries the Lords handed over certain fees. It had been a standing rule of the Civil Service for years that these fees should be treated as appropriated in aid, and he did not understand how it was that the same rule did not apply to the House of Lords as applied to the ordinary Departments. But, as a matter of fact, the Lords did not hand over all the fees, for the pensions were to a large extent paid out of them. The manner in which the fees were dealt with, and in which they might be dealt with, was such that it was perfectly

Mr. Hanbury

ridiculous to say they got any *quid pro quo*. The expenses of the House of Lords reached £100,000 annually, and they only got £25,000 back, leaving £75,000. This was a question that ought to be dealt with. They in the House of Commons had set a better example in regard to their own clerks. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had expressed himself very favourably to the view he (Mr. Hanbury) now took, and he hoped he would have him on his side in these matters when they came up. He would urge that the two Houses of Parliament ought to set a good example in all respects connected with their officials, and both Houses should be put on the same footing as other Civil Departments. He moved to reduce the Vote by £500.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item C, Salaries, be reduced by £500."—(*Mr. Hanbury.*)

SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, the hon. Member who had just spoken had not looked fairly at both sides of the question. He had looked only at one side; but he might have drawn attention to the other. He sympathised with the hon. Member in many of the remarks he made on the subject of economy, but he certainly could not agree with him in the opinion that the House of Lords had done nothing in that direction with regard to the salaries and charges of its officials. In 1889 a Committee went fully into the question of the salaries, pensions, and other expenses connected with the House of Lords, and that Committee, whose Report had been laid before both Houses, recommended changes and reductions in the salaries, &c., which, if carried out, would effect a saving of £6,874.

MR. HANBURY said, there were two Reports. The second one only made recommendations.

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, the second Report was adopted by the House of Lords, and the recommendations made had, so far, been acted upon that up to the present a saving of £2,304 a year had been effected. Reductions were being effected as vacancies occurred; sooner was impossible, because of vested interests. The figures were:—Serjeant-at-Arms, including Deputy (£250)—present, £1,500; future, £1,250; saving, £250. Clerk of the Parliaments—present, £3,000; future, £2,000;

saving, £1,000. Clerk Assistant, £2,100 present salary ; future, £1,500 ; saving £600. Chief Clerk—present, £1,200 ; this remained as at present. Then they had two junior Clerks at £700, to be abolished ; accountants to be reduced from £1,030 to £600 ; Black Rod, reduction from £2,000 to £1,000 ; Secretary to the Lord Great Chamberlain and Yeoman Usher, £1,200 to £500—reduction of £700 ; Doorkeepers, &c., £3,075 to £2,500—reduction of £575 ; housekeeping, £783 to £364—reduction, £419. Of these the following had been effected to date, vacancies having permitted : — Clerk Assistant, £2,100 to £1,500, reduction £600 ; allowance of a senior clerk, £150 saved ; one junior clerk reduced, saving £350 ; accountants, £600, reduction of £430 ; Yeoman Usher of Black Rod, £1,000, reduction of £700 ; housekeeping, £783 to £709, a reduction of £74. The total was, as he had said, £2,304. The points of attack might be summarised thus :—(a) absence of age-retirement rule ; (b) independent treatment of pensions ; (c) patronage ; (d) general expensiveness. As to the first point, the Public Accounts Committee in their third Report expressed the hope

“That the authorities charged with the regulation of the offices of both Houses will consider the question how far they can be assimilated to other Public Departments by the adoption of the principle of compulsory retirement as laid down by the 17th clause of the Order in Council of the 15th August, 1890.”

This paragraph would be communicated officially by the Treasury to the authorities of the House, and it was to be hoped that those authorities would see their way to adopt the recommendations so temperately, but distinctly, expressed by the Committee. It was only fair to give the House of Lords an opportunity of dealing with the matter themselves before the House of Commons moved in regard to it. There was no immediate hurry, as it appeared that there was no member of the House of Lords staff not holding a Patent Office to which the rule would apply. It was, doubtless, an anomaly that the Lords' pensions should not only be fixed by the Lords, but paid out of a fund not voted by Parliament. In the former respect they were like the Commons, but the Commons' pensions were paid from the Superannuation Vote

in the usual manner. The only practical difference between the two cases was that the particulars of the Lords' pensions were not published, except that a list of names and amounts was given in the account of the Lords' Fee Fund annually laid before the House of Commons. The Clerk of Parliaments stated that all the pensions had been granted under the terms, and on the scale, of the Superannuation Act of 1859, except one, of whom the service extended over 49 years, and the case was treated as under an earlier Act. The Lords might agree, without derogation of their position, to put their pensions on the Superannuation Vote. Again, the principal officers of the Lords were appointed, like the permanent officers of Public Departments and those of the House of Commons, by nomination of the Crown or of Ministers. The Lords' officers, however, held office in several cases by Patent—again like the permanent officers of the House of Commons. It might be fairly questioned whether they should not in the future hold office, like ordinary Civil servants, during pleasure, but this change could only be introduced as changes arose, and would probably require legislation. As regarded the clerical establishment, it was true that, as in the Commons, these officers were in form nominated by the Clerk of the Parliaments, on whom this disagreeable duty was imposed by Statute or by his Patent. But successive Clerks of Parliament had minimised this responsibility by arranging for a limited competition for each vacancy, the number nominated on each occasion being at present six—sufficient to secure effective competition. Whether open competition would be an improvement on this plan was a matter for consideration. All the staff of the House of Lords, with the usual exception of those in Patent Offices, held Civil Service certificates. On the last point, that of salaries, he had already replied. He thought the questions raised should be considered in a fair and reasonable spirit, and that the House should not adopt in haste the view taken by the hon. Member.

*MR. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough) said, he need not follow the hon. Member for Preston at any length, but he would gladly support the hon. Member's Amendment. He (Mr.

Morton) had on several occasions raised this question. His opinion was that the Committee should have the courage to reduce the Vote in order to impress upon the House of Lords the fact that the money voted belonged to the rate-payers of the country, and ought, consequently, to be economically expended. He objected to reducing the wages of labourers and servant maids (as was the custom of our Government) and refusing to reduce the salaries of the highly-paid officers who did the least work. If these extravagant salaries were to be paid to the officers of the other House, it would be necessary to reconsider the salaries of the officers of this House with a view to increasing them. His view was that the fees should not be dealt with as at present. A very large sum was spent in pensions. That was not fair. If these matters were to go on as at present, they would have to consider the position of the officers of the House of Commons, because they did ten times more work than those of the Lords and were not half as well treated. He hoped the reduction of the Vote would be carried.

MR. JACKSON said, he could not allow the Vote to pass without one remark. It seemed to be taken as surprising that the anxiety for economy should be confined to one side of the House; but before this discussion arose at all the idea of economy had been acted upon by others than those of the other side.

MR. A. C. MORTON: Do you mean the House?

MR. JACKSON said, the hon. Member was not listening to what he was saying. He believed that the Treasury officials always did their best to secure economy with efficiency.

MR. A. C. MORTON: No!

MR. JACKSON said, he regretted that the hon. Member should not think so. He believed that these matters should be managed as they were in ordinary private firms, so that injustice should not be done to the men themselves.

MR. A. C. MORTON: Subject to a quarter's notice.

MR. JACKSON said, that would be a part of the contract, and, therefore, their part would be no injustice. But if a man was engaged otherwise, he believed his right ought to be respected. He ventured to say that if these salaries

were compared by any impartial person with the salaries paid in the House of Commons, it would be found that they were very reasonable salaries for the amount of work done, and they had had the statement of the Secretary to the Treasury that as vacancies arose every one of the economies recommended by the Committee would be brought into operation. Members of the Government who were brought into contact with those officers must bear testimony to their willingness at all times to combine efficiency with economy. While he was at the Treasury he never had the slightest difficulty with those officers. He had always met with, on their part, the greatest readiness to do everything possible to bring the appointments in the House of Lords into line with the appointments of the House of Commons, and effect economy in every possible way.

MR. BARROW (Southwark, Bermondsey) said, the hon. Member for Preston had stated that 12 clerks in the House of Lords had a gross salary of £200 or £300 more than 23 clerks in the House of Commons. He would like to ask the Secretary to the Treasury what comparison these salaries would have to each other when the proposed economies were effected?

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES said, it was refreshing to hear speeches in favour of economy from the other side of the House. He had always believed that it was possible to find a few honest Radicals who were in favour of economy, and he was glad to find proof on this occasion that he was right. Everybody had admitted that the salaries of the House of Lords were considerably greater than those of corresponding offices in the House of Commons, and nobody had disputed the fact—not even the Olympians of the Front Benches—that these salaries were greater than they ought to be. The only answer that had been given by the Government was that a Committee appointed in 1889 had recommended certain reductions, and that in course of time those reductions would be effected. But these reductions were always postponed, and he would remind the Government in the words of the poet that “reduction deferred maketh the heart sick.” It was to be hoped that the reductions would not be long deferred. He sug-

Mr. A. C. Morton

gested that the Secretary to the Treasury should, with that severe air which he could so well command, inform the proper authorities that the House of Commons would not be trifled with any longer; that it would insist on the clerkships of the House of Lords being reduced to a proper level; that it wished for some immediate result, instead of being told that if they waited for a few years the reductions would come. But, above all, let the Secretary to the Treasury assume his very severest air and tell the authorities that they had no right whatever to presume to withdraw these clerks from the ordinary rules governing the ordinary Civil servants; to claim that they were something above and beyond ordinary Civil servants, that they could retire then at any time, and confer upon them any pension they pleased. If the Committee did not get some assurance that these things were not stopped there would be trouble on the Estimates next year. The Committee had also been told that a large number of these gentlemen in the House of Lords had official residences. If a decayed officer, or the reduced widow of a decayed officer, were accommodated with apartments in any of the Royal Palaces of this country, they were made to pay rates on the rooms they occupied. The gentlemen who lived in the Royal Palace of Westminster were not decayed; they were not even widows; they were persons in the enjoyment of robust health and large salaries, and they ought, therefore, to be made to pay rates.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: I do not think they pay rates.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Why not?

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: I cannot tell.

MR. WHITTAKER (York, W.R., Spen Valley) said, it seemed to him that these positions and salaries were a scandal. The continuance of them was a scandal, and could not be justified. The Secretary to the Treasury could not say that it was a matter of honour to continue a scandal. If they desired to have economy in the administration of State affairs they must commence in this very building, and so set an example for the rest of the Kingdom to follow. He hoped the Government, as representing the Radical Party, would take the matter

in hand. It was most disgraceful to find officers of Parliament drawing salaries for doing nothing. The Radicals through the country would never stand the continuance of such a system, and the sooner it was brought to an end the better.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said, he thought every Radical in the House had reason to be thankful to the hon. Member who had raised this question; and though he thought the Secretary to the Treasury the most courteous and able of officers, those who were in favour of a policy of economy had reason to be dissatisfied with the answer he had given to the hon. Member for Preston. He himself was in favour of the general principle of treating public servants with as much consideration as possible. He was in favour of economy, but he was also in favour of the kind and fair treatment of all servants of the Public Departments. What he thought would strike everyone as curious was that whilst they had been discussing recently the question of the dismissal of dockyard servants, the Secretary to the Treasury did not get up and make the statement that a man once employed in the dockyards was entitled to be employed there for the rest of his days. He admitted the general principle that a considerable amount of consideration should be shown to the *employés* of the Government; but he was unable to see the reason for the radical difference between the treatment given to the higher officers and the treatment given to the poorer officers.

MR. JACKSON: There is no difference according to contract.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he did not see the meaning of that interruption. There was no exposed contract that these high officers should be employed for life, though that might be implied, and there was no exposed contract that men employed in the dockyards should be employed for life, and that being so he could not see how the authorities were entitled to drive away, without a week's or even a day's notice, a dockyard *employé* who had perhaps a wife and seven or eight children dependent upon him, while these high officials were retained for life at salaries which were double what they were fairly entitled to. This question of the high salaries of the officials of the House of Lords had been

before the Commons for years. He had raised it himself nine or ten years ago. It was a question that should be raised year after year until the remedy was obtained, and he thought it was a reproach to the Radicals that on this occasion the initiative should have been left to a Conservative Member. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Leeds had told them the Clerk of Parliaments got £2,500 a year. As he understood it, the Clerk of Parliaments in another place occupied the same position as the Chief Clerk in the House of Commons; but to compare, as the right hon. Gentleman had done, the duties of the Clerk of the Upper House, which sat on an average one hour each day a certain portion of the year, with the onerous and laborious duties of the Chief Clerk of this House, which sat each day from 3 o'clock till 12 o'clock, and sometimes till 3 o'clock in the morning, was grotesque and absurd. The right hon. Gentleman was one of the most successful business men in York, but if he had conducted his business on the principle which he applied to public servants it would not be long before he was in the Bankruptcy Court.

MR. JACKSON: The hon. Gentleman has misunderstood what I said. He is in error in saying that I said that what the House of Lords are at present paying is earned by these clerks. What I said was that if the salaries suggested by the Committee, and which are to be put into operation according as vacancies arise, were impartially considered they would be deemed fair for the work to be done.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he thought the right hon. Gentleman had deviated somewhat from his original statement. It was quite true that the right hon. Gentleman had said what he repeated now, but it was also true that the right hon. Gentleman had said that the gentlemen who filled these offices did not get more than they were entitled to. But he would not enter into a discussion on that point. This question came home to the House of Commons in another way. There was a complaint made against this Assembly which was unknown in reference to any other Assembly of the kind in the world, that it was absolutely without adequate accommodation for its Members. Members had not sufficient seats on the floor

of the House. At certain periods during the Session it was as much as a man's life was worth to fight his way into the House. The explanation was that there were no less than five officers of the House of Lords accommodated with residences in the Palace, thereby occupying the space that should be devoted to the uses of Members of the House of Commons. Then, again, 12 clerks of the House of Lords, with much less work, received larger salaries than 23 clerks of the House of Commons. That was a most scandalous state of affairs; it was high time for the House to deal with it; and he certainly would support the hon. Member for Preston in the Division Lobby.

MR. WADDY (Lincolnshire, Brigg) said, that on several occasions in recent years, he, in common with others, when he sat in Opposition, felt it incumbent on him to criticise these salaries and to vote against them. He did not think that one's attitude on this question was altered by the fact that he sat on a different side of the House, and he therefore felt bound to support the Motion. He did not agree with the theory suggested by the Secretary to the Treasury that they were to wait until the deaths of the various incumbents of these various offices before they made the alterations which were admitted to be reasonable and proper. If it so happened that by some reason or other some years ago these people came into the possession of offices to which they were not entitled, they ought to thank God that they had been left to the enjoyment of them so long, and give them up now. It was most unreasonable that the House should go on paying these men salaries which they believed to be wrong. It was not business; it was not common sense. If a gentleman retired from a high position, having, as in the case of the gentleman who filled the office of Black Rod, earned the respect and esteem of those best calculated to judge of his character, it did not follow that he should be paid a big salary for doing in Parliament, not figuratively but absolutely, nothing at all. If Members met that gentleman in the Lobby they would not know him. He was away from the place, and he got his duties discharged by somebody for £300 a year.

Mr. T. P. O'Connor

THE CHAIRMAN : Order, Order ! That salary does not come under this sub-head.

MR. WADDY said, he would conclude by saying that he would vote for the Amendment before the Committee.

MR. HANBURY said, he thought his right hon. Friend the Member for North Leeds (Mr Jackson) was under some misapprehension as to the terms under which the Clerks of the House of Lords served. The Public Accounts Committee which sat last year had the Clerks of Parliament before them, and in their Report they said—

“ The Clerk of Parliaments was appointed by the Crown, and is removable by an Address from the House of Lords. The Clerks at the Table were appointed by the Lord Chancellor, and are only removable by Order of the House. All the other Clerks attached to the Office of the Clerk of Parliaments are appointed by that officer, and are removable at pleasure by him.”

The Clerk of Parliaments himself in his evidence said—

“ My own appointment is for life ; the other two clerks are for life, but all the other clerks are removable at pleasure.”

Therefore, these clerks were under a totally different position from the clerks in the Civil Service.

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes 103 ; Noes 95.—(Division List, No. 294.)

SIR M. HICKS BEACH (Bristol, W.): The Committee has just had a very remarkable Division, and before we part with this Vote we might ask the Government what course they intend to take. It is all very well for a Committee of the House of Commons by a Vote to reduce this Estimate by £500. No doubt we have the power to say what money should be granted for the salaries of the officials of the House of Lords, but it is quite another thing whether the Vote will have any practical effect. The Committee ought to remember that the House of Commons is not omnipotent in this matter. The House of Lords are in receipt of their fees, which amount to a very large annual sum, just as this House is in receipt of its fees. All these fees are now paid into the Exchequer, not by statute, but simply by arrangement, and I venture to say that if sufficient pro-

vision should not, in the estimation of the House of Lords, be made for the salaries of its officers it would be legally in the power of that House to do as it likes with its own fees. [*Cries of “ Oh ! ”*] I am not suggesting that course, but I am merely stating what I believe to be the law of the case, and I would point out that the matter is one of considerable delicacy as between the two Houses, and that any incautious action would lead to difficulties between them, which I do not think any thoughtful person would wish to see raised upon such a question as this. It is one thing to hold that the House of Lords ought to be put an end to. [*Loud Ministerial cheers.*] Hon. Members may cheer that sentiment, but I think they will find it extremely difficult to give practical effect to it. [*Opposition cheers and a voice, “ We will see ! ”*] That is not the question at issue. The question at issue is this. The House of Lords exists as part of the Constitution ; it must have officers, and they must be paid. [*A VOICE : Reasonably.*] Yes, reasonably. Under these circumstances, I ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what course he suggests? It may be very desirable to further consider the salaries of the officers of the House of Lords, but that question could be considered by a Joint Committee of both Houses and an amicable conclusion arrived at. It seems to me, however, that this matter cannot be allowed to rest upon a mere snap vote of the House of Commons, and I hope we shall have some statement from the Government.

SIR W. HARCOURT : I really thought when the right hon. Gentleman arose and addressed the Government in so alarming and serious a tone he was going to ask whether they considered that the vote imperilled their existence. The real truth is that votes in reference to the House of Lords are not fatal to the existence of the Government. It certainly is a matter which requires a good deal of consideration as to how far effect should be given to a vote of this character. I agree that it ought to be a question of amicable discussion and arrangement between the authorities of the two Houses, but I am not in a position at this instant to make any statement on the subject. I hope, however,

that when the Vote comes up upon Report the Government will be able to state what is to be done.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would take into account the fact that two leading Conservatives, supported by the right hon. Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain) and by the right hon. Member for Cambridge University (Sir J. Gorst), had gone into the Lobby against the Government, and that he would inform the Members of the other House that the feeling against them was so strong that the Amendment was supported from all parts of the House.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer has raised a question of some Constitutional importance—namely, that the votes in reference to the House of Lords are not fatal to the existence of the Government. That statement implies that the right hon. Gentleman is of opinion that the Government may pick and choose between their own Estimates, and that in some instances they would be rather pleased than otherwise if the Committee of that House reject them. This is certainly an entirely new doctrine. Up to now it has always been understood that when the Government lay their Estimates before the House of Commons they do so with a considerable sense of responsibility, and it has been supposed that no Government would lay Estimates before the House which they did not believe were necessary for carrying on the business of the country. I now understand from the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the Government has deliberately put before the House Estimates which they do not feel themselves conscientiously called upon to support. I cannot help thinking that my right hon. Friend has been led a little astray as to the meaning of the vote which has been given. I undoubtedly sympathise with the idea that the officials of the House of Lords ought not to be paid on a higher scale than those of the House of Commons. But I go beyond that. My opinion is that the Government occupy a very doubtful position, and I do not be-

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live that they any longer enjoy the confidence of the country, and that it is desirable they should be compelled at the earliest possible opportunity to ascertain the feeling of the country on the subject. In these circumstances it is the Constitutional right of the House of Commons to refuse them Supplies, and I gave my vote quite as much upon that ground as upon the merits of the particular Vote. I may say once for all that I cannot feel inclined to place any more money than I can possibly help at the disposal of Her Majesty's Government.

*MR. A. C. MORTON said, he took a different view from that held by the right hon. Gentleman, and thought that instead of the Government resigning the House of Lords ought to resign.

Original Question, as amended, "That £22,595 be granted for the said Service," put, and agreed to.

4. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £33,223, be granted to Her Majesty, to compete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1894, for the Salaries and Expenses in the Offices of the House of Commons."

MR. A. C. MORTON said, there was a feeling among the officials of the House of Commons that they were not paid as they ought to be, and he would ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether or not a Committee might be appointed to consider the subject?

SIR W. HARCOURT was understood to say that he had heard no complaints.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES disclaimed any desire to make an attack upon the Clerks of the House, but he must move to reduce the Vote by £500. The Chief Clerk had a residence and £2,000 a year. He wished to take his house from him, and if he would not give it up he wanted an equivalent part of his salary, £500 a year.

THE CHAIRMAN ruled the hon. Member's remarks out of Order.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES urged that it was undesirable the Clerk should have an official residence at all. It was not, he contended, an actual neces-

sity that the Clerk or the Clerk Assistants should be provided with an official residence at the House. It was a bad thing to live over the shop, to reside with their work, and it would be much more advantageous to health, and conducive to longevity, if the Clerk lived away from the House. He moved to reduce the Vote by £500.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item B be reduced by £500."—*(Mr. Gibson Bowles.)*

MR. A. C. MORTON did not wish to say anything on this reduction, which he did not understand, but he should take the opportunity of bringing the cases of some of the lower paid officers before the right hon. Gentleman.

*SIR J. GOLDSMID (St. Pancras, S.) asked the hon. Gentleman opposite not to press this Motion, which was decidedly against the feeling of the House. He was sure they did not consider the Clerks at the Table, who had a great deal of work to do, were overpaid, and any question of official residences ought to be settled on entirely different principles; moreover, what applied to one should apply to all. He, therefore, begged his hon. Friend not to press this matter.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I also join in the appeal which has just been made by my hon. Friend behind me. I am quite sure that putting a vote of this kind to the House would be extremely distasteful to all sides of the House, who have so much reason to be grateful to the Clerks at the Table for their services and the kindness they exhibit towards us, and especially in a Session where there has been a special strain put upon them—it would be a most ungrateful thing that such a question as this should be put to a vote. I hope, therefore, that the hon. Member will withdraw it.

MR. HANBURY said, when he was speaking on the subject of the appointments in the House of Lords, one argument he adduced against the existing system was that the salaries were too large, and the other was the irregular system on which the abodes of the clerks in that House were arranged. He thought if they were going to set an example to the Civil Service it ought to

be set by the House of Commons, and however well the work might be done by the clerks in that House the system upon which they worked was essentially a bad one. Like the clerks in the House of Lords they were exempt from the ordinary Rules of the Civil Service, and the Order in Council recently framed by the Treasury was ignored by them on the ground that they were on a different footing from all the rest of the clerks in the Civil Service. He complained that the Civil Service Commissioners had absolutely nothing whatever to do with the clerks of this House, and all his remarks relative to the system of appointment of clerks in the House of Lords applied to the House of Commons with the exception of salaries, which were much less in this than in the other House. He was aware there was a Commission consisting of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Speaker, and others to regulate the salaries, &c., of the clerks, but practically the whole of the appointments were in the gift of the Principal Clerk at the Table, and he believed every clerk under him held office at his pleasure. The Public Accounts Committee, although they did not express any opinion of what ought to be done in this matter as being outside their functions, indicated that in their opinion the existing arrangements were not to the advantage of the Public Service. Undoubtedly the whole staff of clerks being appointed under a special Act of Parliament had no recognised head; they were subjected to no limit of age for entering and retiring from the service, and were not under the regulation which applied to other branches of the Civil Service. It was ridiculous in these days to have these salaries regulated by a large Commission, who acted *ex officio*, and had practically no responsibility in the matter. The whole responsibility rested in the House of Commons and with the Speaker of the House, and having condemned the House of Lords staff it was necessary they should look into the organisation of the House of Commons staff.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, the hon. Member said that Clerks of the House of Commons were entirely appointed by the Principal Clerk at the Table, without any examination.

MR. HANBURY : I said he had the right to so appoint them.

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, he had the right, but he really appointed by nomination. He selected six persons to be examined by the Civil Service Commissioners, and he took their recommendation. Therefore, although it was a matter of grace, the principal Clerk did carry out that principle, and although he was not compelled by Act of Parliament to do it, it was but fair to him to say he had acted upon that principle for years. It was not correct to say that the Clerks of the House were entirely free from all the requirements of the Superannuation Act. All the clerks were placed under the Act and were subject to its conditions. With respect to the Order in Council as to retirement at 65, he must say they were not under that Order. The House of Commons declined to place itself under the Order. He was told, however, by the Speaker of the House of Commons, only a few days ago, that the spirit of the Order was carried out. He might say that this was a matter entirely for the Commission for the management of the House of Commons, which included the Speaker, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Home Secretary, and the First Lord of the Treasury, together with two of Her Majesty's Judges. If any change were made in the direction suggested by his hon. Friend, it would have to be carried out by legislation, and unless they saw that the spirit of the Rules regulating the other Departments were not carried out, he, for one, did not feel inclined to take any strong action, but to leave it to the Commission, who, he believed, were acting on the principle his hon. Friend desired to see carried out.

MR. SEXTON (Kerry, N.) said, he did not know how the Commission was appointed, what were its duties, how often it met, or whether it had more than an ornamental existence, but he thought it was very peculiar that clerical appointments should be made at the discretion of any individual, even of a gentleman so accomplished as the Clerk of the House, under the supervision of the Speaker, and he intended at the earliest opportunity to move and to press upon the

House the duty of appointing a Committee to bring the department of the Clerk of the House into conformity with the ordinary rule of the Public Service. Economy was always desirable, but if economy was to be entered upon it ought not to commence in the House of Commons but in the House of Lords. The officers of the House of Lords had lighter duties and higher pay than those of the House of Commons, and until there was some reduction in the salaries of the officers of the House of Lords it would be ridiculous to attack the officers of the House of Commons, whose duties were onerous, delicate, and exacting. He wished to put a question which might have an important bearing upon some future action of his connected with the personal experience he recently had in the House. He wished to ask whether the Clerk or the Clerk's Assistant had any duty cast upon him, or whether he had any right, when the Chairman of Ways and Means was in the Chair, to volunteer advice when the question of the punitive treatment of a Member was under consideration? Was the Clerk under such circumstances entitled to interfere, and suggest and press a course upon the Chairman, or was he, as in the case of the Speaker, only to give advice when he was asked for it? He thought it was extremely desirable that this question should be made clear, because, unless he received an assurance that it was not within the scope of the duty of the Clerk or Assistant Clerk to suggest punitive action, such as the expulsion of a Member by the Chairman, it would be his duty to take the earliest opportunity he could find for testing the opinion of Members upon the circumstances of his expulsion on a recent occasion when the Standing Order was put in force in a manner in which it was never intended to be applied. He had put the question solely in the hope that someone might be able to answer it, and that it might be made clear that no Member in future was likely to be placed in danger of censure or expulsion, because of the unasked and unauthorised intrusion of any Official of the House. Unless it was made clear it was not within the purview and right of the Officials of Parliament, he feared it would be necessary to take some future action?

SIR W. HARCOURT: The hon. Member has asked a question, and I will endeavour to answer it. I believe the Clerks at the Table are the advisers, and the only advisers to whom the Speaker, if necessary, and the Chairman of Committees can have recourse. I do not believe that any such circumstances really occurred as those the hon. Gentleman has suggested. I am sure that the Clerks faithfully perform their duties, giving such advice as is required either by the Speaker or the Chairman of Committees. I hope, under those circumstances, the hon. Member will be satisfied with the assurance and declaration, and will not think it necessary to proceed farther in the matter.

***MR. GIBSON BOWLES** said, that in moving this reduction he wished to disclaim any desire to reduce the salaries of the Clerks of the House, to whom he, like all other Members, had been greatly indebted for their courtesy and assistance, and his reason for moving the reduction was to raise a question which had been ruled out of Order. Every one of his reductions were moved for a set purpose; he had not put down reductions at large, but for a specific and definite purpose. He should have asked leave to withdraw the Motion before had not a discussion sprung up upon a matter of importance, and he would now ask leave to withdraw the Motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

MR. HANBURY (Preston) said, that before parting from the question, as the Secretary to the Treasury did not appear to be aware of the constitution of this particular Commission, who would state the Members of whom it consisted, and he thought the right hon. Gentleman would agree with him that if any other Department were regulated by any such Commission the House of Commons would be the very first to question it and to put an end to its existence. The Commission that regulated the salaries, emoluments, and retiring allowances of the officials of the House consisted of the Speaker, the Secretaries of State, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Master of the Rolls, the Attorney

General, and the Solicitor General for the time being. It was a perfectly ridiculous Commission, and another year he should certainly press the Government of the day to put an end to so absurd a system, and to adopt a system by which they would have the Business of the House of Commons regulated in a manner more akin to that which regulated other Departments.

***MR. A. C. MORTON** said, that if the hon. Member for North Kerry (Mr. Sexton) moved for a Committee he would ask him to include in it the officers who were appointed by others than the Chief Clerk, because there were a number of officers of the House who were appointed by others, and he thought the inquiry should be general. But he wished to ask a question in regard to the chaplain of the House. The chaplain received £400 a year. He did not wish to interfere with that; but he would ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he would use his influence to get a Nonconformist chaplain appointed to act alternately. He belonged to the Church himself, but he wished to act fairly to his Nonconformist brethren. There were about half and half in the House, and he thought the Nonconformists were entitled to have a chaplain of their own way of thinking at least three days a week. [An hon. MEMBER: And a Roman Catholic.] By all means, if they liked. As the salary of the chaplain was paid for out of the taxes of the country, half of which were paid by Nonconformists, they were entitled to share in the benefits. He did not wish to move a reduction; but he would ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in the event of a vacancy occurring, to use his influence with the Speaker to get a Nonconformist appointed to act alternately with the Episcopal chaplain.

SIR W. HARCOURT: One of the difficulties of the House is the large number of questions with which we have to deal, and, to add to those questions, a theological competition with reference to the chaplain would be to increase the difficulties already sufficiently burdensome.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN wished to ask a question about one item in this

Vote coming under Sub-head E, as to the delivery of Parliamentary Papers. Formerly every Paper that was issued by Order of the House was delivered the next day to every Member of Parliament. He did not say that was an economical system; and it was found that some Members, instead of reading them, indulged in the reprehensible practice of selling them for waste paper, and on that account it was recommended that the number should be greatly reduced, and certain Papers were only sent to Members who applied. He did not object to that, but he wanted to point out that the new principle had been carried to excess. In the early part of the Session certain Papers were issued with regard to finance, and were published by the Government in explanation of the Home Rule Bill. These Papers only consisted of one or two pages, and the total value, if delivered to every Member, could not have amounted to £1 sterling. These Papers were withheld unless special application was made for them. In reply to a question from him, his right hon. Friend undertook to see that they were delivered, and afterwards those Papers were delivered. What he wished to ask was on what principle the delivery of Papers proceeded? In a recent Paper he received he found a notice of a very important Paper which was published annually, which gave very important particulars as to Revenue and Expenditure. That was a short Paper, and would not cost more than a halfpenny to print, and he could not conceive why that should not be forwarded. He understood that many Papers that were of interest were delayed, whilst many that were of no interest to the general body of Members were despatched at the earliest moment. He would be perfectly satisfied if the right hon. Gentleman (Sir J. T. Hibbert) would give him an assurance that he would look into the matter, and that he himself would undertake to have some responsibility in the matter. It was not desirable that the present inconvenience should be stereotyped, and if the right hon. Gentleman gave him an assurance on this point he would not press the matter further.

MR. CRILLY (Mayo, N.) said, he agreed with the right hon. Member for West

Mr. J. Chamberlain

Birmingham. The officials of the House were very courteous and obliging, but he thought better arrangements might be made for the distribution of Papers. From his experience he would say that it would be quite easy to alter the arrangements so as to meet the convenience of Members.

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston) said, he was also agreed as to the desirability of meeting the views of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham in this matter. There were certain Papers that they did not get until late in the day, and he did not think that should be the case, as it caused serious inconvenience to Members. The service of Papers might certainly be better than it was at present.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said, he only had one complaint to make, and that was that he got a whole pile of Papers which he did not want without asking for them; but, as regards Irish Papers, which he did want, he found that he could not get them without application. Surely there was some remedy for this?

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, there was justification for calling attention to this matter; but he would point out that the Rules for the distribution of Parliamentary Papers were laid down by a Committee appointed in 1889. All Votes, Proceedings, and Bills were distributed in the ordinary course, and so were Papers of special interest. He was sure if the hon. Member (Mr. T. W. Russell) intimated the class of Papers that would be of interest to him they would be forwarded. Orders had been given that all financial Papers relating to the Home Rule Bill should be distributed generally.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN said, all the Government Papers—all Papers presented by the Government—should be despatched as a matter of course.

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT: All Papers of general interest.

*MR. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough) said, he would mention the Return issued the other day as to the pay of Honorary Colonels. Such Returns as that should be placed in the same category with

others. [*Cries of "Oh"!*] Yes ; it was a matter he considered of general interest, and should be placed on a like footing or position.

An hon. MEMBER : In what position?

*MR. A. C. MORTON said, for his part, he thought such Papers were of general interest. He had sent them to the Public Library at Peterborough, and expected them to be filed, so that he could have the use of them for years.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall) said, there was a matter to which he would draw attention, upon which, he thought, hon. Members of all Parties would agree. Few of them would dispute that the expenditure on the Refreshment Department of the House of Commons was inadequate, and that the waiting arrangements were inefficient. He thought in this matter a mistake had been made in the past. A grant of £1,000 was inadequate to provide for the needs of 670 Members. The deficiency arose from the fact that the Kitchen Committee had to deal with a sum which was inadequate to the needs of the House. There were three great necessities. The first was better dining accommodation. The kitchen was wholly inadequate, and a better service room was required, so that the waiters could have a proper place in which to meet the demands made upon them. He did not complain of the refreshment contractor, Mr. Saunders. On the contrary, he said nothing could be more admirable than the manner in which that gentleman met the demands. He did not believe it would be possible to find a man who would attend to matters better than he did—certainly they would not get a man who would do it better at the same salary. But he had serious difficulties to contend with—waiting for the changes in the House and other matters, and he (Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett) said that under such conditions it was impossible for them to have a proper service. Members of the House were aware that a large number of persons waited in the vicinity of Westminster about 3 and 4 o'clock in the afternoon in expectation of engagement for their service as waiters. The result was,

because of the uncertainty and the risks the contractor had to encounter, that the attendance was very unsatisfactory, and Members did not know in what direction to turn. There should be, at least, a permanent staff of 20 or 30 head waiters—men who would know their duties, who would understand the ways of the House and the habits of Members who were accustomed to dine here. He repeated that the difficulties were not to be blamed upon the contractor or upon the waiters. It was the system that was at fault. Another thing was as to the necessity for increased accommodation. He hoped the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) would consider this very important question. He believed that in foreign Houses of Legislature the accommodation was 10, and, in some cases, even 20 times as great as here. They did not ask for much. £2,000 or £3,000 would not be a large subsidy when they remembered that Members had to be in attendance very often for 8 or 10 hours. He trusted the Government would give attention to this question.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said, he thought the Kitchen Department was extremely well conducted, considering that it was a ready-money transaction. He rose, however, to deal with the question of the distribution of Papers, which had been previously referred to, and he hoped the Government would consider that matter with a view to the improvement of the existing system.

*MR. A. C. MORTON : The Kitchen Committee should furnish a balance-sheet. They were entitled to have some statement of gain and loss. A promise was given on the point two years ago, and he would like to know if it were to be fulfilled?

MR. S. HERBERT (Croydon) said, it had been considered by successive Kitchen Committees that it would not be expedient to place before the House a full balance-sheet, which would give rise to discussions upon items. The Members of the Committee ought to be trusted. If the hon. Member (Mr. A. C. Morton) considered it necessary, perhaps there might be a statement made of the turnover.

*MR. A. C. MORTON: Showing losses by bad debts or otherwise?

*MR. S. HERBERT said, that it would be exceedingly difficult to show the actual losses. The Committee considered that the present method of dealing with the matter was more economic and satisfactory than the former one. He agreed as to the difficulties which had been mentioned. The communication in the Dining Room was absolutely inadequate for the demands that were made upon it when there was a full attendance of the House. The Kitchen was a mere passage, unsuited for providing those who dined at the present time—sometimes 300. They had also an inadequate dining room; and the only communication between the Dining Room and the kitchen was a lift of some three feet by two. He feared that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have some difficulty in meeting their demands; but he certainly hoped that the First Commissioner (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) would consult with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and that they would do their best to meet the difficulties that existed. His experience showed him that it was impossible to have the matter dealt with properly until structural alterations were made. They got at present £1,000. They had to make a profit of £2,000—for the average amount they paid was about £3,000—before they could pay their way. They sometimes had the greatest difficulty; and it was evident that they must have the structural alterations in order to meet the necessities of the case. As to the wages, if the Chancellor of the Exchequer could see his way to grant an additional £1,000 or £1,500, he thought the Kitchen Committee could do a good deal to improve the service. They might have a larger permanent staff—better hands than they had under the present system. The Committee would see that it would be inadvisable to have a full working staff to dine 300 Members, when they might often only have 150 Members to attend to. He thought that if they could get an increased grant from the Chancellor of the Exchequer—an increase, say, of £1,000 or £1,500 a year—the Kitchen Committee would be able to do a great deal in the way of improving the service.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I am sure we are all exceedingly obliged to the hon. Member and his colleagues for taking so much trouble for the comfort and convenience of the House. So far as I am concerned, I can assure him that, in concert with him, I shall be glad to consider anything that can tend to the comfort and convenience of the House. We have been compelled this Session to dine in the House more frequently and in larger numbers than at any previous period during my Parliamentary life. The accommodation here is the result of the British Constitution. Every public building in this country is unfit for the purpose for which it was intended; and if that is true of all the Public Offices outside we can hardly expect this House, the principal Office of all, to be an exception to the rule. Certainly there are difficulties with which we have to struggle. Everybody knows the great uncertainty there always is in the attendance—much greater than befalls any club—and we ought to make every allowance for those difficulties. I hope the Committee will accept the assurance on the part of the Government that they will do what they can, in concert with the Kitchen Committee, to improve the arrangements. I would now appeal to the Committee to allow this Vote to be taken. I should hope that the Treasury Vote might be disposed of to-night, and the Motion to destroy altogether the salary of the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

MR. ANSTRUTHER (St. Andrew's, &c.) said, he was glad the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had, on behalf of the Government—and he thought he might say on behalf of the whole House—recognised the admirable work of the Chairman of the Kitchen Committee. It was to be hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would favourably consider the making of an increased grant to the Committee as well as the granting of increased accommodation. He gathered from the right hon. Gentleman's last sentence that he would be willing to confer with the Kitchen Committee in regard to increasing the accommodation.

SIR W. HARCOURT: Increased accommodation is impossible.

MR. ANSTRUTHER: Increased accommodation in the money-lenders' sense.

Question put, and agreed to.

5. £52,458, to complete the sum for Treasury and Subordinate Departments.

MR. HENEAGE (Great Grimsby) said, he had put a notice of Amendment on the Paper to in certain contingencies prevent foreigners landing on our shores, and so infecting the country with cholera, but cholera had come now——

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall) rose to Order. He wished to know whether, if the right hon. Gentleman was allowed to continue, it would prevent the moving of the Amendment sixth down the list, referring to an item which came before the salary of the Chancellor of the Exchequer?

MR. HENEAGE said, he only wished to say that he did not propose to proceed with his Motion. The reason he was going to give was that he thought it exceedingly desirable that there should be entire harmony between the Government and everyone in the measures taken to get rid of the cholera now that it had come. He was anxious not only as Member for Great Grimsby, but as a Member of the Corporation of that town, to co-operate in every way with the Local Government Board. They could thresh out any point in which they disagreed afterwards.

*MR. A. C. MORTON said, he took some interest in the subject of cholera.

THE CHAIRMAN said, the Treasury had nothing to do with the question.

*MR. A. C. MORTON said, the subject came within the Department of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, for certain difficulties in the way of Port Sanitary Authorities had been removed by the right hon. Gentleman. He (Mr. Morton) rose to thank the Chancellor of the Exchequer for his action in that matter.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, that before he proceeded with the Motion he wished to make, he would ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who was in charge of the Business of the

House, whether he would consent to report Progress? ["No, no!"] He asked because he thought that the discussion of his Motion and of the next item would occupy some time.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I hope the Committee will proceed with this Vote. We have been getting on very satisfactorily, and I hope we shall continue in that course.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, he was quite ready to proceed. He had given notice of an Amendment to reduce the Vote for the First Lord of the Treasury, but he did not propose to move it. He wished, however, to call attention to certain phases of the policy of the Prime Minister. ["Oh!"] He did not wish to move the reduction of the right hon. Gentleman's salary, but he wished to direct attention to the fact that since the Prime Minister occupied his present position—since July or August last year—there had been throughout the country and the Empire and in our relations to Foreign Powers a general want of confidence. ["Oh, oh!"]

THE CHAIRMAN: It is out of Order to discuss the policy of the Government on this Vote.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, he did not propose to go into it at length, and he only gave that as the general basis of the particular subject to which he proposed to call the attention of the Committee. He did not intend to refer to the Irish policy of the Prime Minister. He wished to call attention to the fact that certain words used by the right hon. Gentleman some two years ago at Newcastle with regard to the evacuation of Egypt had led to very serious results. [*Cries of "Order!" and "Name!"*]

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman cannot on this Vote bring forward matters of policy. If he wishes to attack the Prime Minister he must do so in connection with some administrative act.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT [*Cries of "Order!"*]: Then I appeal to the Chairman of Committees to be good enough to inform me—[*Cries of*

"Name!"]—I am speaking with all respect to the Chairman of Committees, and I ask him to inform the Committee on what subject I can possibly impeach the Prime Minister in connection with this Vote? In dealing with the salary of the Foreign Secretary we are distinctly allowed to impeach his policy. I ask whether I am not at liberty to refer to certain declarations of the Prime Minister which I hold—rightly or wrongly—to have produced certain results?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I would ask, as a point of Order, whether an attack can be made on the Prime Minister on this Vote for a speech made by the right hon. Gentleman before he took Office?

THE CHAIRMAN: There is no doubt about the Rule. The only thing for which the Prime Minister is answerable is some administrative act done by him as First Lord of the Treasury. Any general impeachment of the policy of the right hon. Gentleman must take place in the House of Commons, and not in Committee of Supply. The case of the Foreign Secretary is different. He can be attacked in Committee for the policy of his Department.

*MR. J. W. SIDEBOTHAM (Cheshire, Hyde) asked that consideration should be given to the case of the Assistant Inspectors of Mines. He would not go at length into the matter if the Chancellor of the Exchequer would assure him that the matter was not entirely closed, but could be re-opened, and that the Government would investigate the matter and attempt to put a stop to the great injustice these men suffered under.

SIR W. HARCOURT said, he had great sympathy with this class of public servants. For many years he had been at the Home Office, and had had intimate personal relations with the Inspectors. These gentlemen were governed by regular rules which it was difficult to depart from; but he could assure the hon. Member that, if he or anyone else would bring the circumstances under his notice, he would give them the most favourable consideration.

*MR. J. W. SIDEBOTHAM: If I ask for an interview, will the right hon. Gentleman give it?

Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett

SIR W. HARCOURT: Yes; I shall be quite ready to speak to the hon. Member in private on the matter.

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston) said, these gentlemen were appointed under circumstances which led them to believe that they would receive a certain amount of superannuation so far as the Home Office was concerned. They were appointed at a time when there were no such Inspectors in the Public Service, so that there was no precedent to follow except in other branches of the Public Service.

SIR T. LEA (Londonderry, S.) said, he desired to move to reduce the salary of the Financial Secretary to the Treasury in order to call attention to the action of the Treasury in regard to the Irish Church tenants who were known as the glebe purchasers. Some time ago he had obtained the first place for a Motion dealing with this question. The Chief Secretary for Ireland appeared to be in favour of the object he had in view, but the Secretary to the Treasury had come down on him, and had refused to give him a Committee. Therefore, in the interests of these tenants he had felt bound to bring the question forward in a few words to-night. These tenants were subject to Treasury Rules—Rules which had been laid down in a most austere and mean manner. The case of these suffering men had been brought before them, but the Treasury never moved one fraction beyond what it was obliged to do. It was shown in the discussion in 1891 that, although an extension of time had been given to a number of the Irish Church tenants, yet there were some to whom that consideration had not been extended. The right hon. Gentleman had asked him if he could suggest any other way in which the Treasury could relieve the Irish Church purchasers, and he had made a suggestion. He proposed that some arrangement should be made by which these tenants could borrow the one-third or one-fourth from the Land Commission in order to pay off the usurers from whom they had borrowed it. These unfortunate people had bought at 26, 27, and 28 years' purchase. They had had to find one-third or one-fourth of

the purchase money, and this they had to borrow at exorbitant rates of interest—so exorbitant that they were unable to pay off the instalments. He would ask the Secretary to the Treasury to appoint a Committee of Inquiry. It would be found that a great proportion of these tenants had been sold up through the high price they had had to pay for their holdings—the purchase having been, in a sense, compulsory. He considered that the proposal he had made under which the tenants would be able to borrow from the Land Commission at $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. would, in the long run, benefit the Treasury. These were a highly honourable and deserving class of men. They existed throughout the whole length and breadth of Ireland, and they felt the pinch of the times enormously. The only argument adduced in opposition to his proposal by the Chancellor of the Exchequer was that if they did this thing the money would have to come from somewhere, and the only available source was the £30,000,000 or £40,000,000 allocated under the Land Purchase Act, which fund the Government were anxious not to diminish unnecessarily. But this fund had not been got into working order to any great extent yet, and he did not see why the money he asked for should not be advanced in this way. If the Secretary to the Treasury could give this relief let him do so; if not, let him give the Committee of Inquiry. He (Sir T. Lea) begged to move the reduction of the right hon. Gentleman's salary by the sum of £1,000.

THE CHAIRMAN: It is not necessary to move a reduction of the Financial Secretary's salary in order to draw attention to this subject.

SIR T. LEA: After his hard work to-night I should be glad to spare him. I will not move.

***SIR J. T. HIBBERT** said, he would give the hon. Baronet the best reply he could under the circumstances. There would be very great difficulty in carrying out the suggestion of the hon. Member, because he sought to re-open the question of the number of years' purchase which had been paid by these tenants. He (Sir J. T. Hibbert) would not say that the Committee for which the hon. Mem-

ber asked would not be desirable. He would like to discuss the matter with the hon. Member, and try and come to some conclusion. Therefore, he would suggest that the hon. Member should furnish the Treasury with a statement giving all the facts of the case.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrona, S.) said, it was not necessary to draw up a statement. It was admitted that these purchasers had purchased under especially hard conditions. It was, in fact, almost compulsory purchase. These persons had to borrow one-fourth of their purchase-money, while purchasers under the Land Purchase Act had the money advanced to them by the Government. All that was wanted was that, in order to prevent these men being ruined by usurious interest paid to the money-lenders and gombreen men, some arrangement should be made by the Land Commission to advance money to them in order to enable them to pay off this one-fourth. He admitted the difficulty of the case, for it would be said—"You are asking for British money to pay off Irish debts." But that was all the more reason why the Committee should consider whether these purchasers could not be placed in the same position as purchasers under the Acts of 1885 and 1891.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: I shall be happy to discuss the matter with hon. Gentlemen.

SIR T. LEA said, that all he wanted was that the Irish Church purchasers under the Act of 1870 should have the same privileges as were given to the Ashbourne Act purchasers. There were one or two other things that a Committee might well investigate.

MR. TOMLINSON wished to know what was the meaning of an asterisk being put against the salaries of the Directors of the Suez Canal. What were to be the salaries paid in the future?

MR. HANBURY asked whether the Committee were to understand that after this Vote the Government would move to report Progress?

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT : Yes. The information the hon. Member for Preston asks for can be given on Report.

Vote agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported To-morrow ;
Committee to sit again To-morrow.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1894, the sum of £11,856,191 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom.—(*Sir J. T. Hibbert.*)

Resolution to be reported To-morrow ;
Committee to sit again To-morrow.

SUPPLY—REPORT.

Resolution [4th September] reported.

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS, 1893-4.

CLASS I.

"That a sum, not exceeding £139,238, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1894, for Rates and Contributions in lieu of Rates, &c., in respect of Government Property, and for the Salaries and Expenses of the Rating of Government Property Department."

Resolution agreed to.

COUNTY SURVEYORS (IRELAND) BILL [*Lords*].—(No. 453.)

Read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

BANKRUPTCY.

Paper [presented 4th September] to be printed. [No. 406.]

QUEEN'S COLLEGE, CORK.

Copy presented,—of Report of the President for the Session 1892-3, with Appendices [by Command] ; to lie upon the Table.

CIVIL SERVICE (SPECIAL RATES OF PENSION).

Return presented,—relative thereto [ordered 28th July ; *Mr. T. M. Healy*] ; to lie upon the Table.

COINAGE.

Copy presented,—of Two Orders in Council, dated 26th August, 1893, and the Drafts of two Proclamations for demonetising in the Colony of Fiji, and the Colonies of the Cape of Good Hope and Natal respectively, sovereigns and half-sovereigns coined before Her Majesty's reign [by Act] ; to lie upon the Table.

DOCKYARD PORTS REGULATION ACT, 1865.

Copy presented,—of Order in Council, dated 26th August, 1893, cancelling Clause 21 of the Order in Council of 15th August, 1890, with reference to the Dockyard Port of Plymouth, and substituting a Clause in lieu thereof [by Act] ; to lie upon the Table.

PILOTAGE.

Copy presented,—of Order in Council, dated 26th August, 1893, approving Bye-Laws and Rules of Pilotage made and established by the Trinity House in Kingston upon Hull for the better regulation of Pilots and Pilotage of the ports of Kingston upon Hull and Great Grimsby [by Act] ; to lie upon the Table.

WINTER ASSIZES ACTS, 1876 AND 1877.

Copy presented,—of Eight Orders in Council, dated 26th August, 1893, relating to the forthcoming Winter Assizes (Counties 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7), and the Central Criminal Court District [by Act] ; to lie upon the Table.

GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND BILL (DATES OF STAGES, &c.)

Return ordered, "of the dates of the Sittings at which the House of Commons was occupied with the several Stages of the Government of Ireland Bill, or any Resolution relating thereto, distinguishing such Stages, and giving the number of Sittings appropriated to each, and a Summary of the whole ; and, of the number of Divisions on each of such Stages or Resolutions, distinguishing the Divisions on Motions for the Closure from other Divisions."—(*Mr. Carvell Williams*).

House adjourned at a quarter
after One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Wednesday, 6th September 1893.

Several Lords—Took the Oath.

PUBLIC HEALTH (LONDON) ACT, 1891,
AMENDMENT BILL—(No. 260.)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

LORD MONKS WELL said, this was a well-intentioned Bill, the object of which was merely to restore the powers of the Metropolitan District Boards to borrow money, powers of which they have been unintentionally deprived by the effect of the Public Health (London) Act 1891.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."
—(*The Lord Monks well.*)

Motion agreed to; Bill read 2^a accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House To-morrow.

GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND BILL.
(No. 265.)SECOND READING. [ADJOURNED
DEBATE.]

[SECOND NIGHT.]

Order of the Day for resuming the Debate on the Amendment to the Motion for the Second Reading, read.

Debate resumed accordingly.

*THE DUKE OF ARGYLL: My Lords, we have been told by the only man who, I will not say represents, but is, the Government on this question, that the passage of this Bill through the House of Commons and its arrival in your Lordships' House constitutes a cardinal fact in the political history of this country. I am not prepared to traverse that statement; on the contrary, I accept it to the full. It is a cardinal fact, and I believe also that it will be connected in future times with the strengthening and the revival of some cardinal convictions: and first and foremost among these will be the conviction which is forced upon the minds of all men that an inestimable value is to be attached to those functions which the ancient Constitution of our country places in your Lordships' hands,

because this cardinal fact of the passage of this Bill through the House of Commons and its arrival here is not one fact, but contains a dozen other facts within itself. I will mention some of them. The first cardinal fact is that the Bill which does so come is a Bill for effecting revolutionary changes in the Constitution of this country. The second cardinal fact is that it has come to this House by the employment of revolutionary means. The third cardinal fact is that it has been sent to this House by a majority of only 5 per cent. of the whole House of Commons; and the fourth cardinal fact is that in every important case there has been a large British majority against its provisions; and the fifth cardinal fact is that this Bill has never been before the people of this country. My Lords, in these circumstances the people look to your Lordships' House, to say the least, to give them time to think. We are not only free to reject it; it is expected and it is demanded of us. I have sometimes speculated within the last week what would happen if a majority of this House, by some terrible act of weakness, by some such act of betrayal of their former convictions as we heard confessed by my noble Friend (Lord Spencer) last night, were to allow this Bill to pass. What would be the feelings of the country next morning? Over a great part of Ireland it would be a feeling of absolute dismay, and I believe that with the great majority of Great Britain there would be feelings of indignation and of shame. It may be said that some of my facts, such as those I have mentioned just now, are not matters of fact, but matters of opinion. It may be denied that this is a measure of revolutionary change. I venture to say that when this Bill passes, if it ever passes, nothing in our Constitution will stand as it stood before. Certainly not the unity of the Kingdom, for I agree with the Duke of Devonshire in drawing a great distinction between that utterly vague and meaningless phrase about the unity of the Empire and the unity of the Kingdom. Certainly not the unity of the Kingdom; certainly not the dignity of the Crown; certainly not the authority of Parliament; certainly not the responsibility of our Ministerial system; certainly not, by the confession of my noble Friend opposite, the purity of public

life; and last, not least, certainly not the liberties of the people. Every one of these great interests would be profoundly affected, and profoundly affected for the worse. My Lords, are we all agreed upon this point of the immense importance of this Bill? My noble Friend (Lord Spencer) said last night, in that speech which was so full of that charm which belongs to his personal character, his moderation, courtesy, and good feeling, that at least we are all agreed upon the importance of the subject. Alas! my Lords, I do not think that we are agreed. Nothing in my noble Friend's speech gave us the least hint of the enormous effect which such a measure as this must have on the practical working of our Constitution—nothing in his speech. As I said before, that speech was full of kindness and of courtesy to us all; there was not one bitter word, not one word of recrimination in his speech. But we cannot deal with this question with rose water. It cuts too deep; it is too serious. I could not help being reminded when I heard my noble Friend's speech of two celebrated lines referring to his illustrious namesake—the poet Spenser—who wrote much about Ireland in the days of Queen Elizabeth. Courtesy towards opponents and moderation of tone are not the weapons with which this battle has been fought outside the walls of this House. My noble Friend may delight in them, and it is always very pleasing to hear him. I could not help being reminded of what Wordsworth has said of Spenser—

“A glowworm lamp, it cheered mild Spenser,
Called from Faëryland to struggle through
dark ways.”

—and most dark were the ways through which my noble Friend has been called upon to struggle. When we heard the excuses which he made last night for the abandonment of the convictions which only a few years ago he expressed on the subject of the land in Ireland and of the retention of Irish Members at Westminster, we had a measure of the “dark ways” through which the mild Spenser of our own day has been called upon to struggle. We are not agreed, therefore, upon the importance of this subject. Did your Lordships hear the Duke of Devonshire last night re-affirm the pleas which Mr. Gladstone lately denounced? The noble Duke quoted them one by one

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—I think they were seven in number. He said Mr. Gladstone had caricatured them all more or less, but substantially he adhered to them. What did Mr. Gladstone say of these pleas of the Unionist Party? The Duke of Devonshire did not refer to that; but so far from admitting those pleas, which are the pleas which assert the importance of this measure, Mr. Gladstone said that those pleas were all of them “enormous, hideous, and monstrous falsehoods”! I hope none of us will be accused of using strong language after that illustrious example, because, after it, we can use any language we like. I rejoice in it myself, because I do not in the least object to this language on the part of Mr. Gladstone. I know it to be perfectly sincere; he is absolutely sincere, and I am not quite sure whether he is not the only Member of the Government who is sincere. I look upon my right hon. Friend at the head of the Government as I look upon the Mahdi, or any of the dervishes in the Valley of the Nile, as a pure fanatic. He cannot look on this subject with moderation, or even with common temper. That is why I like this language, because it proves to us the inflamed state of mind of that man in whose hands the destinies of this country would be if your Lordships do not perform your duty to the people. It is perfectly clear that Mr. Gladstone does not admit the enormous importance of this measure. He treats it, and has all along treated it, as a comparatively light thing—that is to say, as if it were simply the setting up of a new municipality in the country—local government, self-government. Now, my Lords, I wish to address myself to another cardinal fact which I have not yet mentioned. There is a sixth fact of equal importance to those five which I have already enumerated. I maintain that this contest has been carried on in the country by systematic concealment and deception of the people. Not only do I say that this Bill has never been before the people, but I say that the whole of this subject has never been placed by the Gladstonian Party in the light of common fairness before the people. By ambiguities of expression, by dexterous management of words, by simple tricks of tactics, the people have been misled and confused systematically and of set

purpose as to the great issues which are before them. I have said this on many platforms in the country, and I should be ashamed if I declined to justify that statement now in the presence of my noble Friends, who can answer for themselves. I say, in the first place, that the Prime Minister is the main conductor of this campaign. I do not say anything of my noble Friends opposite, as I have not seen one speech of theirs which answers to that description. The Prime Minister on this subject is the Government, and he alone. My noble Friends opposite are not the Government; we know that very well. "Our whole heart and soul," the Prime Minister said lately, "are set on this Bill." I did not hear much heart or much soul in the speeches of the noble Lords opposite delivered last night. No; we have to deal with Mr. Gladstone, and Mr. Gladstone alone, as regards his power, as regards his influence in the country, and as regards the methods adopted in the prosecution of this question. I say here, as I have said elsewhere, that the advocacy of this measure has been pursued by passionate misrepresentation of history. I have endeavoured to show that in another form; and I am not going to trouble the House to-night with a single word on the subject: but it has been pursued by passionate misrepresentation of contemporary events and of recent history, and especially it has been treated with the utmost deception, I think, as regards the relation between this Bill and the Union between us and Ireland, and the Repeal of that Union. We know exactly the date of the conversion of the Government by the date of the conversion of the Prime Minister—

"When I began last autumn to weigh deeply this question."

Such are the words in which Mr. Gladstone explained, not in a speech, but in a published article, "The History of an Idea"—

"When I began last autumn to weigh deeply this question."

That is, the autumn of 1885. My Lords, just think of the confession these words imply—

"I began last autumn to weigh deeply this Irish Question."

Let me remind the House of the stages which have passed since the Union.

From 1800 to 1829, 29 years elapsed. During the whole or the greater part of that time, Ireland came before us upon the Catholic question. As you know, it was carried to a triumphant issue by the Catholics in Ireland on behalf of the Catholics of the whole country. From 1829 to 1842, 13 years elapsed. We had Ireland before us again in the form of the Daniel O'Connell agitation for Repeal. The moment he got Catholic Emancipation he set to work to start the agitation for Repeal. When that was suppressed by Sir R. Peel in 1842, then, from 1842 to 1870, a period of 28 years, we had Fenianism and many of those local disturbances which kept Ireland again perpetually before us. From 1870 to 1885, the date of Mr. Gladstone's *Hegira*, or conversion, 15 years, we had the Home Rule agitation under Mr. Butt and Mr. Parnell. There are 15 years between the initiation of the Home Rule policy of Mr. Butt and the new convictions of Mr. Gladstone, until he had "begun to weigh this Irish Question." Now, my Lords, I have sometimes wondered whether it is possible to argue at all with my noble Friends opposite. No argument can be conducted without some common ground of agreement. We are not agreed, I am afraid, as to what is the Constitution of the country; we are not agreed as to what are the liberties of the people; we are not agreed, I much fear, as to what constitutes the honour of public men in public questions. But, in searching diligently whether I could find any words of common agreement between me and my right hon. Friend at the head of the Government, I find one striking passage. It is not in a speech; it is taken from a deliberate writing; and there I find these two propositions laid down—they are all that I desire:—

"This question," he says, "goes down to the very roots of our whole civil and political Constitution."

Nothing could be stronger than that. This is no Bill to give local liberties; it is no Bill to set up a new municipality; it is no Bill for the mere extension of what we know very well as connected with domestic government. It is a Bill, he says, "which goes down to the very roots of our whole civil and political Constitution." The second proposition is that this is a subject with which up to that

time the British mind was absolutely unprepared to deal—"as ignorant of it," are his words, "as of the differential calculus." On these two facts and admissions by Mr. Gladstone I base my argument to-night; and I venture to lay down this principle as one which should gain the assent of both sides of this House—that if a great measure which goes to the "roots of our civil and political Constitution" is brought forward at a time when the British mind—not one class only, but the whole British mind—was "as ignorant" on the subject "as they are on the differential calculus," it is the absolute duty of those who attempt to devise a new British Constitution to exercise the duty of perfect candour towards the people of this country. Anything like shiftiness, concealment, deceit, is a great crime against the people of this country, and the more so when we remember that the task of drawing up a new Constitution "going to the very roots of our whole civil and political Constitution" is an absolute novelty in the whole history of England. Not one of our revolutions has been made in any other name than the name of pre-existing laws. No group of 12 or 13 men, whatever their qualifications in their own minds may be, have ever sat round a green table and deliberately determined to frame a Constitution "going to the whole roots of our civil and political Constitution"; it is an absolute novelty in the history of England. Now, my Lords, has this been the conduct of the Government? What is the explanation we are to give of the sudden conversion of the Prime Minister and certain of his Colleagues? It is all very well to say it was in the autumn of 1885; do we not all remember what happened in the autumn of 1885? Was not that the date when a certain large contingent of Irish Members was added to the Irish brigade in the House of Commons? I would like to read to your Lordships what was the plan of campaign under which and before which Mr. Gladstone struck his colours. Here is a description of the policy of Mr. Parnell—

"Why not start in the House of Commons an Irish National Party, which should express by its very action in Parliament the distrust and hatred felt by so many of the Irish people to any and every English Parliament? Would not the vast majority of the Irish people soon begin to put faith in the Party which employed

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its position in the House of Commons to worry and obstruct the House of Commons and make it ridiculous in the eyes of foreign nations? What ardent Irish Nationalist could refuse to give his support and approval to a Party like this?"

There is the explanation of the sudden conversion—and whose words are these? They are the words of your nominal Irish Leader—the mild M'Carthy. It was to this conspiracy, and nothing else, that Mr. Gladstone struck his colours; contemporary events prove it. It was because you were overmastered in Parliament, and because you saw a chance of making a dishonourable alliance with the Irish Party. That is my explanation of the Hegira in policy of a portion of the Liberal Party. This policy, these tactics, this policy of dealing with this tremendous question—cutting to the roots of our whole civil and political Constitution by tricks of tactics—is not my accusation; it is the avowal of the Prime Minister himself. Do we not remember the speech he made on January 8, 1886, on the Address to the Crown? I have read that speech over and over again with ever-increasing astonishment. He began by professing a desire to separate this question from every Party interest; he said it would be a great crime to make it a Party question; he could not use language strong enough; nothing he did should tend, so far as he could help it, to mix it up with politics. He said—

"I hope some Member of the Government opposite will take up that view of satisfying the demands of Ireland."

Then came the contradiction. Addressing the younger Members of the House of Commons, his language was to this effect—"There are many young Members in this House. Perhaps I may be allowed to give the advice of an old man, an old Parliamentary hand. Hold your tongues; keep your counsel. I mean to keep my counsel; I advise you to keep yours. I am the great Paujandrum; I am the great necromancer, the old Parliamentary hand; watch me, follow me, and I will show you how to win the trick."

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (The Earl of KIMBERLEY): Is that a quotation?

*THE DUKE OF ARGYLL : No. Quotations, my Lords, are quite fair in two forms—when they are avowedly given verbatim, and when they are avowedly given as the meaning of the words used. I have the precise words of Mr. Gladstone here. He said—

“Addressing those who have taken their seats for the first time, I may avail myself of the privilege of old age to offer a recommendation. I will tell them of my own intention to keep myself and to reserve my own freedom until I see the moment and the occasion when there may be a prospect of public benefit in endeavouring to make a movement forward.”

And these are the last words—

“And I shall venture to recommend them, as an old Parliamentary hand, to do the same”

This is the Leader who deprecated above all things mixing up this Irish question with Party tactics—an open avowal that he was going to treat it in the spirit of an old Parliamentary hand. And well he has fulfilled his part. His one object throughout this campaign and that of all his followers—and they have followed him with abject slavery—was to arouse passion, to conceal his cards, and to take advantage of that universal ignorance which he declared to exist in the British mind. How did the campaign begin? It began by a ferocious attack on the Act of Union and on its great author. I suppose we all remember the expression which slipped out with regard to the action of the most illustrious figure who has ever appeared on the political horizon of this country—the “blackguardism” of the Union and of Mr. Pitt. It was in a private letter, I am bound to say a letter which I do not think was ever intended to be published, and I quote it merely as showing the temper of mind in which the Prime Minister of the country addressed himself to this great topic—“the blackguardism of the Union.” And this was followed by an attempt to connect the opposition to the Union with the Liberal Party and with Liberal politics. Now, I hold this to be a fundamental part of the historical question, and on this subject I rely on an authority which will be acceptable, I think, to noble Lords opposite. On this subject I place myself almost entirely in the hands of the noble Earl the Foreign Secretary. Many of your Lordships may have read the admirable little book which Lord Rosebery has published on the life of Pitt. It is a

very brilliant performance, and, what is better than brilliant, it is a solid contribution to the political literature of this country. There are some passages in it which I venture to think are purely conventional. The noble Earl obviously did not wish to accentuate too much the broad divergence between the view which he takes of his illustrious ancestral kinsman—for I believe he was such—and that which is common to the Liberal Party of the day. A few sentences are dexterously added, with the diplomatic skill of the noble Earl, just to take off the edge of the contrast; but, with the exception of those passages, the book represents the exact view of the Union and of Mr. Pitt’s conduct on that great question which I am disposed to take. I agree with Lord Rosebery on these three great questions—(1) On the conduct of the Whig Party at that time—that is to say, the Foxite Liberals; (2) the conduct of Mr. Pitt; and (3), which is more relevant to this controversy, the true character of the Act of Union. As regards the Whig Party, I cannot forget that I myself belong to a Whig family. I have never held Office in connection with the modern Conservative Party, but I am bound to say that, although I think some of the expressions of the noble Earl with regard to the Foxite Whigs are somewhat over-severe, and almost spiteful, yet in the main I agree with him. They had but one motive in the world, and that was to oppose everything that was proposed by Mr. Pitt. Their conduct at that time was, in my opinion, eminently unpatriotic. I never had the smallest sympathy with them, and I subscribe altogether to the language in which the noble Earl has condemned them. But the noble Earl must remember that the Whig Party and the Liberal Party have long repented of their failure upon that celebrated occasion; and the repentance was not alone with them, but it was with others who were still more deeply engaged in the resistance to Mr. Pitt. Grattan himself, who came across to this country, and was for a short time a Member of the House of Commons, in 1820, upon his death-bed, spent his last breath on earth in expressing his earnest hope that the Union which he had so long resisted should never be repealed. We have that on the

authority of two of the most illustrious men who have ever sat in the British House of Commons—the authority of William Wilberforce and of Sir James Mackintosh. Then, as regards the attempt to connect modern Liberalism with that of 1800, do we not remember that Lord Grey in 1834 was the Minister who put into the mouth of the Sovereign—the King's Speech at the time—the opinion, in language which I declare even now I think was exaggerated, that the highest interests and salvation of the Empire depended on the maintenance of the Union? How dare you quote the Liberalism of 1800 when you have these facts staring you in the face? Do you not know that so late as this Session it has been stated—and I believe with perfect truth—that a son of Daniel O'Connell has signed a Petition to Parliament against the Home Rule Bill? I agree with the noble Earl when he says in his volume that the Union was passed with a rare unanimity, and I believe Mr. Pitt was right when he said it was supported by all who were not secret enemies of the British Empire. I pass to the question of the corruption of Mr. Pitt—the corruption by which the Union was effected. There has been no weapon used more prominently by Mr. Gladstone than this old story. On that subject, also, I put myself in the hands of the Foreign Secretary. I admire his account of it, and believe it to be true. He says that in Ireland at that time nothing could be done without corruption. The enfranchisement of the Roman Catholic voters was obtained by corruption. Lord Rosebery is right when he says that Mr. Pitt's conduct can be defended on this broad ground—that it was his object to buy out corruption and close its annals for ever as regards the relations of the two countries, and he did it. The Union did put an end to corruption in that gross form. That is the true explanation, and, my Lords, he did put an end to corruption. There is only one observation of the noble Earl's in that book, and in reference to this subject, to which, alas! I cannot subscribe. It is part of the conventional form of treating these former times to say that we must not judge them by the standard of morals of our own time, and the noble Earl implies that as to any corruption in our day, the thing is so entirely out of the

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question that it is hardly fair to judge of Mr. Pitt by the magnificent standard of our own time. Alas! my Lords, this may have been the case within recent times, but it is no longer the case since the formation of the present Government. I know no Government in the history of the Kingdom which has been so corrupt as this Government. There is nothing that has not been put up to auction—the auction of a few votes. “Marching through plunder to disintegration” was Mr. Gladstone's own description of the Irish Party; to give them the means and the opportunities of plunder has been his great object in order to secure their votes. My Lords, it is not merely in the sale of principles, in the sale of opinions, but it is actually in money's worth—in money. The dangerous principle that the State can regulate values and determine prices is eating deeply, by moral and pecuniary corruption, into the constitution of society in this country. When candidates address themselves now to the Irish people they say—“We will form a Government that will reduce your rents to prairie value.” That is worse than any money corruption ever invented by Pitt. Pitt's corruption was temporary and for temporary purposes; this is a permanent fountain of corruption planted in the hearts of the people and the customs of the country. All I can say is that if this is to be your principle of government I am sorry for the coming democracy. My own belief is, and has always been, that, however you may define it, what people call democracy is absolutely inevitable. But a democracy may be a virtuous democracy or a corrupt democracy, and it depends much on the conduct and character of public men in such controversies as that in which we are now engaged whether the democracy of the future is to be an honest one or not. As regards this form of corruption, something like the words of Shakespeare often occur to my mind—

“Who bribes with money bribes with trash,
But he that bribes with our good laws
Sells that which naught enriches him,
And makes us poor indeed.”

There is another phase of this controversy in which I agree with Lord Rosebery, and that is the character of Irish independence as given in 1782. Mr. Gladstone always praises excessively the Act of 1782, which set up Grattan's Parliament. He treats it as the con-

cession of an ancient right which Ireland had always possessed. The view he thus takes of it is historically, entirely untrue, but I pass over that. Indeed, I have not found one historical statement of Mr. Gladstone that will bear investigation. I do not mean to say that the individual facts are wrong; but, as we all know, "truths half told are ever the blackest of lies." If you tell half the truth and not the other half you may prove anything. Mr. Gladstone's speeches are full of truths stated in carefully-selected language—one-half the facts is given, but the other half is carefully suppressed, so that the whole representation is false. Lord Rosebery does not praise this scheme of Irish independence; but, on the contrary, says that it was "an act of cowardice," and I entirely agree with him. It was the sheer shame of impotence. He says—"In the sheer shame of impotence this Parliament of Grattan's was set up." And how was it so set up? It was set up by repealing a Declaratory Act. This shows you the value of Declaratory Acts, how strong they are, and how worth your while it is to rely upon Declaratory Acts, Declaratory Clauses, and declaratory words. But the shame of that transaction was this: that Grattan's Parliament was set up without a single attempt to define the future Constitution or relations of the two countries. I come now to the question of Home Rule, and on this matter, again, we have had the most dexterous management on the part of the Government of the day—that is to say, on the part of its head. I really cannot blame any of my noble Friends opposite for any of the misstatements to which I shall have to call attention. Now, with regard to the relation between Repeal and this Bill of Home Rule. My noble Friend (Lord Spencer), in the course of his electoral campaign, came down to the West of Scotland and made an interesting speech in the County of Dumbarton, in which he said that other people had indeed set up the notion of Home Rule as distinguished from Repeal. For, though Mr. Gladstone did all he could to damage the Union, he knew well enough that the words, Repeal of the Union, had been so long familiar to the people of this country that it would never do to say that he went in for Repeal of the Union, so he adopted the minor phrase of Home Rule.

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Earl SPENCER): Is my noble Friend quoting my words here?

*THE DUKE OF ARGYLL: No; I am coming to them, if my noble Friend will have a little patience; but really the quotation I am going to give has nothing to do with special words. It is his representation at Dumbarton that nobody knew what Home Rule meant before Mr. Gladstone defined it. That is not the fact. The noble Earl ought to have known that early in 1870 the policy of Home Rule had been formulated by Mr. Butt much more distinctly than it was formulated by Mr. Gladstone before he introduced his Bill of 1886. I have recently found the original resolution drawn up by Mr. Butt, and used by him at a meeting held in Dublin in 1870, and I was very much surprised to find that all the formulas used by Mr. Gladstone in this campaign were bodily stolen from Mr. Butt. The very words and expressions of Mr. Butt's resolution were copied by Mr. Gladstone, repeated all over the country, and constituted his battle-horse with the constituencies. Mr. Butt said he wanted Home Rule for Ireland for exclusively Irish and domestic affairs. Yet how did Mr. Gladstone treat that for 15 long years? What was the relation he recognised between Home Rule and Repeal of the Union? Did he begin by saying—"I see what you are at. You call it Home Rule, you mean Repeal of the Union?" Yes, that is what he did say. He called it a "new formula," and that was exactly what it was. It was a new formula for Repeal. For 15 years, up to the age of 75, when most men have sown their wild oats pretty successfully, he resisted Home Rule admirably, defined though it had been by Mr. Butt. And on what grounds? He said in the first place it is a new formula, and then more specifically—"Until you tell me what you mean by Irish domestic affairs one by one we cannot even judge of your proposal." Well! That is exactly what we Unionists have been saying for the last seven years. And yet this is the formula which he carefully repeated after his conversion, knowing that it was an unintelligible, because ambiguous, formula admirably adapted for deceiving an ignorant electorate. He also said—"I see what you mean. You mean to have a separate Parliament of your own, and also Irish Mem-

bers here to control us." On which poor Mr. Butt got up and mumbled something to the House of Commons, as much as to say that he did not mean that, and then Mr. Gladstone pounced on him and said—"It is all very well for the hon. Member to say that when the blot has been hit." That is the "blot" which he now presents to the British Parliament, and asks the British House of Commons and the British House of Lords to swallow to the very dregs—to give Ireland a separate Parliament, and to have an Irish contingent here also to overrule us in our home affairs. Well, then, my Lords, is this one of our monstrous falsehoods? Yes, it is. This very doctrine, which for 15 long years Mr. Gladstone insisted upon on every platform of the country, is the very doctrine that he now condemns as one of our "monstrous and hideous falsehoods." How can you trust a public man whose mind is permanently in such a state of instability that he constantly discards one day what he had said the previous day. That is the question here. Now, I want to show your Lordships a few more of the points on which Mr. Gladstone has dealt disingenuously with the people of this country. Comparing Home Rule with Repeal of the Union, which is the stronger measure of the two? He knows that it is not safe to take up the old dishonoured and discredited cry of Repeal. He says—"I only want you to grant Home Rule. These blessed Irishmen are willing to take only a little part of what they once had. They had entire independence under Grattan's Parliament, but they ask you now for some scraps of the great powers they enjoyed then." That was the tone of Mr. Gladstone during several years. It is the tone of many of his speeches up to the latest date. I need not tell you that this is absolutely deceptive unless it be true that the measure of Home Rule would give less than the restoration of Grattan's Parliament. Well, I turn to the language of himself and his Colleagues the other day, and I find that they use these two opposite arguments exactly as it suits them. "Repeal is much more than Home Rule; Repeal is much less than Home Rule." There is no continuity of argument. My noble Friend said the other day he was converted because there was no continuity of policy. Has

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there been any continuity of policy in his arguments, and in those of his Colleagues? Here is what Mr. Gladstone said about the independence of Grattan's Parliament—

"What was the condition of Ireland before the Union?"

This was in May, 1892.

"It was that of a country governed by a Parliament as entirely independent as is the Parliament sitting within these walls at the present day."

That is when he wanted to exaggerate the power of Grattan's Parliament, and to prove how reasonable and moderate were the demands of his Irish friends. Let us compare that with a sentence of Mr. J. Morley, who did not find it convenient to take that view of the matter. In this very year Mr. Morley said—

"Then there was Grattan's Parliament; but would anybody contend that Grattan's Parliament gave the Irish people such control over their own laws and destinies as this Bill would give them."

Exactly; this Bill is not less but greater than Grattan's Parliament. If you had repealed the Union before, and restored Grattan's Parliament, you would have had complete control over legislation in Ireland; but under this Bill you will have practically none. It is on this great question of the relation between this Bill and the old demand for Repeal that there has been systematic deception of the people. Then, my Lords, I pass to another point of cardinal importance, upon which I think the people have been equally deceived, and that is the power and value of Declaratory Acts. The Government say—"We have satisfied our supporters by putting in a declaration of the supremacy of Parliament." I believe there has never been such a case of political imposture as this. Have we had no experience of Declaratory Acts? What do we know about the Declaratory Act for America in 1766? It was immediately answered by the Declaration of American Independence. That Act was passed by Lord North and the other Tories of that time, and that is the policy of the Liberal Government now—to resort to Declaratory Acts or Declaratory Clauses. Then what is your other experience of Declaratory Acts? There was the Declaratory Act of 1719, which asserted the supremacy of the English Parliament over Ireland. What became

of that? When there was great pressure upon us, when we were in low water with the Continental Powers, and had hardly a regiment to send to Ireland, that Declaratory Act was immediately repealed. Are you really trying to deceive the people of this country by giving them to understand that a few words in the Preamble of an Act of Parliament are better than a whole Declaratory Act? Are you not resorting to the same kind of double dealing to which my noble Friend (the Duke of Devonshire) referred last night, when he spoke of the play between the words the "unity of the Empire" and the "unity of the Kingdom?" In this Bill there is a declaration, not of any supreme power of control over Ireland specially, but only over all the "dominions of the Queen." We know that already it is a doctrine of Constitutional Law. It is a pious opinion, and nothing more. Try to put in force the doctrine of the supremacy of the Crown over New Zealand, South Australia, or in Melbourne, and you will find where you are. That effort will be followed immediately by another Declaration of Independence, and you would have to repeal the Declaratory Act. There is nothing in this declaration of supremacy which has the smallest practical effect, because you have no arms with which you can enforce it. I look upon this as a very dangerous deception of the people. People ignorant, as Mr. Gladstone says the electorate are, upon these great Constitutional questions are apt to be deceived by vague words such as these. Let us try if we can undeceive them by reference to our own history—alas! calamitous history—within comparatively recent times. Then take the reference to colonial independence. Can anything be more deceptive? Mr. Gladstone himself said in 1886 there could be nothing more dangerous than to give to Ireland so much of independence as to excite her national feeling, and not enough of independence to satisfy her desires. That is exactly what you are doing in this Bill. You are pretending that Ireland is a separate nationality; you are talking of our laws as "foreign" laws; you are talking of our Army as a "foreign" Army; you are talking of all our legislation, most falsely, as the origin of all Irish troubles; and you pretend to think that that modicum of liberty which you give under the Bill will satisfy the spirit

of nationality in Ireland, to which you appeal. No, my Lords, that is impossible. I have a few other instances to give of the deception practised upon the people, and none greater than the constant repetition of the expression "Irish affairs." I have counted in one declaration of Mr. Gladstone's no fewer than 14 variations of the expression "Irish affairs," invented by Mr. Butt, and taken by Mr. Gladstone second-hand—"Irish affairs," "domestic affairs," "affairs exclusively their own," and so on, but no definition ever being given as to what was meant by "Irish affairs." Municipal Government was suggested. But what was really meant we now know was free scope given to the Irish Legislature to take action involving the complete sacrifice of the life, liberty, and property of the subjects of the Queen. Nothing has struck me more during the whole of this electoral contest than the utter absence in the speeches of my noble Friend opposite and of his Colleagues of the slightest reference to the personal liberty of the subject. They were great on the "unity of the Empire," which may mean anything or nothing. They were great on various other vague phrases, such as "Irish affairs"; but never once did they say that they meant to secure to Irishmen the personal liberty for which we have fought through so many centuries of English government. Never. And yet you pretend to be the only people who represent the Liberal Party. The vindication of personal liberty has been the one great object of the Liberal Party in this country from its earliest times. I should say it is the definition of their creed, and yet in the whole of this contest you have not even promised or held out the hope to the minority of the Irish people that their personal liberties will not be sacrificed. Then as to the consent of the Irish Members. The Duke of Devonshire told us last night that in 1886 Mr. Gladstone never consulted his Colleagues about his change of policy. Whom, then, did he consult? Did he consult Mr. Parnell? Was there any secret communication—any underground railway between Hawarden and Mr. Parnell? I never knew, and I do not know now; but I know that Mr. Gladstone took care to speak early in the Debate at the opening of the Session, and held out the flag of Home Rule. Mr. Parnell followed,

and followed suit. He took care to use words which might be interpreted as meaning his acceptance of the offer vaguely made by Mr. Gladstone, and from that moment Mr. Gladstone declared that he had the assent of the Irish Members to his schemes. Now, my Lords, what turned out to be the fact? We have the revelation of Committee Room 15, where both Irish factions united in saying that a message was sent to them by Mr. Gladstone, or at least on his behalf, telling them that if they did not accept his offer he would retire from public life and they would get nothing. That is how the assent of the Irish Members was obtained. I was a Member of Mr. Gladstone's Cabinet when the Coercion Act was passed. I agree with Mr. Gladstone that we made a mistake in that Act, not in enacting coercion, but in the particular form which that coercion took. Arbitrary arrest was a bad form, and Mr. Gladstone has revealed to a large extent the secrets of the Cabinet at that time in the article which he wrote on the life of Mr. Forster. I think Mr. Gladstone was quite right to back out of that Act as soon as he could, but Mr. Forster was also quite right when he said—"Do not back out of it until you have a substitute in some better and safer Act." Mr. Gladstone said—"Oh, no; we will back out of it at once. The one thing we have to ascertain"—and this is a wonderful instance of the credulity of Mr. Gladstone—"is the state of Mr. Parnell's mind at the time. The moment we have ascertained the state of the prisoner's mind, the moment we have reason to believe that he will be a good boy for the future—we will let him out without any precautions." And who was sent to ascertain Mr. Parnell's views? Who but Captain O'Shea! The idea of making a great question of State policy depend upon the "state of Mr. Parnell's mind" and of sending this unfortunate Captain O'Shea to ascertain what was the "state of his mind" was a perfect specimen of the credulity and folly which have characterised the Government in the whole management of this business. There is another matter in which the Government have treated the people of this country most unfairly. They have said—"Let us put confidence in the Irish people; let us trust to the union of hearts."

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Yes; but what have they done in this Bill? What have they done to show confidence in the Irish people where their own money is concerned? When the lives, liberties, and property of your fellow-subjects are at stake you express perfect confidence in these men, but when your own money is at stake you make the harshest and severest stipulations in your own favour. Trust in the Irish Parliament! Was there ever such an imposture? Remember, my Lords, what you have done. You have advanced £8,000,000 or £9,000,000 to the peasantry of Ireland for the purpose of buying land. The money has been advanced by the British Treasury at considerable sacrifice. Could there be a debt of honour more absolutely due from the Irish Parliament than this? But do the Government trust to their honour? No. Look at Clause 13 of this Bill. Under that clause, if the interest on the money is not paid, the British Treasury, through the Lord Lieutenant, is empowered to arrest the whole Revenue of Ireland and to prevent the expenditure of a penny of it on Irish purposes until the debt is paid. In these circumstances, the pretence of trusting in the Irish people is a great political imposture—nothing but an imposture—by your own confession. Then there is the Tribute. If you had perfect confidence in the Irish Parliament you would not impose tribute at all. Why do not you trust to their voting supplies if there is a perfect union of hearts, if the honour of our Crown is the honour of their Crown; why, if the honour of our country is the honour of their country, cannot you trust the Irish Parliament? "Oh, no!" you say, "we must have a fixed sum in the form of Tribute." I will not discuss the amount of the tribute. I believe that it is £2,000,000 at least less than the Irish people ought to pay; but I will not higggle over the mess of pottage for which you are selling the liberties of your fellow-men, for that is the nature of the transaction as I regard it. There is another point which ought to be interesting to my noble Friend (Lord Playfair) who is, I believe, to follow me in this Debate—I refer to the question of Irish Protectionism. Does my noble Friend see what lies before us in the future? This Bill prevents the Irish Parliament from imposing Customs

Duties or Excise for Revenue purposes ; it prevents them from adopting Protectionism ; it prevents them even imposing for Revenue purposes Customs Duties. Does my noble Friend think that that is a secure arrangement ? Is he aware that Mr. Gladstone has distinctly stated that he does not hold that fiscal unity is a necessary part of Imperial unity ? Does he know that Mr. Gladstone has declared that it is only with the consent of the Irish people that we can impose upon them Revenue restrictions ? How long do you think that the Irish people will remain contented with this scheme ? If you set up a separate Parliament and a separate Executive in Ireland, if you establish her people in the position of a separate nationality, sooner or later they will certainly demand to have the control over the whole of their Revenue. I wish now to say a few words on the question of ascendancy in Ireland. The accusation against the Ulster people is that they are seeking for a renewal of their old ascendancy. I say that that is a gross libel on the Ulster people. The Presbyterians of Ireland never had any share in the Protestant ascendancy. The golden age of Presbyterianism in Ulster, according to Mr. Gladstone, was when they were all Jacobins and wished to throw over the authority of England, and to bring Ireland under the government of Wolfe Tone, and under the government of the French Democracy. That was the golden age in Mr. Gladstone's opinion ; he is always appealing to it. But there was no ascendancy on the part of the Presbyterians of Ulster, and what they dread now is that you should give them over bound hand and foot as regards their personal liberties, their property, taxation and everything else, into the hands of men whom you yourselves have described as advancing through plunder to disintegration. The Presbyterians of Ulster have no desire for ascendancy, and do not possess it now. "Let us alone" is all they ask. Now, my Lords, there is another point to which I must allude, because I must say it appears to me to be another conspicuous instance of political imposture ; and that is the importation into this Bill of a few words taken from the American Constitution. No later than October last Mr. Gladstone wrote a

paper in which he said that any quotation or any line adopted from the American Constitution could be nothing but "a frivolous amusement." Those were his words. When I heard that this Bill was brought into the House of Commons, and that it contained a clause copied from the American Constitution, I was quite sure what had happened ; the "old Parliamentary hand" had determined that the quotation from the American Constitution should be nothing but "a frivolous amusement." And so it turned out to be. It was copied from a part of the American Constitution which had reference to the Central Government, and not to the Local Government at all. It was copied from a part of the American Constitution which imposed restrictions on the Executive as well as on the Legislative power. But he applied it only to legislation, thus rendering it perfectly useless. The great difference is this—that in America the Central Power has Central Courts to administer its Supreme Law, bringing home the liberty of the subject, or of the citizen to every man's door, to every man's domestic hearth in every State of the Union. And whenever the Opposition brought forward any Amendment for the purpose of putting life into this quotation from the American Constitution they were met by the resistance of the Government, which acts under the dictation of the Irish Party. My Lords the people of Ulster have reason, and very good reason, to fear. I must traverse the assertion of Lord Spencer that the Ulster people have no right to refuse this Bill. I stand here to say, speaking to the people of the United Kingdom and to the people of America and of the Continent, that men have a right to refuse to agree to the transference of their allegiance from one authority to another. I repeat what I stated in this House upon a recent occasion—that the duty of allegiance and the extension of protection are correlatives in all civilised societies. If you give up protecting men, their lives, their liberties, and their property—if you delegate it to others, you have lost the right to their allegiance. I say that distinctly as a general principle. The Liberal Party ought to acquiesce in this doctrine. It is not for them to deny it. Absolute obedience to Kings or to

majorities has never been a principle of the Liberal Party. I am myself the descendant of men who resisted authority and suffered death in defence of the liberty of the subject. I, therefore, cannot hold the doctrine of passive obedience in all circumstances. If you throw over the people of Ulster and commit them to the authority of men who you confess have done constantly what my noble Friend Lord Spencer calls discreditable acts—I say that if you treat the people of Ulster in that way, you will lose your right to their obedience; and they will have a right, as Lord Rosebery remarked last year, in his reference to a Cossack prisoner in the Crimea, to refuse to be taken captive by their new masters. I have but little more to say. I must, however, tax your Lordships' patience a little longer in order to refer to a favourite theme of the Prime Minister's, in which, I believe, we may detect the cause of much of the extraordinary conduct we have seen. The Prime Minister says we must submit to the inevitable. He says it is quite inevitable that this separation should come—that this breaking down of the Imperial Parliament is inevitable. I have a great respect, my Lords, for men who submit to the inevitable, for men who bow their heads to fate, cover their heads with the toga, and receive the stabs from the swords of their enemies; but I have no respect for men who make things inevitable, who make inevitable misfortunes which they could easily avoid by a little manliness and a little courage. I maintain that nothing like this Bill is inevitable. On the contrary. My Lords, do not let us think that to-night we are fighting for the last time in a losing battle. I believe we are winning in a great campaign. I believe that the future is on our side. Ours are not the times when great Empires are being broken up into petty Principalities. Ours is the era, ours is the century of union, of strength by union, and I believe that our strength will lie in the maintenance of this Union. Inevitable! Why, I have been spending the last few weeks in a part of Scotland whence we look down upon the hills of Antrim. We can see the colour of their fields, and in the sunset we can see the glancing of the light upon the windows of the cabins of the people. This is

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the country, I thought the other day when I looked on the scene—this is the country which the greatest English statesman tells us must be governed as we govern the Antipodes. Was there ever such folly? I agree with Thomas Carlyle when he said, in his own picturesque style, England, Scotland, and Ireland are one by the ground plan of the world. By geographical propinquity, by common brotherhood, by common blood, we are one. We want nothing but equality—equal laws on both sides of the Channel. My Lords, if there is a single grievance remaining in Ireland at the present moment, it is entirely due to the present Prime Minister. That grievance is this—that the Roman Catholics of Ireland have not been allowed any University system. Why was that? It was because Mr. Gladstone introduced an absurd Bill a few years ago, which my noble Friend opposite, Lord Playfair, took a leading part in defeating, having, no doubt, the guidance of the professional spirit. And since that day what has Mr. Gladstone done? Nothing.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: You were responsible for that Bill.

*THE DUKE OF ARGYLL: I know; and I am quite willing, if my noble Friend wishes it, to explain how that was. I thought it was an absurd Bill at the time, and that it must inevitably fail. And who defeated it? Nobody had a greater hand in defeating it than my noble Friend opposite, Lord Playfair. Mr. Gladstone declared that the Catholics of Ireland had a great grievance. What has he done since to remedy that grievance? Nothing. Not only that, but he has practically declared that because they resisted his measure, and defeated him, they would get nothing more out of him. I must say that, in my opinion, the Catholics of Ireland have a grievance, and it is Mr. Gladstone's fault that it has not been remedied. All I can say is that we wish, my Lords, for a union of hearts; we wish for a union of interests; we wish for nothing more and nothing less. We desire and are determined that this Union shall be maintained—not a nominal Union, not a Union under the Crown merely, but a Union of Parliaments, a Union of Executive, a Union of the Judiciary, a Union with one system of just and equal laws.

***LORD PLAYFAIR :** My Lords, it is a formidable task to speak after the noble Duke, whose stately eloquence has long been the admiration of your Lordships and of the public. Not one word of that speech would your Lordships have wished unsaid ; but I noticed that in a speech which occupied more than an hour and a half, he only gave about twenty minutes to the Bill before us. He gave an interesting history of how this has become a substantial question, and stated his arguments why Home Rule should not be given. I will traverse that part of his speech in due time, and show that the condition of things is such that Home Rule must be given. I hope, however, to be able to traverse his main arguments, which I take to be the tendency to separation, supremacy of Parliament, and the danger to the minority ; but before doing so I desire to lay before your Lordships some general considerations which, to my mind, render a Home Rule measure inevitable now, or in the near future. On June 10, 1886, the noble Duke delivered a remarkable speech in this House, in which, as he has now done, he offered to redress the grievances of Ireland. Upon that occasion he offered a large measure of Municipal Local Government to Ireland—a measure so wide and broad that he included in it some matters which we consider so Imperial that in this Bill we have prevented the Irish Government from dealing with them. The noble Duke said he was prepared to grant to his new Municipal Government the right to repeal Free Trade and establish Protection if they thought it desirable. Mr. Courtney, in another place, said the same thing, and divided the House upon that subject ; but the Duke of Devonshire yesterday was much more guarded. He did not say that that was a subject either of Municipal or Parliamentary right of the Irish people ; but he did say that his mode of redressing the grievances of Ireland would be to give Local Government in an enlarged form ; and he mentioned the fact that the last Government had introduced a measure for the introduction of County Councils. It is true that they did, but they smothered the measure with such restrictions and suspicions that it died on the day of its birth. Lord Clare, in 1801, argued that a system of Local Government in Ireland should be the corollary to the

Union, and had such a measure been introduced the demand for Home Rule might not be so clamant as it now is ; and certainly the Irish would have been better prepared for a separate Parliament. In the latter half of this century frequent demands have been made for the reform of Municipalities and of County Government. But even when the House of Commons passed measures of this kind the House of Lords persistently refused their consent. Since 1836, 12 Bills for the better Local Government of Ireland have been rejected, and four others have been dropped. It is true that in 1840 Parliament passed an Act reducing the franchise for Irish Municipalities to a £10 rateable value ; but the same Act disfranchised 58 existing Municipalities. No wonder that it did not please or content the Irish people. They will no longer accept mere local government as a full answer to their demands. The words “too late” are often the last words of moderate reforms, though they are but the beginning of measures which many of your Lordships may deem to be revolutionary. It is understood that this Bill will be rejected by a large majority of your Lordships’ House. But I doubt whether there is a single person here who believes that our negation will extinguish the demand for Home Rule. Four-fifths of the Representatives of Ireland are sent to Parliament to make this demand, and must persistently continue to make it, with increasing force, unless you are prepared to deprive Ireland of the franchise. How can it be otherwise ? Even Englishmen must admit that they have not succeeded in governing that country to the content of the governed. I am not going to trouble your Lordships with many references to the past history of Ireland ; but I would ask your attention to one test of good government. The object of every Government is to make the country governed so prosperous, by the continuous development of its resources, that an increasing population can be maintained in increasing comfort and happiness. If you apply that test to England and Scotland the government of Great Britain has been efficient. Since the beginning of this century England has increased its population by 226 per cent. and Scotland by 150 per cent. ; while, at the same time, the increased populations are in

every respect better in wages, in health, in education, and in lessened pauperism and crime. Let us apply that test to Ireland. The population now is even less than it was at the beginning of this century, and it is 40 per cent. less than it was 50 years ago at the Census of 1841. It is quite true that those who live in Ireland now have greater comforts than formerly, even though they have not yet reached the plane of civilisation of Great Britain. But that is no reply to the terrible depopulation of Ireland. If you expatriated half a million more of the people the residue would be richer among the working men, though the landlords would be poorer. That is not the way to look at the results of good government. This Parliament has undertaken to govern Ireland as an integral part of the United Kingdom, and our success must be judged by comparing the prosperity of Ireland as a country, and its population as a community, in relation to the United Kingdom. Is Ireland since the Union a richer or a poorer part of the United Kingdom? At the time of the Union we took over Ireland with a population which was one-half that of Great Britain and one-third that of the United Kingdom; now it has sunk to one-eighth. Its proportional gross income was then two-seventeenths that of the United Kingdom; it is certainly not one-seventeenth now. Its taxable resources when we took it over amounted to one-tenth; now they do not exceed one-fiftieth. In case of war Ireland, at the time of the Union, added largely to our strength in men and material; now, with its dwindled population and diminished production of food, it is of small account in national defence. The capital of Ireland, upon which her prosperity so much depends, amounts to about 400 millions, but is only one-twentyfourth that of the United Kingdom. Its total capital now scarcely exceeds one year's interest of the capital of Great Britain. The whole trade of Ireland is insignificant, and scarcely reaches £40,000,000, an amount much less than that of our trade with distant Australia, which is £55,000,000. It is very much less also than our trade in India. As a country for receiving the products of Great Britain, made by our own working men, the trade amounts to only two or three millions. In relation to Great Britain, Ireland,

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as part of the United Kingdom, as a country and as a community, has sunk wofully since the Union. It has remained stationary in some things, gone backward in others, and has not shared the progress of Great Britain. The English Government is responsible for the decline of prosperity and for the depopulation of Ireland. "When the herd degenerates the herdsman is to blame" is a true maxim, though it is as old as Socrates. The main purposes of a Government have never been achieved in Ireland by English administration. Neither in times of tranquillity nor in times of disorder has the English Government received the consent of the governed, or secured the progress and happiness of the people. Alison, the Tory historian, has summed up the result of our English government in these words—

"Conquest has failed in producing submission, severity in enforcing tranquillity, indulgence in awakening gratitude."

If Ireland could be governed as Great Britain is, 12,000 troops, the number in proportion to its population, ought to suffice; but we kept 25,000 to 30,000 in addition to an armed constabulary. It is under a conviction that the British government of Ireland has signally failed that this Home Rule Bill has been introduced. The Bill before us offers decentralisation of government and delegation of duties without disintegration, and it completes your former gift of full representation to the Irish people by its natural complement and sequel of a Representative Government by consent. Some of your Lordships outside this House have attacked the Bill with bitter words. My noble Friend opposite, who once was Chancellor of Ireland, described this Bill at a meeting in Leeds as "a Bill marked in every line and every provision of it both by madness and meanness," and a little further on in his speech, "by meanness, treachery, and infamy." I am glad that the discussion in this House has been carried on by your Lordships in a more sober spirit. The noble Duke has a perfect right to think that we are committing a grave error, and he is justified in asking us to prove three cardinal points—that the Bill preserves the supremacy of Parliament; that it will not lead to separation; and that it will protect the rights of the

minority. I take up his challenge. I take the question of supremacy of the Imperial Parliament as the leading issue. You may think that we have failed, but you cannot deny that our purpose is to found a subordinate, not a co-ordinate, Parliament. To the Irish Legislature would be delegated domestic affairs ; but from it would be excluded, by express enactment in Clauses 3 and 4, all subjects of Imperial interest. We have ample foreign and colonial experience that local interests can be delegated to subordinate Parliaments, and that Imperial interests can be preserved by an Imperial Parliament. In the United States there is not one State, but 45 States, autonomous in domestic legislation and executive, yet acting as 45 pillars in upholding the strength of the Federal system. In our 15 self-governing Colonies their powers of self-government are more complete than are contained in this Bill ; but they do not endanger or conflict with Imperial unity. The Bill tries to surround the Imperial interests with many safeguards. In this Bill there is a provision which was absent from that of 1886. That Bill proposed to exclude Irish Members from the Imperial Parliament on the principle that has been applied to Colonial Legislatures. A good deal can be said in favour of this proposal, which, however, was then fiercely opposed by the Liberal Unionists as well as by the Conservatives. They argued with much force that the exclusion of Irish Members rendered our Parliament British and not Imperial. Mr. Chamberlain considered that the retention of Irish Members was the key of the position. In a letter to Mr. Bolton on May 7, 1886, he used these words—

“In the Bill the Government have proceeded on the lines of separation or colonial independence, whereas they should have adopted the principle of Federation. The key of the position is the maintenance of the full representation of Ireland in the Imperial Parliament, and her full responsibility for all Imperial affairs.”

On the 16th of April, Mr. Chamberlain, speaking in Parliament, said—

“The retention of the Irish Members is a matter of the first and cardinal importance ; it is a matter to which I have always attached the greatest possible weight, because if the Irish Members are retained at Westminster, the Imperial Parliament remains the Imperial Parliament, and its supremacy would then be an established fact.”

Undoubtedly the country agreed with this

view during the General Election. At its conclusion Mr. Gladstone found himself with a mandate from the country to bring in a Home Rule Bill, but with a strong indication that he should retain Irish Members in Parliament to keep it Imperial. In yielding to this desire, Mr. Gladstone had a right to expect the support of every Conservative and Liberal Unionist. But when the Government proposed to reduce the Irish Members from 103 to 80, the Unionists voted for the higher number, and then, after a series of contradictory Amendments, they ultimately voted for excluding them altogether, thus recurring to the proposal of 1886, which they then deemed rank treason to Imperial supremacy. They boxed all round the compass in a manner incomprehensible to my logic and ethics, so I do not attempt to argue upon their rotatory conduct. As the Bill now stands, if it become law, Irish representation would be reduced from 103 to 80. The Bill does not put these 80 Members into Parliament ; that was done by the Act of Union, not by this Bill. Yet Sir Henry James at Sheffield describes these 80 Members “as an overwhelming and overshadowing power in the Imperial Parliament.” It is, at all events, 20 per cent. less of a power than was conferred by the Act of Union. Supposing that all the 80 Members were on one side and voted solidly against Imperial interests, the British Members would still be able to outnumber them by seven to one. Practically we know that the Protestant minority would have 20 seats, and if we could rely upon them for support, there would be nine Members to every Nationalist on a vote. Of course, I know that you fear a close balance of Parties and the weight of an outside Party being thrown into the scale. But it is an insult to British Members to think that they would not unite to protect the interests of the Empire. It is an equal insult to the Irish Members to believe that, when they had attained the object of their desire—an autonomous Government for Ireland—and had no longer need of continued isolation, that they would remain hostile to British and Imperial interests. On the contrary, their ambition and their interest would impel them to bring their quick intelligence to

bear on Imperial questions, and to take that position in the counsels of Parliament which they could readily attain by their ability and perseverance. The fear of separation, which has been largely used as a bogey to scare timid people in the country, has scarcely preserved even its shadowy shape in the discussions in the other House or before your Lordships. In the long agitations by responsible Leaders, from the time of Daniel O'Connell to Parnell, separation has neither been advocated nor threatened. In 1799 O'Connell, speaking in Dublin, used these patriotic words—

“I know that the Catholics of Ireland still remember that they have a country, and that they will never accept any advantages as a sect which would debase and destroy them as a people.”

His successors—Butt, Shaw, Parnell, and Justin M'Carthy—have always held similar views. Though Grattan's Parliament of 1782 was an independent Parliament, in the words of Lecky—

“It was unfeignedly and heartily loyal to the British connection.”

That was due to the national spirit which permeated it, not to the fact that the Members were Protestant, for at that very time the Presbyterians of Ulster were showing a strong anti-English spirit. Grattan explained why the Irish Parliament ought to be true to Great Britain. He said—

“The Crown is one link, the Constitution another. You can get a King anywhere; but England is the only country with whom you can participate in a free Constitution.”

But there is even a stronger bond of union in the fact that all the material interests of Ireland depend upon Great Britain. We buy all the Irish exports, with trifling exceptions, and we furnish, either as merchants or producers, all their imports. Surely when Home Rule has been given these interests would be stronger for union than the mere memory of grievances, which we had redressed, would be for separation. The two noble Dukes are especially alarmed on the subject of the Protestant minority, and it is a subject worthy of the fullest consideration. The Duke of Argyll read to us the clause of the American Constitution, Clause 14, which has been found sufficient to protect personal liberty. The essential part of that clause is verbally adopted in Sub-section 8, Clause 4, of

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the present Bill, with words added to insure compensation for any private property taken. But, in addition to that important provision, there are eight other reservations in Clause 4 which fully cover all questions relating to education, religion, and corporate property. Beyond these clauses there are the Exchequer Courts in Ireland, and an Appeal Court in England, to determine Constitutional encroachments against the law, and any violation of private rights. There is also the power of veto, and, in the last resort, the undiminished power of the Imperial Parliament to prevent and restrain wrong-doing. The fears in the mind of the noble Duke are that the Protestant minority may be oppressed by a Parliament which will naturally have a large Catholic majority. He does not trust the historical fact that Irish Catholics have been singularly free from a spirit of religious intolerance. I know that in former times there have been wild insurrections, in which both Protestants and Catholics have committed very cruel and savage acts. These insurrections were retributions of a savage character for acts of long-continued oppression, some of which were attempts to suppress the Catholic religion. But in the short and only Catholic Parliament of 1689 a memorable Act was passed in these words—

“That it is a law of the land of Ireland that neither now nor ever again shall any man be persecuted for his religion.”

Mr. Lecky draws attention in his history to this peculiarity of the Irish character. He says—

“Amongst the Catholics, at least, religious intolerance has never been a prevailing vice; and those who have studied closely the history and character of the Irish people can hardly fail to be struck with the deep respect for sincere religion in every form which they have commonly evinced.”

In proof of this, I cite the remarkable fact that Ireland is the only European country which never had a Christian martyr, or where the Jews and the Quakers were never persecuted. Nearly 280,000 Protestants live in the Catholic Provinces of Ireland in a hopeless minority, yet they live in perfect peace and safety with their Catholic countrymen. In fact, the Southern Catholic Provinces show a remarkable religious toleration, for not only have they elected Protestants to municipal offices, but they

send Protestant Members to Parliament, and have accepted as the Leaders of their National movement Butt, Shaw, and Parnell, who were Protestants. I wish that Ulster would show equal liberality. Nevertheless, I admit that the Protestants of Ulster are seriously alarmed at the prospect of Home Rule. It is the only Province of Ireland in which the Protestants have a majority, not a great one, but still there are 54 per cent. of Protestants to 46 per cent. of Catholics. Is it possible to conceive that an Irish Parliament, largely Catholic, would seek to injure a Province in which nearly one-half of the population consists of people of their own religious faith? In five out of the nine counties of Ulster the Roman Catholics are in a majority. Even the representation of Ulster is nearly evenly divided between Home Rulers and Unionists—at present the Unionists are 19 as against 14, but in the last Parliament the majority was the other way, and a change of only 600 votes would place them in a majority. Unquestionably the town of Belfast predominates Ulster from its size, activity, and prosperity. Belfast is a town nearly as large as Sheffield, and nearly as wealthy as Hull; but would your Lordships consider that a cry from either of these English towns against a great national movement in England ought to be sufficient to promote or defeat a policy desired by the great majority of the English people? It is right to attach weight to the views in Belfast, but it is wrong to say that it is the voice of Ireland, or even the voice of Ulster. I know that many of your Lordships attach the greatest importance to that voice, and that you attribute the prosperity of Ulster to its content with the Government of England. If I apply my former test of good government to Ulster—namely, the increase of population with increasing comforts—how does Ulster stand? Comparing the population of 1841 and 1891, Ulster has lost no less than 750,000 of its population in 50 years. This depopulation is not confined to the Catholic counties, for Protestant Down has decreased faster than Catholic Donegal. Even the rapid development of Belfast scarcely stays from decline the two counties in which it is situated, for their population has only increased by 1,137 persons in the last

census. The voice of Ulster ought to be listened to in the controversy, and the remonstrances should be taken at their full value. Unfortunately, they rarely reach us in calm and well-considered words, but are usually wild words accompanied by wild threats. We must examine these words by the evidence of past experience. Our predecessors, and many of your Lordships, have heard equally wild words on previous occasions, when measures were introduced mitigating the effects of Protestant ascendancy. If you go back to the time of Catholic Emancipation the resolutions against it passed in Ulster were truly blood-curdling. I was in Parliament when we disestablished the Irish Church in 1869. I have a distinct recollection of the threats of Ulster that 200,000 Orangemen were to rise in rebellion, kick the Queen's Crown into the Boyne, and march upon London. The Protestant minority in other parts of Ireland were equally determined. Mr. Plunket, the Member for the University of Dublin, after an excited speech referring to the action of Protestants in past times, said—

“As they were willing to seal with their blood, in martyrdom and battle if need be, to protest against the oppression and slavery of a system which they could not and should not, and which their descendants never will submit to.”

The Ulsterian outpourings of wrath are now of the same character, and almost the same in expression, as they were in 1869. We have become accustomed to them, and do not even resent such names as a kind-hearted Bishop of my acquaintance called the Liberals at the Protestant Synod in Belfast, when he designated us as “political Saugrados who are willing to shed streams of blood—to flood all Ulster with blood.” For 60 or 70 years, on the occasion of every reform, we have become familiar with this style of oratory from Ulster, and we are not frightened. The recent utterances from Ulster are pitched in the same key. Perhaps if I were to guess at their source, I would recommend noble Lords to read the remarkable speech of Lord Stanley, afterwards Lord Derby, and well known for his fiery eloquence. The speech was delivered in 1837 against the proposal to give Home Rule to the Province of Quebec. That Province contained, as Ireland does now, two-thirds Roman Catholics to one-

third Protestants. Lord Derby was certain that the minority would be trampled upon by the majority; that a religious war would take place, the Protestants being assisted by the great Protestant family of the United States; and that, after the shedding of much blood, the Lower Province of Canada would become a French Republic, and that in six months. The strange thing was that Sir Robert Peel agreed with him. Undismayed by this terrible prophecy, Home Rule was granted to the Canadian Province; and the present Lord Derby, who had just returned from the Government of Canada, could testify to your Lordships that its loyalty to the British Crown is as great as in any part of the Dominion. Looking, then, at past experience we may more safely prophesy—or, at least, we are justified in believing—that Ulster will neither fight actively, nor resist passively, Home Rule if it become law; but she will continue to take that distinguished position in the new Legislature, to which she is entitled by her industry, talent, and perseverance. I fear that it is a foregone conclusion that your Lordships will reject this Bill. Yet you must feel that the task of continuing to govern Ireland by means of coercive law, instead of by the consent of the people, is a hopeless failure. England has tried to govern Ireland in her own way, that is by English methods, twice as long as the Turks have held Constantinople and the Turkish Empire, and in both cases with about as little satisfaction to the conquered people. Ireland is a country that should be easy to govern. The soil of Ireland is naturally productive, and its climate is temperate. The Island is indented with noble harbours, and is intersected by great rivers. Had it been a State in America, its water power would have made it one of the most active industrial countries in the world. It is near the Welsh and Scotch coal-fields, and has the conditions for industrial prosperity far greater than Switzerland or Holland. You still insist on refusing to Ireland a form of Government desired by the people, and while you refuse the population dwindles. Three millions of the people depend on agriculture directly, and yet the agriculture of Ireland, its main industry, dwindles also. Its former chief crop—potatoes—

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no longer produces on the average of years more than $3\frac{1}{2}$ tons per acre; while in Great Britain the average produce is nearly double. I hear a noble Lord say that is owing to the potato disease of 1846; but that disease struck Scotland with the same severity as in Ireland, yet the product of the former country is now double that of the latter. In root crops, for which the climate is favourable, the average crops have sunk 22 per cent. below those of Great Britain. So much arable land has gone into pasture that, even after a full allowance for the increase of live stock, the production of human food in Ireland would feed 1,500,000 fewer people than 20 years ago. A couple of bad harvests bring the peasants to the verge of starvation, and you are obliged to make them objects of charity. The mineral industries of Ireland are not very rich; but such as they are they have not been developed so much as they should have been. The fisheries, which would be prolific in other countries, are neglected in Ireland; and what is the cause of this decline? We have one cause and you another. You attribute all this inferiority as a nation to radical defects in the character of the Irish people. Our answer is that we consider that these defects are the melancholy outcome of governing a country against the consent of the people. When the Irish emigrate to other lands, especially to the United States and our Colonies, they become peaceful and productive citizens in the second generation. The industries of New England, in the large factories, are chiefly worked by Irish and by French Canadians, so even new emigrants quickly adapt themselves to trade. We expect no miracles from this measure, and it may be more than one generation before we get Irish of the character we desire. The fact of Local Government by the people for themselves has an admirable effect. I quote a short passage from a noble Lord opposite, and I think it is very well put—

“Men can manage the affairs which concern their own immediate life and which concern their localities far better than those at a distance could manage them, and if they did not manage them better they manage them in a manner more suitable to their own taste, and they submit to whatever inconveniences are necessary with much better grace.”

That is a capital description of the working of Local Government. I dare say the noble Marquess recognises he is the author of that speech, which was made by him on the 19th of June, 1887, at Leeds. I quote another passage from a speech of his at Newport, which my noble Friend (Earl Spencer) was unable to read last night—

“A Local Authority is more exposed to the temptation and has more of the facility for enabling a majority to be unjust to the minority than is the case when the Authority derives its sanction and extends its jurisdiction over a wide area. That is one of the weaknesses of Local Authorities. In a large Central Authority the wisdom of several parts of the country will correct the folly or mistakes of one. In a Local Authority that correction to a much greater extent is wanting; and it would be impossible to leave that out of sight in the extension of any such Local Authority to Ireland.”

I think that is admirable. In those two speeches one shows the advantage of Local Government, and the other that Local Government will not do alone, but must be supplemented by Central Government. I am content to leave the case as the noble Marquess has put it. There is one thing I should like to ask, Do you expect the democracy of the future to do better than the aristocracy have done, because if you expect the democracy to work on the same lines it is impossible. A democracy ceases to be a democracy when it governs against the consent of the people, and the democracy is now established in this country, and it is impossible for you to continue in the ancient path. I am a new Member of your House, and am not imbued with your traditions. But if I were a man of landed possessions, in the interests of my order and of my property, I would do everything within my power to make Ireland a contented country. A distracted and discontented Ireland is the fortress of advancing Radicalism, and even of Socialism. Since 1867 the conflicts in Ireland have been looked upon by the democracy of this country as battles between the rich and the poor, and those rights which have been given to Ireland have been observed by the British people here, and they will be demanded also. I think it will, before long, be a very formidable thing if we do not succeed in making Ireland contented. I shall make a very few more remarks on the question—“Has this country accepted Home Rule?” The

Duke of Devonshire asks your Lordships to reject this Bill, and he gives this reason—

“Because we have no knowledge, and we can have no knowledge, that either the principles or the details of the measure command the consent of the people of this country.”

The noble Duke is strong on that point. What is there in this Delphic utterance? Is he going to ask you to adopt that most democratic of measures, a *referendum ad hoc*? That would be a much more fundamental interference with the Constitution than this Bill. If that is not the meaning, then the meaning is that the country does not know the details or principles of the Bill. Everyone knows that Members are returned to frame measures and arrange details. In regard to details, the people trust their Representatives in Parliament assembled. As to principles, what are the facts? At the last General Election the voters of this country, by a majority of 229,000, affirmed the principle of Home Rule. It does not lie with your Lordships, who are such strong supporters of a United Kingdom, to deny the force of this majority because it is chiefly from Ireland. That fact increases the strength and significance of the majority. Yet against all logic you have become Separatists and cut off Ireland from your considerations, arguing that you should be guided by the votes of Great Britain. But the majority of British votes was also on the side of Home Rule. Your newspapers sometimes deny this by cutting away the Labour votes from the Gladstonians, though every Labour candidate was a Home Ruler, and, therefore, it was unfair to cut them off. At all events, you will not deny that the Gladstonian majority in Scotland and Wales was very largely in favour of Home Rule. In England the majority of voters was greatly with the Unionists. Yet it was England that sent us back to power. We lost in Ireland, and on the balance, excluding England, we gained only two seats. It was the revulsion of feeling in England that brought Home Rulers into power. Your English representative majority against Home Rule was 214 in 1886; it dwindled to 71 in 1892—you lost two-thirds of your English majority—and that shows that the desire and feeling of the country had greatly

increased in favour of Home Rule. The Duke of Devonshire did not know for what the Members were returned; some he knew were returned for labour, some for local option, and some for disestablishment. It is useless to deny that there has been a clearly expressed mandate of the people in favour of Home Rule. In the Division on the Second Reading in the other House every Liberal voted for the Bill and every Unionist against it, showing that each Party understood the conditions on which they were elected. You say that you are entitled to reject this Bill because the majority in favour of it in the other House was only 40. Yet the Unionist majority in Great Britain at the last Election of which you boast so much was only 17. Your Lordships cannot defend the rejection of the Bill on your ignorance of the wishes of the country. Do not let us delude ourselves by thinking that, now or hereafter, we can settle this question of Home Rule by a mere negation. I give full credit to the majority of your Lordships that in rejecting this Bill you act upon the deepest conviction that it is injurious to the highest interests of the United Kingdom if it is passed. We ask your Lordships to give to the minority who support the Bill equal credit for the sincerity of their convictions. We believe that it is calculated to bind Ireland more firmly to Great Britain, because it removes the sources of past discontent and distrust; because it confides to the Irish their own domestic government and makes them responsible for its efficiency; and because large experience has shown that organised government of a people through their own Parliament is the best safeguard against the excesses which follow from a disorganised and irresponsible democratic liberty.

LORD ASHBOURNE: My Lords, I have listened with interest to the very clear and able speech of the noble Lord who has just spoken, and I have listened closely to see what arguments he would adduce to show that this Bill was necessary, and safe, and just. It is obvious that these are three cardinal propositions which should be present to the mind of any honest man wishing to get a vote on the question. The noble Lord has dealt with, and I might say revelled, in statistics. I pass away, at the outset, from all the figures which have given such

pleasure to my noble Friend who has just sat down with this remark—that the Bill comes up to your Lordships' House only by the votes of the Irish majority in the House of Commons, with a majority of 23 British Members against it, and a majority of 48 Members against it from England and Wales. Those are clear figures that cannot be gainsaid. Now, it is obvious that in substance and in reality this is a Bill for the Repeal of the Union. In order to prove that such a stupendous measure is necessary it should be shown that the Union has failed, and that a disruption is desired by the two nations that entered into that great conflict. This has been entirely left out of view by the noble Lord, as well as by Earl Spencer in his speech introducing the Bill. It is manifest from the figures I have given that Great Britain is in favour of the maintenance of the Union, while a great and growing minority in Ireland hold strongly to the same view. The views of the noble Lords on the other side go rather to indicate, not by bold and manly assertion, but by indirect and devious suggestion, that the Union has failed. I at once take issue upon that point. The Union has not failed. Contrasting the state of Great Britain and Ireland in 1800 with the state of the United Kingdom now the Union has distinctly succeeded. The noble Lord who spoke yesterday (Lord Ribblesdale) dealt shortly with the history of Ireland since the Union. I do not think he went into it fully; I do not think he went into it in such a way as would be satisfactory to this House. The great difference between the manner in which the Union was entered into and the disruption of the Union is that the Union was a deliberate Act by some of the greatest statesmen that England ever had, headed by the great name of William Pitt, not in a moment, not in a month, but after years and years of study and contemplation, before arriving at the conclusion that the Union was the safest course that could be taken in the interests of the Empire and Great Britain, and, not least, in the interest of Ireland itself. The Union, which has subsisted for 93 years, has been, I venture to think, attended with immense benefit to Ireland. It has controlled the

antagonisms of race ; it has controlled as well the bitterness sometimes caused by different creeds. Under it commerce and imports have increased ; Belfast has grown from the condition of a small town to a gigantic commercial centre ; Catholic Emancipation has been granted, religious freedom secured, national education dealt out with a generous hand to all the people. The Land Laws of Ireland are for the tenants the most liberal, the most generous of any Land Code ever formed in the civilised world, the envy of the tenants of Republican France and of Democratic America. Taxation which has been imposed has been marked by differences of generosity in favour of Ireland. Public money has been poured out freely for land purchase, for land improvement, and to develop the industrial resources of the country. I cannot quite follow the curious arguments from statistics to which we have been treated. To a certain extent a man becomes intoxicated with too much of his own figures. The idea of suggesting that in consequence of the Union the potato crop has diminished by one-half ; that in consequence of the Union the fish will not come to be caught ! He did not say that it was in consequence of the Union, but that was what he desired to convey, and what he wished us to understand. It is about on a parallel with what the noble Earl indicated yesterday in his rapid *résumé* of the history of Ireland since the Union, when he seemed to suggest that things which had occurred since the Union were consequences of the Union. The noble Earl, for example, mentioned religious animosity. I ask, was religious animosity developed or assuaged by the Union ? It was under the Union you had Catholic Emancipation. It has been said that under the Union there has been poverty and famine. What is the meaning of that ? The suggestion appears to be that the Union has worked out poverty and famine, and that if this wretched Bill is passed famine will cease and poverty will be over. Looking at the reality of things, everyone knows that it is the Union which has assuaged the bitterness of poverty. Everyone knows that when the pinch of famine came generous help was extended by the British Parliament. Taking the broad view such a statesman

should take ; taking into consideration everything by which you can measure the real worth of a nation, it was all acquired under the Union, and you now ask us to destroy it. At the time of the Union Ireland was not prosperous. At the time of the Union the only growing thing in Ireland was its Debt. Its exports, its shipping, and trade were all diminishing. It was stated by a great authority that Ireland was at the time of the Union within three years of bankruptcy ; 25 years after the Union, and long before the great change took place, commerce, shipping, and exports all increased. A vague impression is sought to be worked into men's minds that Ireland at the time of the Union was in a state of happiness and prosperity ; that the Union gave it a check ; that ever since Ireland has been going from bad to worse ; and that, therefore, you must interfere. There never was a suggestion more absolutely unfounded. The truths I have presented are not directly encountered by the noble Earl who spoke yesterday or the noble Lord just now, who presented such a vast array of figures to us. They are not even directly challenged ; but I tell you—and I speak on this question with the advantage of not being a Scotchman—these obvious truths are recognised in Ireland by all the law-abiding classes ; they are recognised by the commercial classes to whom security of commerce is as the breath of their nostrils ; they are recognised by the banking, the railway, and the industrial communities ; they are recognised by the great seats of learning—or the great majority of them—and by the great bulk of the professional classes. I decline in every way to make this a religious question. It was almost suggested to me by the noble Lord to use some words that might stir up old religious differences ; but I will not do it. I will not put it for a moment that it is a question of religious differences. Almost to a man the great Protestant community of Ireland is against this Bill. Is it not a fact that the mass of educated, independent, and intelligent Roman Catholics are against it ? Why is it that these men, over 1,000,000 in number, a third of the population—some of the most intelligent, educated, and independent of all those who have anything to lose—are against this Bill ? Why do

they loathe and detest it? It is because they are on the spot, because they will have to suffer, because your empty philosophical theories are not shared by them, and because they know that what you say will not occur, because you express a doubt upon the subject, will occur. There has always been more or less agitation in Ireland. But do you think that even if you pass this nostrum of yours that agitation will cease, and that for the future there will be nought in Ireland? There have been agitations in Ireland for many a long day; but what have those agitations mainly depended upon? Two potent factors, certainly, during the last 30 years, without which those agitations would be powerless. One is the aid of American sympathy, incitements, and gold. If Ireland had been left without the gold and incitements from America the agitation would have died. What is the other factor which has given life and vitality to agitation? It is the land. Every agitation that I can recollect—and long before for what I know—has striven to link itself to the land and appealing to the cupidity of the farmer; and, therefore, you find sometimes that it calls itself Fenianism, and sometimes Moonlights, and more recently the Plan of Campaign. If you get rid of the American element, if you settle the Land Question, as it can be done, to satisfy the reasonable wishes of the farmer, what then remains of the life of these agitations? Up to a recent period the traditions of the English public life were courageous and patriotic. Be the Party what it might, the Union was safe, the Constitution was safe, the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament was a thing not to be touched. Crimes Acts were passed mostly under the Government of Mr. Gladstone, but never to hurt to the extent of a pin's point any law-abiding citizen. They were solely directed against those who by crime and terrorism denied to their fellow-citizens the enjoyment of the first rights of civilisation—liberty and safety. The noble Earl yesterday alluded to the fact that the law in Ireland has not been aided by public effort. I know it, and I regret it. But has not that been largely due to the remorseless power of intimidation and terrorism with which we are all familiar? The efforts of every statesman in England, without exception, have always been

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directed to point out the benefits of the Union. And this has been going on for 86 years. Mr. Gladstone, in the year 1866, used these words—

"My firm belief is that the influence of Great Britain in every Irish difficulty is not an influence of domination and tyranny, but a softening and mitigating influence."

I shall not use any quotations to-night for the small and puny purpose of establishing inconsistency. I use that quotation as the testimony of a statesman who has an experience of far more than a generation of public life. In 1881, in introducing the Irish Land Bill, he observed—

"It is said that our legislation in Ireland has failed. I admit the process to be incomplete. If I am asked how it is to be made complete, I say by patient perseverance in well-doing, and by steady adherence in the work of justice."

These are hopeful words; they are the deliberate conviction of a statesman presenting a great ameliorating measure to Ireland. More recently, on May 16, 1884, Mr. Gladstone used these words of deep significance, having regard to many recent utterances—

"England for 50 years stood in the face of the civilised world a culprit with regard to Ireland. I say that the civilised world has entirely changed its judgment."

That is a most interesting statement, as containing the belief of the view of the civilised world. That was in 1884. In two years after that all is changed; a miracle of conversion is wrought. Mr. Gladstone changed his mind in a moment, almost in the twinkling of an eye. If he had not changed his mind we should have no Bill before us, and if he changed back his mind to-morrow morning what would become of the Bill? Would there be any need of a Division on Friday, and would any of his Colleagues be sorry? The noble Earl yesterday gave us a glimpse of his mind when, in rather a halting explanation, he stated how he came to change—he said it was on account of the continuity of coercive legislation. [Earl SPENCER dissented.] I read the report of the noble Earl's speech this morning, and I heard the words last night, and if they did not mean that they meant nothing.

*EARL SPENCER: I did not read the report of my speech this morning, but I do not think I referred to the continuity of coercive legislation, but to the want of continuity in support of the ordinary administration in Dublin.

LORD ASHBOURNE: I do not know what that means if it does not mean that. Why should the Union now be broken? Why should the immense experiment of this Bill be tried unless it can be shown that great benefits would arise from the breaking of the Union? Where is the prospect of justice to Ireland—I mean justice to all classes in Ireland—from this Bill? Where is the prospect of peace and contentment? The very introduction of the Bill has roused passions and animosities which may be assuaged by time, but which it will take years to allay. The Bill works a revolution; it destroys the Constitution of England in the effort to set up a new Constitution for Ireland. There is an enormous difference between making a Union and breaking one. You cannot obliterate the tremendous fact that the Union has been in existence for 93 years. I am an Irishman, and I speak from what I am bound to know, and of which I am entitled to have a strong opinion about. And, speaking from the standpoint of an Irishman, I ask how many men of any sense could be found to state what the arguments are which commend themselves to a Home Ruler, and it would be found in this form—"Get rid of Irish questions; put a stop to coercion; let the Irish manage their own affairs, and let us manage ours." There is not one solitary syllable of that carried out in the Bill. So far as Irish questions are concerned, Ireland stops the way when Mr. Gladstone is in power; but how can the dullest fail to see that this Bill cannot put an end to Irish questions? It is not accepted as final; it is ostentatiously accepted as only provisional. Land, Judiciary, police, and finance are all put into a probationary period, and Mr. Gladstone says he is of opinion that during that period the business of the Irish Members would require them to be more at Westminster than in Dublin. Get rid of Irish questions indeed! Is that the hope and belief of a single one of you? We are not so easily got rid of as that, after all. What are we making 80 Irish Members in the Imperial Parliament for? Although your rôle is to make them angels, you do not think they will do nothing when they come over here—when you make them come over here—in order to goad the English Go-

vernment to view English questions from the Irish standpoint.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: They interfere now.

LORD ASHBOURNE: They can meddle now, but they are not allowed to have a separate Parliament in Dublin at the same time. After this Bill is passed you will give them the exclusive management of their own affairs, and allow them to send a delegation of 80 over here to prevent you managing yours. The Irish are human beings; they are not a bit worse than English or Scotch people; indeed, I am not prepared to say they may not be better; but if you compel them to come to the Imperial Parliament and to take part in the discussion of English subjects, you must not be surprised if they consider the interests of their own country first and the interests of England second. What is the meaning of the second step in your argument, "get rid of coercion?" There is not a Crimes Bill now which has any provision of it in existence. Do you suggest that that is a reason to carry you on in this tremendous revolution. There is a Crimes Act now upon the Statute Book the provisions of which are lying dormant. The Act served its purpose well; it put down intimidation and boycotting and enabled law-abiding citizens to obey the law; it never harmed a single human being who wanted to abide by the law. But this Bill would work out a coercion of the most deadly character to the loyal minority in Ireland—a real and effectual coercion instead of the coercion now lying dormant on the Statute Book. From the way some people speak it would be thought that the Irish were a united people, with common objects, common hopes, and common interests. Must we again, even at the eleventh hour of this discussion, say that there are two Irelands? The meaning of "let the Irish manage their own affairs" is that a numerical majority, less educated, shall have sway over the more wealthy and better educated. Whose affairs are they to manage? Not their own, but the affairs of the loyal minority. And then you have the 80 Irish Members at Westminster to manage your affairs, never to forget the watchword bequeathed to them in past ages—"England's difficulty is Ireland's opportunity." We are asked in this case to at-

tend to the words of the Irish Nationalist Leaders; but it is not easy to forget their actions and their words in the past. It is all very well to allude to the Irish Nationalist Leaders as "babes and sucklings." They are curious babes and sucklings, but we cannot forget the not very remote language which they used, harsh to the minority, to the police, and to the landlords. Is it fair to ask the minority to trust these men? I do not think it is when they cannot trust one another. I heard it said the other day—I read these words in *The Irish Independent*—

"Mr. Healy did not think much of Sexton, and Sexton thought less of him, and neither thought much of the other, but each thought highly of himself."

The whole administration of Ireland is to be handed over to these men—the Magistracy, police, law, maintenance of order, protection of life and property, and every right that made free citizenship of value. The administration of all these matters is to be handed over to them without check or stint. I have heard it said—"At all events let us pass the Bill as an experiment. It can be repealed if the experiment is a failure." Is not that an appalling suggestion—that you will try an experiment under which you gamble with the lives, liberty, and property of our fellow-subjects in Ireland? I must now refer to the important question of the land. We were told not so very long ago by the Prime Minister that it was an obligation of justice and honour to settle the Land Question before any Home Rule Bill was passed. In the same way Lord Spencer gave us to understand that in his opinion it would be most treacherous not to buy out the Irish landlords before granting Home Rule. Now obligations of honour and dictates of justice do not change from day to day and from hour to hour. Meanness and treachery one day are meanness and treachery the next. A man of honour should have an honour which is not mutable as a weathercock. Under this Bill no land legislation is to be possible in the Irish Parliament for three years. What is the meaning of that reservation? I am entitled constitutionally at this Table—[pointing to the Front Ministerial Bench]—to search your consciences, and to test the reality of your honourable convictions, and as

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men of honour you are bound to give an answer. What is the meaning of this reservation? Do the Government intend themselves to present a Bill upon this question? If they do, when do they intend to present it, and upon what lines will it be drawn? Or do they merely desire to conceal by this postponement the infamy of the transaction which they contemplate? Can it be possible that they intend to hand over the landlords to the merciless treatment of the Irish Nationalist Leaders, who have declared that the landlords are only entitled to "prairie value," and ought to be hunted until they are as scarce as foxes? In the Debate on the Third Reading of this Bill in another place Mr. Dillon denied that the landlords were entitled to regard Ireland as their country, and in alluding to the action of the National League he referred to "felonious landlords." Is it just and honourable to hand over the property of the Irish landlords to men who have used this language? It is a curious circumstance that the first judicial term of 15 years under the land legislation of the Prime Minister will expire in about three years. Can the infamous thought have passed through the minds of the Government that it would be expedient to leave the subject of judicial rents, and the appointment of the Sub-Commissioners who will fix these rents, to be dealt with by the proposed Irish Government? I should be glad to hear from some Member of the Government that that idea did not enter into their heads. What was the explanation given by the noble Earl opposite to account for the absence of legislation respecting the land? He said that the Purchase Acts passed in recent years have taken the place of the contemporaneous Land Bill of 1886. Is this not puerile to a degree? I desire to use no terms calculated to give pain, but I never heard a more lame, halting, and impertinent excuse. Why, the first Act in the Land Purchase Code was passed before 1886—when my noble Friend was Prime Minister for the first time, and it held out every inducement for the tenant to become a purchaser. But the system will be changed by this Bill. Who will buy if it be passed? Will it not obviously be better to remain a tenant than to purchase when the chances are that a man will be able

as a tenant to avoid all payment successfully? The treatment of the landlords by the Government is like sentencing a man to be hanged at the end of three years, and suspending him in the meantime. Everyone would say it was brutal and cruel, but the Judge would be candid. What do the Government think would be the fate of the Irish landlords? I am not sure that it would not be better for them to know their fate; but what would it be if they are handed over at the end of three years to the merciless mercy of the men who have always said they would show them none? If that is their object, it is impossible to use words strong enough to mark one's sense of the conduct of the Government. I have used words of considerable strength, and I cannot at the moment think of any stronger; therefore, I leave the matter where it is. If that is what they mean, it would be better for them to try to be men enough to confess their shame, instead of taking refuge in what my late great countryman, Bishop Magee, called the "cautious cowardice of refusing to say anything at all." It is thought that a fair trial will be secured in jury cases by the appointment of the Exchequer Judges; but the juries will be empanelled under the Jury Laws, and will be at the mercy of the Irish Government. They will return exactly what verdicts they please, whether the Exchequer Judges like it or not. As to the jurisdiction to be given to these Judges, legal minds are unable to understand it. It is a conundrum without an answer. There is to be an appeal, but is there to be an appeal on facts and law? Is there to be an appeal from the verdict of the jury? The section bristles with difficulties, and yet it was absolutely undiscussed. Then, how are the orders of the Exchequer Judges to be carried out? That is a momentous question, but it was absolutely undiscussed in the other House of Parliament. It may be said that, like other orders, they are to be carried out by the Sheriff. I am speaking in the presence of my noble and learned Friend on the Woolsack, the Lord Chancellor, who must endeavour to clear up some of these legal difficulties. It is said that the Sheriff must execute the orders of the Exchequer Judges, but the Irish Government might not compel him to obey the orders of the Judges, and

there is no provision in the Bill for the punishment of the Sheriff if he disobeys their orders. It is a grotesque machinery not worth the paper it is written on. If there should be a brawl, and life is lost, the Sheriff and his assistants would be tried before a common jury empanelled under the then laws of Ireland; and I am not at all sure that it would be very easy to get them acquitted. Sir Charles Russell said that the Exchequer Judges would have at their backs the Imperial power. That is a very fine phrase, but what does it mean? The Imperial power will not have a single policeman or Magistrate at its back, so that this is merely a phrase of the Attorney General's. It might be said that it refers to the Army, that there is the Army to fall back upon; but the Army could not act in the matter, because the very second the Imperial Government directed the Army to interfere in any struggle, such interference would not be administration of the law, but civil war. The Executive impotence of the Exchequer Judges must expose them to contempt. If their orders are unpopular they will not be executed; but if executed, it will be at the risk of riot, bloodshed, and civil war. It is an endeavour to set up an *imperium in imperio*, but your *imperium* will have neither power, nor resources, nor credit. Your Bill treats Ireland as a suspected Province, whose justice is doubted and whose honesty is questioned. You trust Ireland with everything except the till; but in order not to hurt their feelings you order the money to be placed in the chest and give them the key. It is nothing but a medley of distrust, unbelief, and credulity. You entrust the Irish Executive with enormous powers, and then endeavour to balance them by things called "safeguards." No one believes in them, not a single human being outside a lunatic asylum. The Irish Nationalist Leaders play their part well. They listen to the description of those safeguards with an air of reluctant resignation. I can only say that, for myself, I regard those safeguards as absolutely illusory, ineffective, and unworkable. The Second Chamber proposal I pass by. It is too ludicrous to be taken seriously. I have a great respect for Second Chambers that are intended to perform real functions as to stability or caution to

legislation; but the Second Chamber under this Bill is not the real thing at all. With regard to the veto, Lord Spencer spoke as if he had some belief in it, and that makes me think that he has not rightly grasped the meaning of some sections of the Bill. Under ordinary circumstances the veto is to be exercised under the advice of the Irish Cabinet. Surely it is nonsense to expect them to advise the Lord Lieutenant to veto their own Bills. Then where is the protection of the veto? It is said that the English Cabinet may give special directions, but who is to invoke the intervention of the English Cabinet? Is the Lord Lieutenant to do so? Is there to be an Imperial Minister who is to watch the Irish Legislature? The Lord Lieutenant of the future will be a strange creature, fearfully and wonderfully made. He may disagree with a Bill when it is submitted to him; he may believe that it is fraught with peril and gross oppression to the minority; he may get no directions from England. What, then, is he to do? He may ask for special directions. He may get back a definite reply; but has he any discretion to act on his own clear judgment? Mr. Morley says that sometimes he may act on English advice, sometimes on Irish advice, and sometimes on his own judgment; but would he not be bound to assent to a Bill presented by his Irish Ministers in the absence of any special directions from the English Cabinet? That is a clear Constitutional question that I am entitled to ask, and it must be answered before this Debate closes. The Lord Lieutenant would be sometimes Imperial, sometimes Irish, sometimes hung up between heaven and earth, like "Mahomet's coffin." He may be in a paroxysm of doubt, yet, like a Colonial Governor, he cannot reserve the question for consideration. It may be that the Bill before him threatens the grossest oppression to the minority, yet he has not the power to veto it. At every step it turns out that the veto is a sham. It is not a real protection, and my opinion is that it is not intended to be a real protection. The Lord Lieutenant of the future—I do not know whether any noble Lord is in training for the office yet, but I advise his friends to keep a very close eye upon his sanity—will sometimes be as pliant as indiarubber,

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sometimes as hard as adamant, and sometimes composed of something that it is impossible to baptize with any name at all. Then it is said that the Imperial Parliament is a safeguard. What is the meaning of that? The supremacy of the Imperial Parliament is now the greatest safeguard to every subject of the Queen in the United Kingdom, because it means its action. The supremacy of the Imperial Parliament of the future will have no power of action whatever. Parliament may pass Resolutions against Irish administration; it may pass concurrent legislation. How can it carry out Resolutions or legislation? The Irish Executive could not be relied on in these cases, because it would be against the Irish Executive that the action of the Imperial Parliament would be directed. If an Imperial Executive is set up, what is your position? You will have in this poor Ireland two hostile Executives, and that is your message of peace. If a row or a breach of the peace arose—and these things have occurred in Ireland before—the Members of the English Executive would be promptly arrested by the Irish police and subjected to that due process of law of which we have heard a great deal. Again, you will find in every season of difficulty, doubt, and trouble, the 80 Irish Members will always crop up. How is the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament to be asserted in the face of the shifting ballast of 80 Irish Members ready to vote against any assertion of supremacy, against any effort to do justice to the minority? It is said the loyal minority will be represented among these 80 Members, and that they could make their wants known in the Imperial Parliament. But the Schedule is a gerrymandered Schedule. I do not accuse Mr. Morley, a man of honour, of desiring to do anything of the kind, but he is the victim of some less scrupulous statistician than the noble Lord opposite. Dublin University, the great seat of learning with which I am proud to be identified, and proud to remember that I represented it for many years in the other House of Parliament, is to be disfranchised, and this in a country with thousands of illiterates. The only constituency, every man of whom can read and write, is to be deprived of its representation, and the

Protestants of Connaught, Munster, and the greater part of Leinster are to lose the only voice they have for asserting their grievances in the Imperial Parliament. The doom of the loyal minority is hard. Is it not an inconceivable meanness to stifle the voices by which they could make their sufferings heard? Mr. Morley said there was a principle involved in his figures, that principle being that one Member should be given for every 75,000 of the population, and a second Member for any excess over the 75,000. Thus Meath, a Nationalist county with a population of 76,000, is to have two Members; while Fermanagh, a mixed county, with a population of 74,000, is to have only one. Leitrim, with 78,000 inhabitants, is to have two Members; while Armagh, with a population of 143,000, is only to have two Members. Kerry, with 179,000, is to have three Members; while Antrim, with 174,000, is to have only two Members. If that is not gerrymandering—I do not say it is—it is the most miraculous coincidence that ever was known in the history of figures. In Ireland the Bill will work chaos; it will tend to civil war; it will lead to bankruptcy; it will give the Loyalists less protection than was afforded in America, after the Civil War, to the negroes. A supporter of the Gladstonian Party, though not of the Bill, has declared that “his revered chief” wishes to carry any sort of Bill in any sort of way. The Bill now awaits judgment at your Lordships’ hands. It is false in its principles; it is dangerous in its policy. There is surrender in every line; there is betrayal in every sentence. It sends to Ireland not peace, but a sword. It preaches not the assuaging of passions, but the rousing into fever-heat of old and sad animosities. While that is the wretched message that is sent to Ireland, I put this point to your Lordships. There is not one single solitary advantage that will accrue to England under this Bill. The Bill has passed the House of Commons. I do not discuss the question how many Members voted for it, thanking God there was a House of Lords; how many Members voted for it, thanking God it was not going to become law by the mechanism of their votes. The whole nation has its eyes turned to the House of Lords, watchful and expectant as to our action. But we

act more or less with the certainty that the nation is behind us. Each day feeling deepens and broadens, in spite of tremendous pressure. In the House of Commons votes diminish, and not one single vote was gained in the whole of these months of fighting. The tide of opposition is rising, the tide of support is going out. The Bill cannot pass. I believe that the people of Great Britain, now that their intelligence is awakened and their conscience aroused, never will allow a Bill of this kind to discredit the Statute Book of Great Britain. Animated by the conviction that our action will be ratified by the country, let us reject this pernicious Bill, in justice to Great Britain and in mercy to Ireland.

LORD CASTLETOWN said, that he occupied in the House a twofold position. Every hope and interest he possessed was centred in Ireland, his native country; and yet he had a seat in their Lordships’ House as a Peer of the United Kingdom. It was proposed by the Bill to confer on Ireland a Legislature subordinate to the Imperial Parliament, but by means of paper safeguards. What must be the first impulse of every Irishman, if he loved his country and was anxious for freedom and independence and for the national life of his country, would they not naturally ask that their power of legislation might be increased for the purpose of giving it to them; but to attempt to enlarge the powers conferred by this Bill, to break through the paper fetters which the Government in their fatuity had created, and to force by slow but sure degrees the Imperial Parliament to give the subordinate Legislature greater and more extensive powers, until an absolutely free Parliament for Ireland, with 80 Irish Members in the British Parliament, was created? Mr. Redmond, speaking for the active and increasing Parnellite section of the so-called Nationalists, distinctly stated that the word “provisional” was written in red ink on every page of the Bill. He was as good an Irishman as Mr. Redmond, and he would say openly that if such a pitiable measure as this were forced on this country it would be the duty of every Irishman to force the Imperial Government to make the Legislature an effective one; it would be the duty of the minority as well as of the majority in Ireland to make the law-

creating machinery of their country equal to the task imposed upon it. If this were not done the position of Ireland and of every Irishman would be simply unbearable. Speaking solely as an Irishman, proud and jealous of his country and nationality, he would boldly declare that he would rather see Ireland separated for ever from this Empire, see her trying to stand alone among the nations of the world, see her even fail and fall in that effort, than see her subjected to the malignant growths which this measure must engender in her political system. If the Bill were provisional it meant that years of discord must intervene, not only between the Irish and British Legislatures, but between the priestly factions on one side and the Fenian factions on the other; and during these conflicts the minority—the men of Ulster and the scattered communities in the other parts of Ireland—would be permitted to work out the salvation of their country by physical force under the advice of the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. The outlook for Ireland would be deplorable. The one thing she needed was peace and rest from agitation, and they were abolished for generations by this measure. Capital, which was returning, would fly from a country harassed by every political feud, and which might at any moment become the prey of a foreign foe. As to the financial provisions, there were three salient points with which he would deal. The first was Clause 12, Sub-section 2. By this provision taxation in Ireland would be doubled. The Irish people would have to pay for the maintenance of the Legislature, and for the 80 Members in London. Did Irishmen realise this? Every Irishman would indirectly suffer, and as, no doubt, the first Chancellor of the Exchequer of Ireland would step up from the Board of *The Freeman's Journal*, his fellow-countrymen must look forward to expensive times. The second point was Clause 13, Sub-section 2. This sub-section directed the Controller General to certify any amount due from the Irish Exchequer to the English Exchequer and the Treasury to send an order to the Lord Lieutenant for the collection of the amount. How was he to collect it? One thing was absolutely patent. If this extraordinary clause became law it would start the same danger; would

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initiate the same agitation that ended in the separation of the States of America from Great Britain. The 3rd sub-section, which would deeply affect all classes of Irishmen, was Clause 16, Sub-section 3. That meant for Ireland the extinction of her credit; it meant the loss to all classes of every possibility of ameliorating their position by improvements; it meant the withdrawal of the Imperial credit, and to a poor country like Ireland that meant absolute bankruptcy; it meant the impossibility of effecting any improvement except at a usurious rate of interest. Yet the men who called themselves Irishmen, who called themselves Nationalists, who called themselves Representatives of the Irish people, had the brazen audacity to accept this Bill with clauses in it such as these, which must mean ruin, civil discord, and hopeless bankruptcy to their native land. From the Imperial standpoint, the ground of opposition to this measure was even stronger than from the Irish aspect. The issues involved were greater, the aspect wider, and the dangers even more patent. The Government had always set before themselves certain points which they said were contained in the four corners of the Bill. The first was the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament. Was that maintained? Every man knew that with 80 Irish Members in the Imperial House acting under orders from Dublin the Imperial supremacy was moonshine and a farce. Clause 10 extinguished the supremacy of Great Britain, while it extended the tyranny of the Land Leaguers of Ireland over the United Kingdom. On this point none of the arguments of the Government could have any weight so long as the representation of Ireland was as at present, and as long as 80 Members, or rather items, were brought from Ireland representing, not the opinions of Irishmen, but the *dicta* of so many ecclesiastics. The first point contained in the Bill was the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament. Now was that maintained? With 80 Irish Members in the House of Commons acting under orders from Dublin everybody knew that Imperial supremacy must be the merest moonshine and a farce. The supremacy of Great Britain was extinguished by Clause 10, which extended the tyranny of the Land League over the United

Kingdom. The arguments of the Government with reference to supremacy must be absolutely without weight so long as 80 Irish Members were brought from Ireland to represent not the opinions of Irishmen, but the *dicta* of the Roman Catholic Bishops, of Fenians, or of the Clan-na-Gael. It had been stated that the Irish Members represented the opinions of Irishmen, but he knew the country well, and knew how they were elected. In the constituency where he lived the right man apparently could not be found, and a gentleman from Cork was nominated by the Federation. That gentleman was elected, but out of a large constituency nearly one-half abstained from voting. Still, he was elected simply by the orders of a certain clique. Imperial supremacy was, he maintained, impossible. Followers of the Government seemed to think that elections in Ireland were like elections in England. In the large towns or in the North that might be the case, but in the rural constituencies everyone who lived in Ireland knew that candidates were nominated by one or other of the Nationalist Parties, and those who dared not vote against them and would not vote for them abstained. The result was that a certain item was elected as a Representative, not expressing the opinion of the electorate, not expressing the wishes of the people, but simply as the nominee of the dominant faction in that district, a faction not dominant owing to votes, but simply from power of combination, or through clerical influence. Imperial supremacy could not exist when those items, whether in Ireland or in the House of Commons, were so elected. Mob supremacy or clerical supremacy might result according to the particular turn of the wheel in Ireland, but to say that an absolutely clear representation of the Irish people existed at the present time in Parliament was absurd. Then what would be the result of either mob or clerical supremacy dictating terms to the Imperial Parliament? The result must be either surrender to that supremacy, or else it must be fought against—whether the result were mob supremacy or priestly supremacy, the Imperial Parliament would have either to surrender or to fight. In the first case, as he had said, that meant Ireland becoming a separate country; in the second it meant civil war and bloodshed

for the preservation of the Union. Were their Lordships, who were now the sole guardians of the rights and liberties of the British people, for the other House was nothing but the playground of Mr. Gladstone, willing to surrender the liberties gained through generations of conflict, bloodshed, and patience? Would they surrender everything to the tender mercies of 80 men, the political merchants of the present day, who were selling their wares to the highest bidder? That was practically what it amounted to. Were they going to hand over the freedom of Parliaments, the Constitution of this Empire built up by the wisdom, the care, and the forethought of their ancestors to be the playthings of the illiterate voters of Kerry and Clare, or—which would be still more serious for Ireland—or to be subject to the dictates of the American-Irish Fenians? Then they were always being told that the Bill preserved the equality of the Three Kingdoms; but the very essence of this Bill was the domination of the Land League in Ireland over everything and the tyranny of the Land League and Clericalism combined over England and Scotland. Then, on the point of equitable repartition of the Imperial charges, he denied that that was carried out by the Bill. Ireland, the poorer country, was to go to the wall, while England must make up any deficiency on the part of Ireland. The promoters of the Bill claimed for it that it was to be “a real and continuous settlement.” They did not dare to use the word finality. If that were so anything that would make a real and continuous settlement of the Irish Question would be of vital importance, and every citizen of the Empire would hail it with joy. So far however from its being a real and continuous settlement, having looked through every line of the Bill and read most of the speeches on it he could say honestly and conscientiously that he had never seen any plan more capable of producing, and more certain to produce, “a real and continuous” conflict between Great Britain and Ireland. Every line of the Bill bristled with conflict; every clause in it dislocated the constitutional fabric framed by our forefathers; and, in short, the Bill was the torch of civil war. No supremacy for the Imperial Parliament, no protection to the vast British majority

who were opposed to its proposals was afforded by the Bill; and, worse than all, there was no finality, not even a real or continuous settlement. Not one meeting had been held in favour of the Bill in the rural districts of Ireland. The agitators dared not hold one, and scarcely one Petition had come from Ireland in favour of it. In the South of Ireland nearly every man was praying that the Bill would never become law, if he dared to tell the truth. That House was threatened with all pains and penalties if their Lordships threw out this mischievous measure, but they never had less cause for fear. He would gladly see reforms in the constitution of that House, or any plan which could be suggested to strengthen the position of the Second Chamber in the eyes of the Empire. But, as he had said, they had in this case no cause for fear. They stood on solid ground, and had simply to do their duty. The course the Government had adopted in the other House had proved the necessity of their existence as a Second Chamber, and the country would recognise that that House had done its duty by giving time for thought and for discussion of a measure which had never been discussed. If, after an appeal to the electorate, this plan was desired, he, as an Irishman and citizen of the Empire, would say, if it was the wish of Great Britain that the Union should be broken, then let Ireland go free and unshackled to her destiny, not tortured and bound by such a puny and miserable measure as this. If, on the other hand, the verdict should be for the Union, their Lordships would have proved not only the honour and honesty and wisdom of their vote, but would have earned the gratitude of all future ages by proving that the Union of Ireland and England, like the Union of Scotland and England, could, after years of patience and mutual self-sacrifice, be made not only what the Government called a Union of hearts, but what was grander, nobler, and more lasting, the Union of three peoples under general laws in one United Kingdom.

*THE EARL OF DONOUGHMORE said, he ventured to ask their Lordships to allow him to deal with one or two of the issues raised by the question before the House, and he could assure their Lordships that he approached the subject with a full consciousness of the

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difficulty of treating it adequately under the circumstances. In the position in which they were called upon to discuss that Bill, it was difficult for a speaker to feel otherwise than somewhat hampered in regard to any arguments he might desire to adduce, for he could not help feeling that such arguments must be invested with a certain air of unreality, as being directed either in favour of or against a proposal which, to use a phrase not unfamiliar to some of their Lordships, was not really meant. Everybody was perfectly aware, by this time, that this Bill was not intended to stand by itself on its merits; but that its production and the efforts made to carry it as far as their Lordships were due to the imperious necessity of doing something towards redeeming, in a fashion, some of those wild and vague promises that were sown broadcast during the General Election campaign, as well as to the nature of the majority which the Government commanded in the House of Commons, and that it was, as it were, the *avant courier*, and part and parcel of a general policy, of which that House, and through it the Constitution of this Kingdom, was the ultimate object of attack. It required no great effort to predict the fate of the Bill in that House, and they had the strongest indications, coming from an influential and at all events an outspoken quarter, that in its fall it would drag with it a very important item of the general policy of which it was a component part. Even in the opinion of the most advanced Radicals and thorough-going Home Rulers, the consummation so devoutly to be wished could, it appeared, be bought at too high a figure, and it was no part of the bargain that, while Ireland was to be free to manage her own affairs, she was also to have full and absolute control over those of Great Britain. And so, in spite of Party discipline, in the face of the extreme undesirability of exposing any rift within the lute, or of weakening in any degree that appearance of mechanical unanimity which had been so conspicuous of late, Dr. Wallace, of Edinburgh, had summed up for them his view of the situation. He had spoken very clearly—

"He has not observed that the country has welcomed the 'Irish Occupation' with any great signs of enthusiasm or cordiality."

And he finally tells us that—

“The Government having marred their measure, his chief regret, when the House of Lords should throw the Bill out, would be that an opportunity would have been lost of aiming a great blow at the hostile power of the hereditary Chamber.”

He hardly thought their Lordships would require any stronger admission, coming as it did from a strong supporter of the Government and a fervent and enthusiastic Home Ruler, of the nature of the view that would be taken by the country of their Lordships' action with regard to that Bill, and it was surely a fair and just interpretation of Dr. Wallace's words to look upon them as a confession—an unwilling confession on his part, it might be—that their Lordships were expected, nay required, in the discharge of their great public functions, to put a period to this futile attempt to secure so-called “Better Government for Ireland.” There was at least one thing for which they could give credit to noble Lords opposite who supported that Bill. They, at all events, were not the authors or producers of a policy of Home Rule as a serious factor in politics. They had shown a marvellous adaptability—what he might perhaps be allowed to call a silent adaptability—to the tenets of their new creed, for he had never heard or read any deliverance from a public platform or elsewhere in which any noble Lord opposite had ventured to cope with or defend any of the details of that Bill. The Bill had been cut to pieces in argument, and yet noble Lords followed the lead blindly. He dared say some of their Lordships, in the course of their travels, had found themselves in the City of Chicago, and had visited there the great establishment of Mr. Armour. Such noble Lords would have observed, with astonishment, the herds that had accumulated from the great Western prairies standing there dazed by their unaccustomed surroundings and the novelty of their position. These herds were met at the entrance by an aged and astute creature after their own kind, who, having gained their confidence, guided them on their way, and lured them to destruction, while the leader preserved his life, and continued to perform the functions of his office for the benefit of subsequent followers, one would have thought rather to the deterioration of his reputation.

Their Lordships would appreciate the analogy, and he would ask them to read, for Western plains, the cold shade of Opposition, for the novelty of the position, the disappointed hopes of the last General Election. He did not envy noble Lords the position, but it might be worse. Theories might be impossible for two reasons; one, because they were impracticable, the other, because no patriotic or right-minded man could adopt them—and he did not wish to be taken, in what he was about to say, as attempting to lay down any practicable or possible theory as regards their Lordships. They had had lately some remarkable experience of the effects of the doctrine of “Party before all.” Speeches had been delivered in Parliament which hardly corresponded with the accompanying votes. Declarations had been made in the country which pointed to a Lobby other than that into which their authors had ultimately drifted. They had witnessed numerous instances of that capacity for sudden and complete conversion of which the Secretary for Scotland was perhaps the most brilliant and shining example. Their Lordships' House would certainly not set aside Imperial considerations for a mere Party advantage; but if such a thing were possible, if they in that House were to accept that Bill as it stood, he should like to know what would be the feelings of noble Lords opposite? What would be the feelings and the position of the Government when confronted with the universal chaos which the passing into law of the measure would inevitably bring in its train? How long would the Government last under those circumstances, and what would the action of those Representatives of the people be like who had depended upon their Lordships' House to take the course they had not the pluck and the moral courage to take themselves? It would really be a most interesting condition of things, but there was no possibility of their Lordships permitting it to come within the range of practical politics. No, the authorship of Home Rule as a policy was not vested in noble Lords opposite. It was private property. It was the exclusive copyright of the Prime Minister. The grounds for it were declared by him in 1886, and no one fairly recalled them more forcibly than

Solicitor General in his able speech on the 14th February last. To sum them up in two words, they were the failure of coercion and the inseparable connection of the question of the land with that of Irish government. Now, into that latter question he did not desire to go. A noble Friend of his (the Marquess of Waterford), who was undoubtedly the greatest authority in their Lordships' House on the subject, would deal with it far more ably than he could. He only desired to say this, that if to deal with the land was an obligation of honour in 1886, it was equally an obligation of honour now. Nothing had happened to make it otherwise; and though Mr. Gladstone now contended that the rejection of the Bill of 1886 put an end to the obligation, every word he said on the subject when introducing that Bill directly contradicted the assumption. And now they were told, if his recollection served him, by the Prime Minister, that the Bill of 1886 was not brought in to pass. If that were so, where was the use of talking of the obligation ending under those circumstances? It was as strong and as binding now as ever it was, yet it was so far ignored on the night of the introduction of the Bill that Sir Edward Clarke had to ask what had become of it. And then there was the cuckoo cry of coercion. Surely that argument was dead and buried. It died with the administration of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition in the House of Commons, and it was dead still, unless revived, not against the criminal, but against the loyal and law-abiding portion of the Irish community. And they had heard a great deal about a mandate. The Prime Minister laid stress on it on the Third Reading in the House of Commons. Any careful student of the General Election Campaign must have been struck with one remarkable circumstance, and that was the varying and various degrees of importance with which the Home Rule cry was invested in different localities. In some it came in for no observation at all; in others it was in the forefront of the battle; in others it was accorded some slight and cursory mention; and in all it was sandwiched up between other considerations and it was called from the New-
the Lordships' programme. The policy of dis-
ject with a

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at all, and in whatever form it was presented it was certainly not in the form or in the spirit of that Bill. Whatever verdict the constituencies pronounced upon, Home Rule was given upon an abstract proposition, hemmed in, as it was foreshadowed, by every sort of safeguard and proviso. And if there was one point more firmly insisted upon than another in election addresses it was that the functions of the Irish Parliament should be confined strictly to local matters, and that the supremacy of the English Parliament was to be complete. But the General Election passed, and the position changed. The Government did not find themselves to be free agents in the matter, so the Party Whip was applied, and every safeguard and proviso by which the adhesion of the English electorate to Home Rule was to be secured have successively gone by the Board. But the doctrine of the mandate had got its quietus from a far more authoritative source than any argument of his could furnish. It was practically repudiated by both sections of the Irish Party. On the one hand, they had, Mr. John Redmond, who on the 15th of September last stated that—

“By withholding the details of the Home Rule Bill Mr. Gladstone was only mystifying the people of England.”

While a few days before, on the 24th of August, they found it proclaimed by Mr. Dillon that—

“Had we been silly and wicked enough to make these foolish and ridiculous demands upon Mr. Gladstone before the Election took place, the verdict of England would probably be given, not for Home Rule, but against it.”

That utterance of Mr. Dillon disposed effectually of the doctrine of a mandate to Parliament in the case of that Bill, and even if such a mandate ever existed, it could hardly be taken to contain a direction to Parliament to enact that the Irish Nationalist Party should be enabled to run a Parliament of their own in Dublin at the cost of the British taxpayer, to the tune of something over a million and a half a year. But did that Bill fulfil, in any single particular, any single one of the conditions upon which the country was asked to grant a mandate for Home Rule? What were those conditions? There was the absolute supremacy of the British Parliament. That was gone. There was the protection of the minority.

That was absolutely gone. And thirdly, there was the freedom of Parliament, the most potent argument, the most alluring bribe ever offered to the constituencies. Would any noble Lord opposite tell them where that was now? Or when under the proposed arrangement they might expect to see it realised? In six years? Not in 60. Governments came and went, opinions changed according to the pressure they were subjected to from without, and there was a wonderful power to enforce conviction to be found in a state of chaos. But all these conditions and the effect of their settlement could be summed up in one word—finality; and he was willing to admit to their Lordships that if there was any sound and valid consideration to be advanced in favour of Home Rule it was this: In dealing with the Irish Question in its many phases, the cry of finality had always been with them. It had proved a most convincing, indeed an irresistible, argument. It opened up a vista of a Parliamentary millennium in Westminster, which was calculated to lead even the strongest and most patriotic instincts astray. It began in 1886, it was reiterated in 1870, it permeated all their debates in 1882; and yet it was every day more like a Will-o'-the-Wisp, which, in spite of all their efforts, was ever evading them at every floundering step they took in its vain and profitless pursuit. It would probably strike the House, looking at the matter as it did from a common-sense point of view, that the only chance of realising finality on questions such as that was by an arrangement in regard to which the various parties to the concession intended to secure it were practically in agreement. Well, the House had had ample opportunities of forming a judgment as to the harmony which prevailed in the Irish Party. He would recall one or two latter-day instances. It was not many days ago that Mr. Healy and Mr. Dillon made entirely contradictory declarations on the important question of the retention of the Irish Members. Their Lordships had not forgotten those edifying scenes in *The Freeman's Journal* office, alluded to by his noble Friend who spoke last, where the future Irish Chancellors of the Exchequer were seen struggling over the remains of a once prosperous business, in mutual recrimination

and abuse. The record of those men was before their Lordships, and he should be very much surprised if any Member of this House had the courage to rise in his place and seriously undertake their defence. They were the men who, upon their own confession, bought and paid for the influence of the Irish priesthood, and who unscrupulously used that influence for the coercion and intimidation of voters, as was known from the disclosures of the Meath Election Petitions. They were the men who held one language at their hillside meetings in Ireland and another in the House of Commons and in English constituencies. They were the men who had been condemned by the highest judicial authority as members of an illegal conspiracy and as inciters to crime and the breaking of contracts; and it was to them that the Government proposed to hand over Ireland and her government, body and soul. And they would persuade the Opposition as well that their conversion from the doctrines of murder, of outrage, and of intimidation was as sudden and as sincere and as whole-hearted as the Government's own to the principles of Home Rule. The Government belonged to these people, they existed by their favour, they were at their mercy, and the result of this wasted Session was that, so far, they had acquired by this Bill the power to carry out every threat and to realise every item of revenge with which they had in the past menaced those who did not agree with them. But the country had, at all events, received a significant warning. The Bill and its history afforded a practical object-lesson of the enormous power for extortion which an illegal combination was able to bring to bear upon a weak Government. It should teach political Parties not to venture to treat Ireland again as she had been treated in the past, as the battlefield of English Parties, so that when the shadow of this curse which it was attempted to force upon Ireland should have been removed by the action of their Lordships' House, opportunity might be given to her to realise that prosperity of which she had shown herself to be capable under a firm and just administration of the law, and by the removal of every grievance of which she could fairly and rightly complain.

*THE EARL OF MAYO said, that living among the loyal minority of the South and West of Ireland, he denied that the interests of those who lived in that part of Ireland, the Ireland of ancient learning, were safeguarded by the Bill. He did not speak for himself alone, but for the thousands of the South and West of Ireland; for those who were afraid to express themselves in public by reason of the intimidation which it was well known existed in the country. Their cry was that this was the most treacherous of all the Bills that had ever been introduced during the sad history of that country. It was impossible for him to enter into all the details of the Bill, but he would say that no minority could be protected under such a Bill, when the men placed in power by it were the very men who, from the beginning of their career, had sought to harass that minority, and to thwart its interests in every possible way. The capital, interest, and learning of the country, as represented by the minority, had all declared their dread of the future under this measure; and those who had no capital, no stake in the country, whose interest was political agitation, and whose learning was mere self-interest and intrigue, were the men to whom Mr. Gladstone was going to hand over the Government of the country. The principle involved could be easily described in a few short words. The Government was to be handed over to two Legislative Chambers which were to be supported by a large standing army. Did anyone who lived in Ireland imagine for an instant that that army was to be kept to fight against England's foes? There was not a fort around their coasts which could be defended with any safety. The noble Earl who brought in the Bill very truly said that while he was in Ireland for several years under the most difficult circumstances he had to administer the law entrusted to him by Parliament, and he had done so honestly and fearlessly. The noble Earl was one of the best Viceroy's that Ireland ever had; no Viceroy ever administered the law so well. Many a time the noble Earl carried his life in his hand; and if he were appointed Viceroy again, and came without the Home Rule Bill, they should welcome him and be pleased to see him. He lived in Ireland among Roman Catholics. His tenants

were Roman Catholics, as were also all his labourers and a great many of his servants, and he could assure their Lordships there really was not one of them who cared one brass penny for this Bill. The loyal Roman Catholics of Ireland had spoken, and the noble Duke, the head of the great Roman Catholic families of England, who addressed their Lordships yesterday, clearly expressed their sentiments. The noble Earl who introduced the Bill said that the present did not initiate any political movement. They were not so foolish; they waited to see if the movement was a success, and if it was, they guided the people in the way they should go; they moulded the people's wishes, took them to the polls, and made them vote as they wished. The noble Earl went on to say that if the current was strong the Bishops and priests swam with it. They did not swim with it. They watched the current and dug dykes and directed it, and with it irrigated the political soil of Ireland, if it suited their purpose to do so. The peasantry grew up and flourished under that irrigation, and were influenced in every possible way by the priesthood. He had no desire to cast aspersions on the Irish priesthood. They were the guides, philosophers, and friends of the Irish peasantry for better or for worse, and were well known to be a strong political power in that country. Supposing Mr. Gladstone were to people an island in the Atlantic, and give this Bill to those people, he wondered what the condition of that island would be within a short time. Why, in 18 months, they would be "fighting like devils for conciliation, and hating each other for the love of God." He thanked the House for listening to the reasons why he was there to record his vote against the measure.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: My Lords, when yesterday I listened to the speech of considerable length of the noble Earl who introduced this measure, I could not prevent the thought entering into my mind as to what would have been his answer had anybody of a singularly courageous temperament ventured in 1885, when the noble Earl last had practical experience of Ireland, and since when I believe he has never set foot on the shores of that country—

had anybody ventured to prognosticate that within little more than eight years from that date the noble Earl would have been introducing to your Lordships a measure of Home Rule for Ireland. Any one who ventured upon such a prediction would, I believe, have been contradicted in language of a forcible kind. The gist of the noble Earl's observations would probably have been—"I am a strong Unionist, for I am firmly convinced that the Union is absolutely essential to the welfare and prosperity of Ireland, and I am the last person to propose to hand over the loyal, honest, industrious, law-abiding inhabitants of Ireland who supported me in the time of trouble to a body of men whom the Government to which I belonged did not hesitate to imprison without any sort of trial, and whom I did not hesitate to prosecute for doing their utmost to stop the administration of the law." I listened with considerable interest and attention to the speech of the noble Earl in introducing this measure, and I am sorry to say that I heard from him no argument of any sort or kind to prove that Home Rule would be beneficial to Ireland. His whole argument was belief in the future, of which he knows nothing, and absolute forgetfulness of the past, of which he knows much. The noble Earl proved up to the hilt that, if a body of political agitators were only sufficiently persevering in carrying out their lawless principles, there was nothing which they might not hope for at the hands of the Prime Minister supported by a Government of a docile character. There was one astounding point in the speech of the noble Earl. He said that the reason of his conversion to Home Rule was that in 1885 the Conservatives had joined the Home Rule Party. [Earl SPENCER: No.] He certainly accused the Conservative Party of coming to an accommodation with the Home Rulers. Now, I deny that *in toto*.

*EARL SPENCER: I said that one of the facts which made an impression upon my mind in 1885 was that at the time when the Conservatives were in a minority in another place they were willing to come into Office on the Irish vote with all its responsibilities, in addition to the votes of their own Party.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDON-DERRY: I repudiate that statement *in toto*.

*EARL SPENCER: Does the noble Marquess dispute that the Conservatives were in a minority in the House of Commons?

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I dispute that we had any desire to come into Office. We were forced to come into Office by the action of the Liberal Party.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDON-DERRY: I maintain that the noble Earl had no right whatever to accuse the Conservative Party of having intrigued with the Home Rule Party, and I defy him to quote any speech of any Member of the Party to which I belong which would bear him out in that statement. I am not going to quote the opinions of noble Lords opposite who were Members of Mr. Gladstone's Government in 1880, and who are Members of his Government at present, but this I will say: there was hardly a Member of the Government of 1880 who did not denounce the principle of Home Rule, and denounce their present supporters among the National Party in terms of greater violence than were used by any Member of the Party to which I belong. But there is one quotation which I will give from a speech of the Prime Minister himself which, to my mind, embodies in itself every obstacle and impediment to the measure introduced by the noble Earl. Mr. Gladstone said in 1881—

"Can any sensible man, any rational man, suppose we are going to disintegrate the great capital institutions of this country for the purpose of making ourselves ridiculous in the sight of all mankind, and crippling any power we possess for bestowing benefits by legislation on the country to which we belong?"

Why has Mr. Gladstone, and why have the other Members of the Government, changed those opinions? The noble Earl in January, 1886, was not a Home Ruler, for he made a speech in your Lordships' House in which he denounced the Government for not bringing in a Coercion Bill. But we are not in a position to know why he changed his opinions. The noble Earl made use of the only argument that can be put forward in support of Home Rule. He thought it a valid argument, but it is only plausible. It is the argument that

the majority of the Irish Members demand Home Rule. But the Unionist Party in Ireland is grossly under-represented. If they had had their fair share they would have at least one-third of the representation. The 80 Irish Members who maintain Mr. Gladstone's majority are mostly returned by the votes of the least educated men, influenced by clerical intimidation. In my opinion, and in the opinion of almost every unprejudiced mind, the arguments against Home Rule are innumerable and overwhelming. From the Irish standpoint alone, your Lordships are justified in refusing to pass this Bill. From the Imperial point of view, as possessing property in Ireland and in England, I object to this measure because, in the event of Home Rule being granted, you would find a hostile Ireland with 60 miles of your shores. What would be the effect on India, on your Colonies, and on Foreign Powers if they were to see a surrender of this kind granted to a parcel of agitators, simply because they put forth demands that the Government dare not oppose? There is no finality whatever in this measure. Everyone who knows Ireland is aware that this Bill is looked upon only as a stepping-stone to separation. How can the noble Earl say that this is a final measure?

*EARL SPENCER: I never said so. I do not believe that a final measure could be introduced.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: Then the noble Earl agrees that separation is the result. Some of his supporters, amongst them Mr. W. O'Brien, have declared their determination not to accept any measure that does not give Ireland entire repeal. Mr. William O'Brien, M.P., at Ballaghaderreen on December 6, 1891, said;—

"Whatever the future may bring, of one thing you may rest assured—that the Irish Party will never barter their independence as the ambassadors of an Irish nation, and that they will never accept any national settlement, any Home Rule settlement, that will not draw the last fangs of landlordism, and that will not leave this old Irish race of our's masters, and the landowners within the four seas of Holy Ireland."

On another occasion Mr. O'Brien said—

"I take it that we are all united in demanding that the Irish Parliament, while it acts within its own province, shall be as free from Imperial meddling as the Parliaments of Australia or Canada. That is to say, practically speaking, as free as air."

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After that I do not think I have gone too far in saying that the Irish nation regard this measure merely as a stepping-stone to separation. Then, from the purely British point of view there are many objections to this Bill. What, for instance, would be the effect of the presence in the House of Commons of 80 free lances prepared to sell their votes to whoever may be the highest bidder in order to oust the Government of the day? What have you to say to the increased taxation upon the British people, estimated at £500,000, and what will be our position in the event of a war? I now wish to put before your Lordships the objections to this measure from an Irish point of view. In the first place, the measure is not necessary. I am borne out in that statement by the representatives of commerce, education, capital, and certain branches of labour, by the Protestants of Ireland, by almost all the Nonconformists, and by tens of thousands of Roman Catholics. The interests of all these men are centred in Ireland, and they, therefore, would not go out of their way to oppose a measure like this unless they believed that it would bring ruin and misery to their country; and they will tell you that Home Rule means not only moral but material ruin. They will tell you that they distrust the present Leaders of the Irish Party. They believe that no truer words were ever written than those written by Mr. John Bright in his letter to Mr. Gladstone—

"You deem them to be patriots. I hold them to be not patriots, but conspirators against the Crown and the Government of the United Kingdom."

Mr. Bright, like sensible men to-day, judged these men by their past, and not by their statements as to their future policy. The noble Earl opposite (Lord Spencer) bases his belief on the unknown future; we base ours on the known past. We do not choose to expunge from our minds the record of these men in the noble Earl's facile fashion. We know them as the originators and promoters of the Plan of Campaign, which was declared illegal by the Judges of the land, and immoral by the Pope of Rome. We know them as the advocates of boycotting and intimidation, and we have not forgotten words like these, which were used by Mr. Dillon—

"When we come out of the struggle we will remember who were the people's friends, and who were the people's enemies; and we will deal out our rewards to the one, and our punishments to the other."

We remember also that Mr. Dillon said that a man who stood aside in the struggle against landlordism, British rule and coercion, was a dastard and a coward, and that he and his children would be remembered in the days near at hand, when Ireland would be a free nation. Surely we are justified in refusing to have men who have spoken in this way put in authority over us. We did not hear much from the noble Earl about the future financial position of Ireland. My opinion is that the men who showed their financial capacity by their disastrous venture at New Tipperary, and by almost ruining *The Freeman's Journal*, are not likely to manage successfully the financial business of their country. Then we cannot forget the Report of the Special Commission of Judges, who found that these men had been guilty of a criminal conspiracy to coerce, intimidate, and drive out the English garrison, of seeking the total separation of Ireland from England, of inviting and accepting the co-operation of dynamitards like Patrick Ford, and of disseminating *The Irish World*, which preached the burning of English cities, and the murder of English subjects. Yet these are the people to whose tender mercies the Government propose to hand over the peaceful and law-abiding population of Ireland. Speaking in 1881, Mr. Gladstone said—

"For nearly the first time in the history of Christendom a small body of men have arisen who are not ashamed to preach in Ireland the doctrine of public plunder."

And Sir William Harcourt once said—

"We have heard the doctrine of the Land League expounded by the man (Mr. Dillon) who is an authority to explain it, and to-morrow every subject of the Queen will know that the doctrine so expounded is the doctrine of treason and assassination. . . . To-morrow the civilised world will pronounce its judgment on this vile conspiracy. . . . The Land League is an association which depends upon the support of the Fenian conspiracy."

The noble Earl himself, who when he was in Ireland and knew these men, before he allowed himself to truckle to this body of agitators, did not hesitate to say of them that they were dastardly—

"But they will not terrify the English nation;"—

they have terrified the present Government—

"the Government will face their enemies with a determination not to give in, and they will not give up one point or one idea they consider it necessary to maintain——"

*EARL SPENCER: I believe the noble Marquess is quoting from a speech of mine at Belfast? I was then referring to the dynamiters and assassins which unfortunately had made their appearance in Ireland at that time.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: Yes; and I have quoted passages to show that these Leaders were associated with the dynamiters.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: Did the finding of the Commission associate the Irish Leaders with the dynamiters?

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: Certainly. There is this passage—

"Inviting and accepting the co-operation of dynamitards like Patrick Ford and disseminating *The Irish World*, which preached burning of English cities and murder of English subjects."

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I asked whether there was any finding that they were dynamiters, and the noble Marquess produces a passage of which I am perfectly well aware, but it is not the point.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: I quoted these statements to your Lordships to show the class of men to whom the Government propose to hand over the government of Ireland. We distrust them; you did distrust them. You know them now, but you do not dare to say you distrust them. We believe implicitly that the Ethiopian cannot change his skin nor the leopard his spots. The noble Earl in his speech last night seemed to imply that there might be a different class of persons in the Home Rule Parliament; but I wish to ask him on what grounds he made that statement? Why are the present Leaders to be dislodged and to make place for others? Do you think that this body of agitators, who have challenged the law and undergone imprisonment, are going to put their interests on one side when the goal is reached and to retire into seclusion? I cannot believe that the inducement to enter the English Parliament was so

great, that the gates of the gaol were only a prelude to a seat there, or that these men will take a back seat and never appear again when Home Rule is granted. The noble Earl knows full well that if Home Rule is granted these men, who have maintained their system of intimidation and crime, will occupy the foremost place in the new Parliament. Now, my Lords, I have dealt, I think, with the moral objections to the proposals of the Government. I go on now to what is, perhaps, more important, and what may be described as the material objections. I say that even if the Leaders of the National Party were of an absolutely unimpeachable character the material objections would be as strong as ever. It is hardly necessary for me to explain to your Lordships that on account of the close and intimate connection of Ireland with Great Britain she enjoys enormous advantages. England is the richest and most important country in the world, and consequently by the fact of being connected with her Ireland enjoys advantages from the Imperial Government. There is enjoyed by the citizens of this country a freedom such as is hardly known in any other part of the world. Ireland knows that were any grievance to arise she may count on its being speedily and justly redressed; but the main advantage that Ireland enjoys from her connection with a great and rich country is the power she has possessed up till now of borrowing money at a cheap rate of interest for the purpose of benefiting all classes of the community. There is not a class that has not been benefited in this way. Ireland, as you know, is a poor country. She has no mineral resources. I noticed that a noble Lord opposite in his speech to-day made out that Ireland was an El Dorado, but I say that Ireland has not the advantages you might expect her to have. She possesses no mineral wealth. She does not possess those great means of industry which this country possesses, and consequently her credit must be small when she wishes to obtain money for the purposes of developing her resources. In the last 60 years nearly £40,000,000 had been advanced to Ireland on the credit of England for the purposes of railways, harbours, and docks, the houses of the labourers and artisans, the public health, lunatic asylums, river drainage and navigation, the improvement of land,

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seed supplies, and the relief of distress. Almost every class of the community has benefited by that money. But these advances must necessarily cease if Home Rule is granted. These resources which I have just touched must remain undeveloped; the benefits which we have begun must necessarily remain uncompleted. For who will advance money to Ireland under a Home Rule Government? Will any noble Lord opposite, or will any English capitalist, and is it likely in these circumstances that the British taxpayer will allow the English Government to advance money? Certainly not. Because there is no security. Capitalists, taxpayers, and your Lordships yourselves will consider the character of the men to whom you are to advance the money, and I do not think you will find anyone who will advance money to a Government manipulated by men who have preached and insisted on the doctrine of the repudiation of debt, and who have carried out that doctrine with a vengeance. What is to be the result in Ireland if no money is advanced? There must be either bankruptcy or an increase of taxation. Can it be wondered at that anybody with anything to lose in Ireland regards the measure with alarm? The fault of this is to be found in the fact that a great withdrawal of capital has taken place in Ireland. I find that there was a decrease of £16,000 in the deposits in the Post Office savings banks in June, 1893, as compared with June, 1892, and a decrease of £160,000 in June last, as compared with December, 1892. Government funds had decreased in June, 1893, by £759,000 as compared with June, 1892. I have said that capitalists have been betrayed by the present Government, whom they looked upon as staunch supporters of the Union under which they invested their capital. But there are many other classes which you have betrayed. You have betrayed the landlords of Ireland, the men whom the noble Lord opposite said it would be mean and treacherous to abandon. You have betrayed the Protestants of Ireland, many of whom were supporters of Mr. Gladstone up to 1886; you have betrayed Trinity College, you have betrayed the police, and you have betrayed the Civil servants. I do not propose to enter at any length into those cases. But I would draw your Lordships' attention to the

matter of the Civil servants, who have been praised by every Chief Secretary as having discharged their duty in an admirable, able, and efficient manner. They are at the present moment in a most desperate condition. If they retire now they receive a pension so small and so miserable that they could not exist upon it. In many cases they have sacrificed posts of a lucrative but a temporary character to obtain these permanent posts. If they retain their posts, at the end of five years they will be at the mercy of Mr. O'Brien and Mr. Dillon, who have not hesitated to declare how they will treat them. Yet we are told that there is ample security. What is the security? The Irish Legislative Council. That part of the Legislature was never discussed in the House of Commons, because the Government dare not let it be known who the people are who elect that Council. They are men possessing land of a rateable value of £20; and those who know Ireland know what that represents. Under the O'Hagan Jury Act of 1861 the same qualification was established for the common jury. But these men were found so liable to intimidation that trial by them was a perfect farce, and they were abolished by the noble Earl opposite himself. Then the qualification was raised to £30, and in 1876 it was raised by the Government of Lord Beaconsfield to £40; and even then it was found that the men were so open to intimidation that the Clare Assizes had actually to be abandoned. But these £40 men are too good, and the Government return to the £20 qualification, which they themselves abolished. I am glad that the Lord Lieutenant is present to-night, because I have come across a speech of his which requires some explanation. Speaking at Devizes in 1892 the noble Lord said—

“He would like to ask the Tories exactly what it was the Protestants of Ulster were afraid of. The demand for information was not an impertinent one, for, if it could be shown that there was any serious risk of persecution, he would not support any Home Rule scheme that did not promise every possible safeguard.”

That speech was made on the 1st of April. I ask the noble Lord whether he adheres to that statement, and whether he thinks the £20 qualification is a sufficient safeguard for the minority? I now come to the main objection to the

Bill—an obstacle of an overwhelming and insuperable character—the attitude of the Ulster Protestants. I would first answer a question put by the noble Earl yesterday—Have the Ulster people a right to oppose what Parliament decides? I ask him in reply—“Has Parliament any right to force down the throat of Ulster a measure which not only they detest, but which the majority of the people of Great Britain detest also?” I ask him further, if he is so determined that Ulster should obey Parliament, why the Government does not at once go to the country and ask the people if they support the measure and are willing to coerce Ulster? The Government dare not; but the country is beginning to understand this measure; and it will declare with no uncertain voice that Ulster shall not submit herself to this tyranny. That Ulster objects to this measure no man will deny. But let me say solemnly and deliberately that, though Ulster will accept the edict of the Imperial Parliament, be it led by the present Prime Minister or by the ex-Prime Minister, cheerfully and willingly in the future as she has done in the past, she will not submit for one moment to place her neck beneath the yoke of Mr. Dillon and Mr. O'Brien and consent to obey the dictates of the National League. Mr. Dillon has said—“We have managed the South, and we will manage the North.” But Ulster will not be managed. Ulster has never bragged or blustered. [*Ministerial cries of “Oh!”*] When?

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: Continually. They never stop.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: When?

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I shall apply the words to the speech of the noble and learned Lord this evening.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: Ulster has never bragged. I say that we have never boasted nor blustered in Ulster, but we know our position, and we will not recede a jot from it. We know well what Ulster is. Previous to the Union Ulster was the poorest of the four Provinces. She had none of the advantages of the other three Provinces. She had not the grazing pastures of Connaught or of Munster, nor the great harbours of Cork; but what is the position she occupies now? Agriculturally speaking, she is the garden of

Ireland, and from the commercial point of view her chief cities rank as high as some of the large cities of England and Scotland. It was, therefore, proposed that the people of Ulster, with all the fruits of their energy and industry, should be handed over to a body of men whom she hated and who hated her. In order to prove the value of land in Ulster by the price of the tenant-right in that Province, I may state that in 1892, on the Somerset estate, in Antrim, the tenant right of a farm was sold for 24½ years' purchase; on January 3, 1893, a farm in County Down was sold for 27 years' purchase, and on April 12, in County Tyrone, one was sold for 77 years' purchase. I come now to the City of Belfast, and wish to show your Lordships the enormous strides which have been made there since the Union. The population of Belfast in 1800 was under 19,000; now it is 275,000. The number of inhabited houses was about 3,000; now they number 60,000. The number of ships entering the harbour in 1800 was 777; now the number is 8,304, and the tonnage amounted to 55,268 tons, as against 2,053,637 tons in 1893. The income of the harbour was £2,748; at present it is £129,864. The Customs Revenue in 1784 was £101,376; in 1893 it was £2,376,511. Another great industry was the linen trade. In 1850 the number of persons employed in the linen trade was 21,121; in 1890 the number was 64,000, while on bleaching greens and in other processes connected with the finishing of linens there were 50,000 persons, making in all a total of 114,000. The annual value of the linen trade is estimated at £1,200,000 per annum. Though Ulster has been guilty of no bluster, she has this enormous stake in the country, and she is not going to give it up without a struggle. She is taking precautions to guard herself in the future, and there have been enrolled under the Ulster Defence Union 170,000 men. These men have elected 600 delegates to represent them in a great Convention at Belfast in October, and I have no doubt that at the meeting of these delegates a resolution will be passed absolutely declining to submit to any edicts that may emanate from Mr. Dillon or Mr. O'Brien if an Irish Parliament is established on College Green. There had been no less a sum than £250,000

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advanced in connection with this Body. And let me tell your Lordships that that sum of money, large as it is, does not consist entirely of the thousands of the rich, but to a large extent is composed of the pennies of the poor. I maintain that that shows the determination of the people of Ulster to resist to the utmost any attempt that may be made to set up a Department on College Green. I wish that any of your Lordships who are ignorant of Ireland could visit Ulster; you would then see what the determination of the people is. I trust implicitly to the people of England; I know they will not desert us. I ask your Lordships to remember that on Friday you have to decide whether you will assent to the disintegration of the Empire. I ask you for a moment to consider the measure moved by the noble Earl and the rejection moved by the noble Duke. In favour of the measure is the Prime Minister of England, who has proved to have sold himself body and soul to the Nationalist Party. And behind him stand his Colleagues, who have been unable to resist the moral influence of the Prime Minister to carry this measure through the House of Commons. It is common talk that supporters of the Government would not have voted for this measure if they had not believed that this House would throw it out. You are asked to pass the Bill by the Nationalists, who have supported boycotting, the Plan of Campaign, intimidation, crime, and cruelty. You are asked to reject it by the majority of the people of England and of Great Britain, and by those who represent the wealth, industry, and intelligence of Ireland. Can you hesitate for one moment? I make no appeal to noble Lords opposite who, whatever their convictions may be, are tied body and soul to their Party. I appeal to all the rest of your Lordships, and I will ask you to remember that the eyes of every member of every nation of the civilised world are upon you. Your enemies are hoping, and your friends fearing, that in a moment of temporary aberration you will carry a measure that will ruin Ireland. In conclusion, I will suggest the spirit in which your votes should be given by quoting words once used by the noble Marquess the Leader of the Opposition, who said—

“I have no fear of the conduct of the House of Lords in this respect. I am quite sure, whatever

judgment may be passed on us, whatever predictions may be made, be your term of existence long or short, you will never consent to act except as a free, independent House of the Legislature, and that you will consider any other more timid or subservient course as at once unworthy of your traditions, unworthy of your honour, and, most of all, unworthy of the nation you serve."

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN observed that the Bill before the House was the biggest Bill which had ever been submitted to Parliament. It was the biggest in the Constitutional changes which it proposed, and in the possible consequences which it might hereafter entail, and it was for the Government which proposed a Bill of that character to justify the measure to the House. It was for them to show that this measure, which admittedly went far beyond anything that they had ever proposed before, was required, and that there was every chance of its working successfully, and, above all, that it was just to the minority of Ireland. Yet every speech delivered on the Government side seemed to him carefully to avoid the provisions of the Bill altogether. It was a strange thing that not one single word had been heard from the Government of justification with regard to the constitution of the two Houses of the new Legislature, although in the opinion of many persons it was on the constitution of the Legislature that the working of the measure and the future of Ireland must necessarily depend. He was surprised to find his noble Friend Lord Brassey a Member of Her Majesty's Government, because, as far as he could make out, he agreed with nothing in the Bill except the general principles of Home Rule, and he proposed a variety of Amendments not one of which had the slightest chance of being accepted by the Government. In the first place, he knocked down the number of Irish Members at Westminster from 80 to 35, and he had other schemes of his own, one of which was that a Commission should be appointed on the Irish Land Question. His noble Friend Lord Ribblesdale made an able and interesting speech; the only fault he had to find with it was that it had nothing to do with the Bill. His noble Friend said he had, like the rest of the Liberal Unionists, hardened his heart and resisted Home Rule. He asked for a sign, and that sign was given

by the Election of 1892. He was surprised his noble Friend said that, because he remembered having had the honour of being on a Unionist platform with him, and he did not remember the date at which his noble Friend left the Party, but it was long before the Election of 1892, which appeared to have exercised so converting and potent an influence upon him. Lastly, they had had the speech of Lord Playfair, who said that the Duke of Argyll made a long speech not connected with the Bill. But it was not the duty of the noble Duke to defend the Bill. Lord Playfair made a long and able speech, in the course of which he added and subtracted and proved to his own satisfaction that this Bill was supported by the majority in England, Scotland, and Ireland, but he never addressed himself to a single clause of the measure. He would not follow his noble Friend into all his additions and subtractions, but he would say that this Bill had been carried in another place solely by Irish votes, owing to the fact that Ireland was greatly over-represented in the Imperial Parliament. Had noble Lords who had brought forward this measure thoroughly considered the problem they had laid before the House? Was this Bill to be limited to Ireland, for, if not, it ceased to be Home Rule and became Federation. If they extended local Parliaments hereafter to Scotland and England then there would be a sort of triarchy with an Imperial Parliament to control it. He asked the other day whether the Government intended to give a Parliament to Scotland, and he was told that nothing of the kind was desired, and that the Government had not taken any thought with regard to it. That was an easy way of conducting the Government of the country. After bringing in an important measure, which dealt with the Constitution of Ireland and struck at the roots of the Imperial Parliament, they had not a conception how far they were going to persevere in this policy—indeed they had not a policy at all. He would now turn shortly to the details of the Bill. There was, in the first place, the great question of the land, which was the most important question of all. The noble Earl who moved the Second Reading recanted his opinions as to the necessity of dealing with the Land Question at

the same time as the question of the Parliament. He remembered that his noble Friend did not speak in any great praise of the Ashbourne Acts; on the contrary, he predicted that they would fail. And he on that question said in 1889, the year of the first Ashbourne Act, that it had failed, and he would like to ask his noble Friend had those Acts anything to do with his conversion? It looked to him as though his noble Friend was looking for a way to escape from those extremely strong opinions that he had uttered at other times, and he fell back upon this the last straw. Whether his reputation would suffer or not he (Lord Camperdown) could not say; but if he did consider those reasons were sufficient to warrant his changing his opinions, did he look upon them as good now? He must do or else it was difficult to suppose his noble Friend would hand over the Irish landlords to the tender mercies of an Irish Parliament. If in that case his noble Friend felt any doubt as to what was likely to happen, let him turn to the utterances of the Nationalists. The Leader of the Anti-Parnellite Party had, at the Irish Nationalist Convention, made it clear what the landlords might expect from the Irish Legislature at the end of three years. There was no way for the Irish landlord to get out of his position except by sale to his tenants and no other person, for no person would buy. He thought that that condition of things would induce the landlords to be reasonable and possibly liberal; moreover, it was extremely probable that the prospect before them at the end of three years would induce the landlords to sell as soon as possible. He would have very much liked to hear something from the Government with regard to the constitution of the Assembly which was to be represented by the present constituencies. Those constituencies most unfairly represented the real opinion of Ireland; and when they were establishing a new Legislature, it was absolutely intolerable and unfair that they should accept and perpetuate a state of things which gave undue representation to the decaying towns and the small constituencies of the South at the expense of the loyal population of the North. If due consideration was to be given to population six years hence, why was it not to be given now? Why had the boundaries of the

constituencies not been marked by Boundary Commissioners? Why were Newry, Kilkenny, and Galway, with a population of 44,000, to have three seats, while County Down, with 35,000 electors, was to have only the same number, and while Belfast, with 38,000 electors, was to have only four Members? Why was Dublin University to be entirely disfranchised? The Prime Minister said there was no disfranchisement; but if they examined the Schedule there was. He believed one of the reasons was that it had consistently returned Members who were not in community of feeling with the present Prime Minister. Under the Second Schedule there would in every case be a gain to the Nationalists and a loss to the Loyalists. It was quite impossible to make it a complete system. As to the financial scheme, which had undergone such frequent alteration, they had been told by Lord Spencer that the bargain was a good one for his country; but, as to that, he had never made any attempt to prove it, and until more effective arguments than had yet been adduced were brought forward to prove this, he should doubt whether the noble Earl's view was correct. As things stood, Great Britain was to bear a cost of collection in connection with the Revenue amounting to £200,000, and was to pay an allowance of £500,000 a year to Ireland for an unlimited period. The most significant thing with regard to this financial scheme was that all Irishmen were agreed as to its being ungenerous. They apparently thought that it was the duty, nay, the privilege, of this country not only to provide Ireland with a Parliament, but also to provide that Parliament with a surplus. In providing this surplus the Prime Minister had acted very much in the same way as he (the noble Lord) had acted when at Eton, and which, he dared say, many of them had with regard to a sum in arithmetic. They turned to the end of the book and looked at the answer, and, having got the answer, they then ingeniously devised some scheme by which they arrived at the necessary figure. There might be a surplus, but it could not be proved in any way. With respect to the subject of the Irish Members, it struck him as strange that the Government should not have discovered that the plan of partial retention was unworkable until after

they had incorporated it in the Bill and brought it before Parliament. The noble Duke below him had said it was impossible to exclude the Irish Members, because if they did, they taxed them without giving them a representation. The Unionist Party believed that there would be much intrigue as a consequence of the plan finally adopted by the Government. The Prime Minister, on February 13, in introducing the Bill, said—

“If some large question of controversy entirely British, but still deep and vital, were severing the two great Parties in this House, and the Members of those Parties knew that whichever could bring forward the 80 Irish Representatives, or a large contingent of them, would carry the day, I am afraid of this possible opening of the door to wholesale and dangerous political intrigue. I dread a state of things through which there may be an opening to intrigue, with the result that British questions may be decided on Irish motives. . . . I confess that I and my colleagues have not been able to face such a contingency as this.”

Yet on July 13, under pressure of political necessity, the Prime Minister found himself well able to face the contingency, and what was now wanted was some adequate reason which led him to adopt that which he had previously declared would be entirely wrong. The most important speech delivered from the Irish Benches on this Bill was that of Mr. Redmond on the Third Reading, in which he said that the word “provisional” was written on every line of the Bill, and that no one would dare to say that it would be accepted as a final settlement. What would be the result. In three years from this time there would be a great land struggle in Ireland. He thought that in their dealings with Ulster they were taking upon themselves a great and grave responsibility. In six years there would be a great financial struggle, and a financial struggle in the House of Commons. The 80 Irish Members would be always *en evidence*, because whenever it came to Irish interests they would always be found fighting together. How could their Lordships pass the Bill upon the case, or, rather, no case, presented by the Government? The Government were in exactly the same position as promoters of a bogus Bill before a private Committee. The Bill ought to be rejected, because they had nothing to say

in defence of its provisions. In the words of the noble Duke who spoke that night, their Lordships could not but know well the deception practised by the Prime Minister on the country and on the House of Commons. He could not forget an answer given by the Prime Minister to Mr. Chamberlain. The Prime Minister promised over and over again to bring forward the 9th clause, but at the last moment he rose and proposed the omission of that provision. When the Prime Minister was asked by Mr. Chamberlain whether he did not give that undertaking, he replied—“I knew the object of your question, and I was determined to defeat your purpose.” That was an extraordinary proceeding. Was that the sort of action the Prime Minister ought to take in the House of Commons? He called their attention to the changes that had been made in this Bill in the present Session. They had got a new clause which had not been half debated, and which had been closed and passed, and they had not had a word of explanation as to that, and the Bill must fall by its own weight, they being unable to make any case in its favour. Was the House of Lords bound to accept every Bill of every kind that obtained a scratch majority in the House of Commons? If so, what was the use of their Lordships’ Chamber at all? They had only one course to take in duty to the country—they must reject the Bill. He had no fear of the judgment of the people. He thought he could persuade them that there was no reason why an Irishman should have three votes while an Englishman or a Scotchman had only one, and why an Irish Parliament was to be set up and paid for by increasing the burdens of the English and Scotch taxpayers. He had no fear that when the Bill was fully explained to the electors they would declare that it was wrong to pass a measure which committed the decision of British affairs to a band of irresponsible Members.

*VISCOUNT CROSS: I wish to address to your Lordships a few words on the question of finance in connection with the Bill. I am quite aware that the propositions contained in this Bill and the principles on which it is founded are so radically unsound that it will be quite impossible for this Government or for any Government to present a good Bill

to your Lordships on the subject. But there is one matter which I think, at all events, we are entitled to have from any Government which presents a Bill of this kind—namely, that it contains in its pages the deliberate convictions of the Government themselves, and also the deliberate convictions of the House of Commons. I maintain as strongly as possible that this Bill does not contain the deliberate convictions of Her Majesty's Government. We had in 1886 a speech from the Prime Minister when he first introduced this subject to Parliament. He then said, after he had given all the consideration to it he could before he brought the subject forward, there were two initiatory propositions and principal parts of the Bill. What are they? The first was that the Irish representation at Westminster should cease; the second was that the fiscal unity of the Empire should be absolutely maintained. These were the vital principles. They are not found in this Bill. There was a third proposition which he made at the same time, and on which, at that moment, he laid equal stress, and that was that in order to be a good plan it must be a real settlement for the Irish Question. That is not found in this Bill. One more quotation from the Prime Minister. He said—

“It is perfectly clear that if Ireland is to have a domestic Legislature, the Irish Peers and Irish Representatives cannot come here to have control over English and Scotch affairs. That I understand to be admitted.”

But that is not found in the Bill. We do not yet know what are the deliberate opinions of the Government as to whether the Irish Representatives ought to be or ought not to be here. We have had three plans. First the Irish Members are to be out; next they are to be in and out; and now they are to be in. Which plan represents the deliberate conviction of Her Majesty's Government? That I think we are entitled to know. What did Lord Spencer say on this very in-and-out plan yesterday? He said it was perfectly impossible as a practical measure.

“How was it possible to have a Government supported at one time by one body of men and at another time by another body of men?”

If that was the conviction of the Government, as it was of Lord Spencer, why was that plan laid before Parliament?

Viscount Cross

Then as to fiscal unity, as to the contribution of Ireland, we should like to know the deliberate conviction of the Government on that point. We have had three plans submitted. We have had the tribute, or lump sum; we have had the allocation of the Customs, and now we have the quota. We should like to know why these three plans have been presented so rapidly the one after the other? We do not want to hear about the best and easiest means the Government could find for passing the Bill through Parliament, but we want to hear the deliberate convictions of the Government. These clauses are not the expression of the deliberate opinion of the House of Commons, because the House of Commons has not been allowed to discuss this question of finance. Your Lordships seldom interfere with financial questions; but never before in my long Parliamentary experience have I heard of a Bill dealing with financial matters which was sent up to the House of Lords without having been deliberated on by the House of Commons. The Speaker of the House of Commons comes from time to time to the Bar of the House and asks for recognition of his privileges, among which are freedom of debate and freedom of speech, and Her Majesty has always readily granted the privilege; but what Her Imperial Majesty always grants this imperious Minister has refused. I might say a few words about the three different policies of finance. First of all, the proposition of 1886 was that the Irish people should pay a lump sum; why was that plan not reproduced in 1893? It had been very strongly pressed on the House of Commons by the Prime Minister, and the only reason the right hon. Gentleman gave for dismissing it was that the

“Method of providing by a lump sum we thought naturally disappeared with the adoption of the new plan as to the retention of the Irish Members.”

I do not see the connection. I am glad, however, that plan has been produced. In that plan the contribution by the Irish Government towards the cost of police was to continue at £1,000,000, and the savings made by the Irish Government were not to go into their pockets, but into the Imperial Exchequer. Another question of importance was the collection of the Revenue, and

according to the plan of the Government the cost of collection was without dispute put on the Irish Exchequer, and not upon the English Exchequer. We need not discuss that second plan, because it was based on estimates in which upon discussion we found a mistake had been made of £350,000. The third plan is that of this Bill; it is said that Ireland should pay something like what she does now. There are great objections to that plan; they were stated by the Prime Minister himself; and they seem to me to be insuperable. He said there was no difficulty as to the Excise, but there was great difficulty as to the Customs in distinguishing between the respective consumptions of Ireland and of Great Britain. No answer has been given to that question. You do not mean to say that within the last three months the Customs have found some way out of the difficulty which they could not see before. The second difficulty of the Prime Minister, which appears to be equally insuperable, is that Irish finance would be exposed to inconvenient shocks from changes made in the English Budget for Imperial reasons. Let us follow that out. If the Sugar Duties had not been repealed you would have seen the effect of it immediately. There is a great cry amongst a certain class of people, and I think a reasonable one, that we should have a free breakfast table. Let us say the Chancellor of the Exchequer of the future, wishing to get a little popularity, acceded to this cry of the free breakfast table. Then there would have to be extra taxation to meet the difference lost in that way, and then the Irish Exchequer would lose £502,000 a year, and in that case what would become of the Irish surplus? Let me take a natural corollary from the objection stated by the Prime Minister. We all know the finance of each year varies in two respects—either the Revenue increases or the Expenditure increases, or both may happen—and the Chancellor of the Exchequer has to meet the difficulty by revising his Budget. But he cannot do it. He is tied down by the bargain with the Irish Chancellor of the Exchequer, and if he touches one of the taxes he interferes with the surplus to be given to the Irish Government. There is the duty on dried fruits, about which there is some considerable clamour.

As far as Ireland is concerned, that comes to £40,000 a year. There is a question which we may be forced into by foreign complications—the Wine Duties. Ireland's share of the Wine Duties is £104,000 a year, but the Chancellor of the Exchequer of England would be bound to send over to Ireland and say—"I am bound to alter this financial arrangement of mine; I must consult you before I can do it; otherwise I shall not be fulfilling the bargain with Ireland." The Chancellor of the Exchequer the other day, in reply to this objection, said he had now a Local Budget and an Imperial Budget to arrange, and that it would be no more difficult to deal with this new system than with the old. What an absurd answer for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to make! The contribution which he makes to local expenditure is entirely in his own hands; he can do exactly as he likes; he has nobody to consult. But with an Irish Chancellor of the Exchequer he cannot put his finger on a tax, direct or indirect. Whichever he touches, he touches the surplus which you have given to the Irish Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the Irish Chancellor says—"No; there is a treaty; you are depriving me, and have no right to touch these things without my consent." Let me take the third objection. "We should," says the Prime Minister, "under this system give to Imperial officers a meddling and intervening power in relation to Irish fiscal affairs." What is the answer to that? That you have given the power to these 80 Irish Members of meddling and interfering in English affairs. Do you suppose the Chancellor of the Exchequer will stir one foot or hand in anything which might affect the surplus without the strong intervention of these 80 Irish Members who will be there as Delegates? I should like to consider the result of this particular bargain. The first question that arises is, What does Ireland contribute at present to the general expenses of the country? The general Revenue, according to the Returns placed in our hands, in 1892-3 is £96,000,000. The Irish contribution is £7,600,000, but, deducting the amount expended by the United Kingdom on Ireland, the balance left for the Imperial Exchequer is £2,103,000. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has taken an average of three

years, and he says that £2,100,000 may be taken as the sum to be contributed by Ireland for Imperial purposes. That is what she does pay, but what ought she to pay? The Prime Minister said that the best test is the amount paid on the Death Duties. In 1886 he laid down that 1-15th was the proportion which Ireland ought to pay. I believe that the Death Duties have been somewhat considerably reduced since that time. Therefore I am willing to adopt the contention of the Government and say that 1-18th would represent the proportion which Ireland ought to pay in 1893 according to the Death Duties. Now take the total for the whole of the Three Kingdoms, and it is admitted on all hands that the amount required is £60,576,000. One-eighteenth of that will come out at £3,350,000, and that is the sum which, according to the Prime Minister, Ireland ought to pay towards Imperial Expenditure; but what would she pay under the Bill? The average contributed by Ireland in the last three years has been £2,262,000. You are going to make them a present of one-third of the cost of the police, or £486,000, which reduces her contribution to Imperial Expenditure to £1,776,000. A further amount of £224,000 has to be deducted as the cost of collection, so that Ireland will really have to pay £1,552,000, which is not 1-18th, nor 1-15th, but 1-40th. That is a question which ought to be discussed before the constituencies. Then they turn round and say that the cost of the police ought to be an Imperial charge. The result is that the British taxpayers will have to pay £700,000 a year, at least, for the bargain which the Government have made. Do you think that the people of this country had any notion that they would be called upon to pay this sum? The arrangement for the collection of taxes, involving an annual expenditure of more than £200,000, had no place in the scheme of 1886, and the proposals respecting the police are totally different from those made then. This is the price which the Government propose that we should pay, and for what? In order that they may buy 80 Irish votes. Your masters will not be contented with anything less. The dish had to be flavoured to suit the palates of those who were to enjoy it, and they said somehow or other we must have

£500,000. All these accounts are cooked in order that this sum may be arrived at. I do not believe that the people yet understand this. We were told that when this Home Rule measure was passed the English Parliament would be relieved of all Irish business. But what are the facts? We have to pay £700,000, and 80 Members from Ireland are to be present in the House of Commons. Do you think those Irish Members will let you rest? No; if you set up these tyrants they will tyrannise over you. The English people had, at all events, reason to believe in 1886 that under the scheme then proposed they would get rid of the Irish Members and of the Irish Question. If the Government wish to know the opinion of the English people upon these points, let them put on the Estimates a Vote of £700,000 for the cost of the Home Rule Bill; or let them bring in a Bill to place this amount on the Consolidated Fund. Their proposals would then be made short work of in the House of Commons and the country, and you will dispose of this Home Rule Bill for once and for ever.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (The Marquess of Ripon): I hope your Lordships will allow me, even at this late hour, to make some observations on the course of this Debate. I would beg at once to point out that only one supporter of this Bill has had an opportunity of speaking to-night. Of course, in the present circumstances of the House, there are many more Members who are opposed to the Bill than support it; but I think there ought to be some limit to the exercise of the power of your overwhelming majority, and that you ought to allow a larger amount of time to the minority than you have done to-night. We had at the outset of the Debate this evening, in the eloquent speech from the Duke of Argyll, a long treatise on Irish history from the point of view he takes of the subject. I will not follow my noble Friend upon that point, but will content myself by saying that in respect to Irish history, and especially the Union, I would rather take as an authority the history of Mr. Lecky than I would the history of the Duke of Argyll. Before I proceed to speak of the provisions of the Bill, I am impelled to notice the course of this Debate in one

respect. Noble Lords who oppose the Government seem perfectly unable to imagine that we could have had any good or honourable motive for adopting the policy of this Bill. I am quite sure that this must arise from your not having followed the arguments that have been deduced in favour of this measure. I think that already there have been given to you in the course of these two nights, by the few persons supporting the Bill who have been allowed to address you, some reasons of no small weight, quite apart from those charges of desiring to buy the support of the Irish Members that form the stock and staple of the speeches of our opponents. My noble Friend Lord Spencer, in opening this discussion, laid before you many instances of the fatal tendency of English remedial legislation in Ireland to be always too late, and my noble Friend Lord Playfair, in his able speech, spoke about the commercial condition of Ireland during the years it has been governed under the present system. But still your Lordships think that these reasons cannot have weight with honest men, and that there is some concealed and improper object in the policy which we are pursuing. We held at the Election of 1886, and our assertion has since been proved up to the hilt, that there are but two methods of governing Ireland; we said that there was no choice except between conciliation and coercion. We believed that the policy of coercion pursued for 87 years through 87 Coercion Acts had been proved to have failed for the purpose for which Government is established in free countries. What were the last experiences of coercion at the time of the Election of 1886? They were the Coercion Acts administered by Mr. Forster and Lord Spencer. With respect to Mr. Forster's Act, it is now admitted on all hands that it was a failure. I had nothing to do with that Act, because I was not in this country at the time. The Act which followed and which was administered by Lord Spencer produced good results in respect of the diminution of crime; but my noble Friend himself has told you in the course of this Debate that, having administered that Act to the best of his ability, the result of that administration left upon his mind the conviction that a policy of that descrip-

tion never could produce that which I venture to say is the great end of government, the contentment of the people. But, apart from that experience of the failure of coercion, we have another important circumstance which took place in 1885, and again in 1886. In 1884 Parliament for the first time gave to the Irish people the same franchise that the people of England enjoyed. To that measure the Duke of Devonshire was a party. Why did you do that? Did you extend the franchise to the Irish people because you wanted to disregard their opinions, or did you do it in order that you might get in Parliament a better representation and a fuller expression of the feelings of the Irish people? What was the result? The supporters of the Home Rule policy were returned by an overwhelming majority both in 1885 and in 1886. The result of the reduction of the franchise was the return of overwhelming Nationalist majorities in 1885 and 1886, and that is a fact which cannot be disregarded, and is a circumstance which may reasonably lead men to think that a new policy with regard to Ireland ought to be pursued. There were also in 1885 some remarkable expressions of opinion upon the question of the state of Ireland; and the late Lord Carnarvon, in a speech in your Lordships' House, said—

"I have been astonished to find that ever since 1847, with some short intervals that are hardly worth mentioning, Ireland has lived under coercive legislation. No sane man can admit that this is a satisfactory or a wholesome state of things. It does seem to me that it is very desirable, if possible, that we should extricate ourselves from this miserable habit and aim at some wholesome and better solution. But more than being undesirable, I hold that such legislation is practically impossible if it is to be continuously and indefinitely re-enacted."

I am bound to say that these words made a deep impression on me, and I might add that before I returned to this country from India I had come to the conclusion that I would not again, unless under very exceptional circumstances, be a party to a policy of coercion. There was another description of Irish government as it then stood, and still stands, given by the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, when he was still in the service of the Crown. He described the system of government in Ireland as depending on 30,000 bayonets, and compared it to Russia's government

of Poland or Venice under Austria, and finally said—

“The time has come to reform altogether the absurd and irritating anachronism which is known as Dublin Castle.”

It is impossible for responsible persons to use such language without leading men to think whether such a system ought not to be stopped. It is, therefore, quite needless for the noble Marquess to seek for some sinister motive for the change of policy adopted by the Liberal Party. We took the experience of the past to heart. We took your teaching to heart. To us it seemed that a policy of conciliation was the only policy by which we could deliver Ireland from coercion, or by which we can reform the irritating anachronism of Dublin Castle. For my part, I give all honour to the late Lord Carnarvon and his Colleagues. In 1885 they set us an example. The only difference between them and us is that they have withdrawn their hands from the plough and we have gone forward.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY : What plough ?

*THE MARQUESS OF RIPON : The ending of the miserable habit of coercion and the anachronism of Dublin Castle. Our policy is a full and complete concession to the Irish people of the management of their own affairs.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY : Does the noble Marquess mean to suggest that we intended to give Home Rule to the Irish people ?

*THE MARQUESS OF RIPON : You told the public from these Benches that the system of coercion was a bad one, and that it should be abandoned ; and you were on the look out for a better method of government. I do not want to carry you further than your words. But such words cannot be spoken in the Parliament of this country without making a great change in the position of any question. Our policy, then, is to give a full and free power to the Irish people to manage their own Irish affairs. That policy implies a trust in the Irish people. But your Lordships are accustomed to sneer at the notion of putting trust in the Irish people, though here, again, we have on our side the words of the late Lord Carnarvon. On July 6, 1885, Lord Carnarvon used these words—

The Marquess of Ripon

“It may be said that this is a question of trust. No doubt it is a question of trust, but trust begets trust, and it is, after all, the only foundation upon which we can hope to build up amity and concord between the two nations.”

That is language which we thankfully and gladly accept. We came to the conviction that the policy of coercion could not be maintained, and that there was no choice between a policy of continued coercion and a policy of trust. That policy we have since firmly adhered to. When I speak of coercion, I do not say that noble Lords opposite have had a monopoly of coercive policy in Ireland. Doubtless the Liberal Party has had its full share in the adoption of that policy. The difference, however, is that we have learned our mistake, and have had a glimmering of the truth, and retrieved our former error. Now, I will turn for a moment, before touching on the Bill, to another argument which has been very largely introduced into this Debate. We have been told several times that Parliament has no mandate in regard to this Bill. That is the language of my noble Friend the Duke of Devonshire, and that was the language of my noble Friend Earl Cadogan. I cannot help remarking here that I am not sure that it is altogether judicious for noble Lords to talk about a mandate to represent the people of this country, because it is not impossible that some irreverent people may ask whether the Members of this House have any mandate to represent the people at all. That is not a point I want to press. What I want to say is that your doctrine of mandate is totally new to the Constitution. If ever any Parliament had a mandate to deal with any question, this Parliament has a mandate to deal with the question of Home Rule, which has been discussed throughout the country in every possible way. I have been a long time in public life, and I have never known a public measure so fully discussed. At least in Liberal speeches Home Rule has held a foremost place for six years. It is said this Bill has not been before the country, though its principles have been discussed in every shape and way. There is a new-fangled idea of a sort of *referendum* which is to be entrusted to your Lordships which is very rife just now. I should like to ask what has been

the practice in the past? I should like to ask, of the great measures which have been passed within the last 50 years, in which of them has the actual Bill been laid before the country, and in regard to which of them you have claimed this right of *referendum*? Take the Corn Laws. If the Parliament which repealed the Corn Laws had any mandate it was to maintain them. It certainly had no mandate to repeal them; but at the bidding of a great Minister at a great crisis it did repeal them. Then, take the Reform Bill of 1867. The noble Marquess will remember the Ten Minutes Bill. Was there any mandate given to Mr. Disraeli to pass the Ten Minutes Bill?

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Not the Ten Minutes Bill.

THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: I may have applied the wrong name. But, at all events, the Bill against which the noble Marquess protested so strongly had never been submitted to the country. What happened about the Disestablishment of the Irish Church? A general Resolution was passed in the House of Commons; no Bill was prepared or was submitted to the country. A majority in favour of Disestablishment was returned at the General Election, and my noble Friend (the Duke of Devonshire), who was a Member of the Government, must remember the pains that Government took and the length of time they employed in the preparation of the details of the Bill. That Bill was passed; you did not talk about the *referendum* then. Your Lordships did not say that the Bill had never been before the country; but you passed it, and one of its authors was the noble Duke. A few words as to our experience in this matter of giving wide self-government. After we had brought a few of our Colonies to the verge of rebellion we gave them self-government. What has been the result? The effect has been to bind them more and more closely to the Mother Country. Look at Australasia, look at the Cape, look at Canada. Canada is a complete parallel to the case of Ireland. There you have two races and creeds; there you had open rebellion. You tried coercion, and failed. You proposed self-government, and it was denounced vigorously by many

men in this House and in the country. They said it would produce all the evils which are prophesied with regard to the grant of Home Rule to Ireland. The prophecies failed, and the result has been to bind Canada to the Mother Country in the closest bonds. There may be a few scattered individuals in the country who still dream of annexation to the United States; but when they want to get a Leader they cannot find him in Canada, but they have to go to a distinguished member of the University of Oxford. I turn now to some points in the Bill to which allusion has been made. In the first place, we are told that the manner in which we have provided for the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament in this Bill is inadequate. Lord Playfair answered that argument, and showed that the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament is amply secured. No one values the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament more highly than I do, but, as a matter of fact, the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament needs no protection. The supremacy of the Imperial Parliament cannot be touched. The Parliament of to-day cannot bind the Parliament that succeeds it. The Session of Parliament of 1893 cannot bind the Session of Parliament of 1894. We asserted that supremacy in the Preamble. But it was well to accept also the proposal of Sir Henry James. A cardinal point of our policy is the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament. Lord Castletown, in his speech to-night, used the expression "The supremacy of Great Britain." But what we are concerned with now is not the supremacy of Great Britain, but the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament, and we contend that we have protected it as much as possible. Lord Camperdown asserted that my noble Friend Lord Spencer had changed his opinion on the question of land legislation. But I should like to point out that Lord Spencer held a strong opinion in 1886 that land legislation should accompany the grant of Home Rule. But he pointed out yesterday that, in his judgment, the legislation which had taken place since 1886 with regard to the land had rendered it unnecessary to deal with that subject now, and therefore that the point upon which he had insisted in 1886 was not now a cardinal point. The noble and learned Lord (Lord Ashbourne) fell foul

of the Schedule and accused the Government of gerrymandering.

LORD ASHBOURNE: The charge was made against Mr. Morley in the other House that a figure had been selected which would produce results which were unfair to the Unionists.

***THE MARQUESS OF RIPON:** That is just it. Your opponents are either knaves or fools. If you do not like to call us fools, you call us knaves. It does not matter to us, but I do not think it does you any good. Now, there is another point, in respect to which I would say a few words — that is, the position of the Members who will remain in our House of Commons. The Bill of 1886 proposed the exclusion of the Irish Members. We now propose their retention; but that is not one of the new points in the Bill, because it was known to the country long ago. You objected to the removal of the Irish Members in 1886; in 1893 you object to their retention. We are told that, in future, the British Government will be at the mercy of the Irish Members. The Irishmen are there now, and all we are proposing to do is to reduce their numbers. Before now Governments have been put in power, and kept in power, by the votes of Irish Members. We are not aggravating the situation; on the contrary, we are doing the opposite by diminishing the power of Irishmen in the House of Commons. The noble Viscount opposite spoke, as he always does, with courtesy and moderation upon the subject of the sum for the cost of collection and the contribution towards the Irish Constabulary, and he said that that was an enormous charge to impose upon the English people. But the noble Viscount forgot that both liabilities are temporary. The charge for the Constabulary will be a diminishing charge, and the charge for the collection of Revenue is limited under this Bill to six years. I doubt whether my noble Friend will find, when he goes on the stump this Autumn, that he will stir up such very great indignation among the British people by denouncing this contribution in aid of the new Irish system in its inception. I believe that the British people have made up their minds that they will give self-

The Marquess of Ripon

government to Ireland fully, and I believe them to be just enough and generous enough to see that you cannot set up this new Government without making a temporary provision for its immediate needs. We have heard a great deal of strong language as to the manner in which the Closure has been applied in the House of Commons. I do not want to discuss the proceedings in that House; but when I am told that a Bill so passed through the House of Commons can never be accepted by your Lordships, I cannot help asking who taught us to take that course? It was yourselves. You passed the Crimes Act in that way, and it seems that a system which is legitimate to confiscate the constitutional rights of the Irish people is not legitimate to enlarge them. With regard to what fell from the Duke of Devonshire as to local self-government, I am as anxious as any man can be that local self-government should be extended in Ireland; but if you extend it without granting general self-government you will not satisfy the people, and you will ruin local self-government, because you will make every County Council a scene for political discussion. I might have said much on other matters, but you have left me very little time. My Lords, the result of this Debate is a foregone conclusion. Those who lead the serried ranks that we have seen earlier in the evening have told the world long ago what is to be the fate of this Bill in this House. The unwonted faces that have shown themselves on the Benches opposite tell the story of Friday night. It would be hypocrisy in me to make those appeals to your Lordships to pass this Bill which are often heard on occasions like this. You made up your minds what you would do with it before you knew what it was. And, therefore, I will content myself with saying that if on this occasion you frustrate the will of the people, and refuse the just claims of Ireland to the management of her own affairs, it will not be that will or those claims that will be in the end overthrown, but it will be rather the rash and fatal counsels which dictate the rejection of this Bill which will at last be brought to nought.

Further Debate adjourned till Tomorrow.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (SCHOOL ATTENDANCE) BILL.—(No. 255.)

Amendment reported (according to Order); and Bill to be read 3^a Tomorrow.

EDUCATION (SCHOOL ATTENDANCE) (SCOTLAND) BILL [H.L.]—(No. 262.)

Read 3^a (according to Order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

COMPANIES (WINDING-UP) BILL [H.L.]

Read 3^a (according to Order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

SHERIFF COURTS CONSIGNATIONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.—(No. 259.)

Read 3^a (according to Order), and passed.

FERTILISERS AND FEEDING STUFFS BILL.—(No. 263.)

Amendments reported (according to Order), and Bill to be read 3^a on Friday next.

BURGH GAS SUPPLY (SCOTLAND) ACT (1876) AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 226.)

Read 3^a (according to Order), with the Amendment, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes past One o'clock a.m., till a quarter past Four o'clock p.m.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 6th September 1893.

MR. SPEAKER'S INDISPOSITION.
The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to the continuance of his indisposition:—
Whereupon Mr. Mellor, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy Speaker, pursuant to the Order.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—COMMITTEE.

SUPPLY,—considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS, 1893-4.

CLASS II.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £56,697, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1894, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Home Department and Subordinate Offices."

*MR. STUART WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam) said, that he did not intend to move a reduction of the Home Secretary's salary, but he wished to ask a few questions. In the first instance, he desired some additional information with regard to the appointment of 15 new Assistant Inspectors of Factories, including two lady Inspectors. He assumed that the new men were to act as the spies, so to speak, of the Factory Inspectors; to be their eyes and ears; to go about the factories and workshops collecting evidence. He thought that was a very right thing to do to supplement the present administration of the Factory Acts; but, of course, any Minister who increased the Factory Inspectors by so large a number as 15 was bound to give an explanation, and to show that this new staff was created for the purpose of genuinely improving the administration of the Act. Especially was this necessary in cases of appointments carrying small salaries. He did not suggest that these appointments had been made for the purpose of rewarding political services in the country, but with the view to enabling the Home Secretary to further satisfy the public mind on the subject he invited him to make a further explanation. He also wished to ask whether these new additional Inspectors were subject to the ordinary Civil Service rule, that persons in that position were forbidden to take part in political agitation. This was a requirement particularly necessary in the case of those officers. They had to exercise extra-

ordinary statutory powers, and according to the way in which they exercised those powers so did they gain local confidence. He would be glad to know whether the Committee could, by the presentation of a Return to the House or otherwise, be informed as to the qualifications and the examinations, if any, of this new class of Inspectors' assistants. The House might remember that the conditions of the examination of the old staff were altered by the late Home Secretary in a direction he thought they would all agree was very much for the better. It used to be the fashion to require that a Factory Inspector should show some form of literary qualification, such as was required from all the other branches of the Civil servants; but the late Home Secretary conceived that it was much more important that they should be examined in the history and growth of the enactments they had to administer. He hoped some such knowledge was required of these new assistants, and that these appointments were not merely conferred upon candidates on the sole ground that they belonged to what was commonly known as the industrial and wage-earning classes. It was quite right that candidates should, when they had shown themselves to be otherwise qualified, be appointed as much as possible from the working class, and a large number of appointments were made by the late Home Secretary from that class. With regard to Mines Inspectors, he observed that during the last Parliament, in the Debates on the Estimates for the Home Office, many complaints were made that the staff of Mines Inspectors was totally inadequate for the work they had to do. But there was no increase proposed in the present year. He did not say there ought to be an increase, but he thought, considering the amount of criticism, which sometimes pretty nearly amounted to abuse, the House should have its attention drawn to the fact that although a full year had elapsed, during which there had been complete opportunity of reviewing the situation, no increase in the Mines Inspectors had been proposed. With regard to the financial consideration, a few increases would not come within dangerous distance of changing the balance of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It would be observed

Mr. Stuart Wortley

that the sub-head also included Inspectors in metalliferous mines. One of the subjects which used to be pressed upon the attention of the late Government was the amendment of the present Act regulating these mines. There were many sources of danger in that dangerous industry which might possibly be relieved by legislation, and he would be glad if the Home Secretary had it in his contemplation to introduce legislation on that subject. Another subject that came under these sub-heads was the question of retreats for inebriates. The late Home Secretary appointed a strong Departmental Committee to consider whether the present law might be altered, and they made a Report which indicated several material improvements which might be made in the present system. That Report had been shown to be the germ of a great deal of work which might possibly be done to great advantage. He would be glad to know that the Home Secretary was able to make any promise as to initiating legislation in the future. He was afraid that most of the recommendations of the Departmental Committee were things which could not be carried into effect without legislation. Therefore, the House would be very interested to know whether the Home Secretary, as a Minister, would recommend legislation to that House.

MR. GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN (Kent, Tunbridge) said, he desired to call attention to the want of action of the Home Secretary in connection with the tithe riots which had recently occurred in Cardiganshire, South Wales. Within the last year there had been very serious disturbances indeed in the neighbourhood of Cardiganshire, owing to the refusal of the people to pay tithes and the fact that the County Council did not send a sufficient police force to protect the bailiff when he attempted to execute the order for the tithes. Over 100 of these orders were unexecuted in the neighbourhood of Cardiganshire, with the result that the tithe owners had to a certain extent been deprived of their income. Those people who refused to pay tithes were small freeholders, and, therefore, were not affected by the late Act, which transferred the payment of tithes from the owners to the occupiers. On May 5th the bailiff set out to collect the tithes in

Cardiganshire. He had only a protection of four policemen, accompanied by a member of the County Council, to persuade the people to pay the tithes; but as that gentleman was a member of the Anti-tithe Committee for the district, his efforts in that direction were not successful. A crowd of about a hundred people collected, and the bailiff was severely handled by them. He (Mr. Griffith-Boscawen) brought the matter before the House by asking questions of the Home Secretary, and he was bound to admit that the right hon. Gentleman had taken a certain amount of action with satisfaction. The right hon. Gentleman ordered the Public Prosecutor to prosecute a man named Thomas for the brutal assault on the bailiff, and Thomas was convicted and got three months' imprisonment. But what he had to complain of was that the Home Secretary had taken no steps to provide against a recurrence of the disorder, or to provide for the carrying out of the law in the future. In fact, when he asked the Home Secretary to recommend to the Chief Constable that a sufficient force of police should be available for the protection of the bailiff in the future, the right hon. Gentleman refused to do it, and said that he had confidence in the Chief Constable. He would venture to ask the Home Secretary how he was able to say that he had confidence in the Chief Constable. The predecessor of the present Chief Constable had been dismissed without a pension simply because he gave adequate protection to the tithe bailiff, and as to the present officer he knew that if he took action his situation would not be worth a day's purchase. In face of these facts it was absurd to say that there were any grounds for confidence in the Chief Constable under the local circumstances. After the trial of Thomas, he (Mr. Griffith-Boscawen) questioned the Home Secretary as to whether he would take steps to warn the Joint Standing Committee, who had control of the police arrangements, that a sufficient police force should be provided in the future. The Home Secretary did write to the Chief Constable, but the Chief Constable thought so little of the letter that he never referred to it in his Report to the Joint Standing Committee, and only mentioned the fact when he

was asked about it by the Chairman of Quarter Sessions. On the strength of the letter, the Chairman of Quarter Sessions proceeded to move two resolutions. The resolutions were intended to carry out the suggestions made by the Home Secretary in his letter. But the Joint Standing Committee simply treated the Home Office with contempt. They rejected those two resolutions, and left in force a previous instruction to the Chief Constable that he was never to send more than two or three constables with the bailiff and a County Councillor to persuade the people to pay tithes. The majority against the resolutions were entirely County Councillors, and two of them, he contended, had no moral right to vote, being members of the Anti-tithe Committee, and, therefore, interested parties. After the resolutions in favour of the enforcement of the letter of the Home Secretary had been rejected by the Joint Standing Committee, he again asked the right hon. Gentleman whether he intended to take any strong action to compel the observance of the law. He believed that the Home Secretary had done absolutely nothing, so that at the present time they had the Local Authorities in league with the law-breakers, and the Home Office looking on with indifference. Cardiganshire was truly a disturbed district. There was, in fact, in the district as much disorder as had arisen in many parts of Ireland during the recent land agitation. The feeling in the district was indicated by the fact that a Welsh Liberal newspaper had started a public subscription for Thomas, who had committed a brutal assault on a bailiff. Whether the people objected or not to the payment of tithes, so long as it was the law of the land the Executive Government was bound to see that the collection of tithes was carried out without disturbance. He, therefore, moved the reduction of the Home Secretary's salary by £200.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A, Salaries, be reduced by £200."—(*Mr. Griffith-Boscawen.*)

*MR. S. T. EVANS (Glamorgan, Mid.) said, he had some personal information as to what had taken place with reference to the collection of the tithes in the parish of Penbryn. This was not a "disturbed district." Notwithstanding the

strong feeling which prevailed amongst the people against the payment of tithes in the locality, there had only been one criminal prosecution for a serious assault upon a bailiff. The hon. Member for Tunbridge—whose qualifications for taking this matter in hand he was at a loss to understand—had called this a very brutal assault. He thought the Committee ought to be informed that the bailiff first of all took proceedings before the Justices against a man named Thomas for doing him grievous bodily harm, and also for unlawful wounding. The Magistrates dismissed the charge. They came to the conclusion—and there was no doubt of it from the evidence of the medical men—that not even a rupture of the skin had taken place from this “brutal assault.” However, the authorities determined to prosecute at the Assizes, with the result that a verdict was given against Thomas for a common assault, not for doing the bailiff grievous bodily harm, and not for unlawful wounding, and he was sentenced to a term of three months’ imprisonment. He had heard some complaints made by the bailiff in the County Courts. The bailiff, according to the evidence in these cases, took a very high-handed course, and took a very high view of his authority. When distraining for the purpose of compelling the payment of tithes the bailiff thought he had a right to go over hedges, break down fences, and go over locked gates, and that he had a right to go upon premises by any means he chose; but the opinion of the Law Officers had been given to the effect that he had no such right at all. What the tithe bailiff said, practically, was this—that when he attempted to go over fences the farmers or their friends took up a position on the top of the fence, that he pushed against them, and then he exclaimed, “You see these cruel men; I knocked up against them, and they assault me.” He had in some cases heard the bailiff give evidence of this description. The bailiff thought he had a right to get in to a farm over a gate. There were people inside the gate on freehold premises. The bailiff put his foot on one of the bars of the gate, and thereupon his foot came into contact with the knee of somebody on the other side. He at once took proceedings in the County Court, and said, “I am assaulted in the execu-

tion of my duty.” The fact of the matter was, police protection was not required for the bailiff at all. The Chief Constable, a man of admirable tact and judgment, was of that opinion. The County Council who had appointed him thought it was better in the regulation of the district and for the peaceful carrying out of legal process that there should not be a big police force. He knew what the hon. Member opposite would like. If the Home Secretary acceded to the request of the hon. Gentleman, and ordered down a large force of police, the hon. Gentleman would then like a military force sent into the district. He thought the fact that during the last two years there had only been one serious case of assault—which it required the lively imagination of the hon. Member to describe as a “brutal assault”—was proof that no further protection was needed for tithe bailiffs. It was not a disturbed district. There had, no doubt, been prosecutions for unlawful assembly. But although the prosecutions were before the Magistrates, and the Chairman was a clergyman and a tithe-owner, though a man highly respected in the district, the Bench did not think fit to commit any of the defendants on the charge of unlawful assembly. He ventured to tell the Home Secretary that his action in this matter was the right action to take. The County Council were fully alive to the state of things. There was no serious disturbance, and he hoped the Home Office would not undertake, without due necessity, to interfere with the Local Authorities in respect of this matter. The effect of sending a large military force would be, in the first place, to say to the County Council what the Home Office had no right to say—they were neglecting their duty; and, in the next place, it would be a further incitement to the people; and, in the third place, they would be using the forces of the Crown to collect tithes for the tithe-owners in that district. That was not what was required. As soon as it appeared that it was necessary to have a large force to protect the bailiff he dared say the requisite force would be given, but he had shown that a larger force was not necessary at present, and, if sent, might even create disturbances which did not now exist.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. ASQUITH, Fife, E.): This discussion is carried on on lines which range over fields very widely apart, and I would point out to the Committee at once the small area that is really covered by the Vote. As to the Motion now before the Committee, the hon. Member has moved to reduce my salary owing to some act which he disapproves of on the part of the Joint Standing Committee of Cardiganshire. What the hon. Member has succeeded in doing is to point out—unconsciously, but very effectively—the defects of the legislation of the late Government on this very question. The Tithes Act was passed, as we all know, to settle this question two or three years ago. Power is given by the Act to the County Courts to enforce the payment of tithes. When I entered Office I received complaints from Cardiganshire that a large number of these orders remained unexecuted. I thereupon took the opinion of the Law Officers of the Crown as to what right the bailiff had to call upon the police to assist him in the execution of these orders. The Law Officers gave me a very clear opinion on the point. They say that under the legislation passed two or three years ago a bailiff, in executing a County Court Order on the premises of a freeholder, was in no better position than a bailiff levying a distress for rent due to a landlord at Common Law. The law is perfectly clear on that point. A bailiff levying a distress for rent may not make a forcible entry on the premises in respect of which the rent is due. The police are not bound to render him any assistance whatever in making such an entry. The police are bound only to protect the bailiff from breaches of the peace or bodily harm. Under these circumstances, I gave advice, which, if it had been acted upon, I have reason to think that, though probably a number of the Orders would remain unexecuted, there need have been no trouble. Whether the bailiff was acting lawfully or not on the occasion to which the hon. Gentleman referred I will not undertake to say; but he was undoubtedly assaulted by the crowd. It was the only case of assault brought to my knowledge. I ordered a prosecution at the public expense, and the man was sentenced by the Judge to three months' hard labour. I

also wrote to the Chief Constable pointing out that, in my opinion, a sufficient force of police ought to have been sent to protect the bailiff from actual harm. I said that there had been a neglect of duty, and that I hoped it would not occur again. The Chief Constable wrote me a most becoming and sensible letter. He said he had been taken by surprise, that he did not anticipate that there would have been such a crowd, and he undertook that it would not occur again. What more could I do? The hon. Gentleman has complained of the Joint Standing Committee, from whom the Chief Constable has to take his orders as to the service of the police. The hon. Gentleman has advanced the novel theory that some Members of the Joint Standing Committee should be suspended from voting, because they are Members of the Anti-Tithe Committee. What is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander, and if Members of the Joint Standing Committee are to be disabled from the performance of their statutory duties because they are members of Political Bodies outside, the administration of the police in England would soon be paralysed. If I find the Joint Standing Committee neglecting to discharge the duties laid upon them by Statute in handling the Police Force in such a way as to endanger the maintenance of law and order, I shall not hesitate to bring the matter under their notice; and when the time came for giving the certificate of efficiency, I should consider whether I was bound to give such a certificate. I have maintained a perfectly impartial attitude in this matter. Up to this moment I have no reason to doubt that the Police Force are being properly used; and if they should at any time be improperly used, I shall not hesitate to take such steps as the law enables me to take in the matter.

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE (Rochester) said, the Home Secretary's salary was a legitimate opportunity afforded to the House of Commons of criticising his administration. The real importance of this matter lay in the fact that, by the course of action which the Home Office had permitted, a serious blow had been struck at the power and dignity of one of the constituted tribunals of the country—namely, the County Court. The Tithe Act made the County Court in Wales responsible for the collection of the tithes proved to be justly due, and

the bailiff of the Court in this case, in endeavouring to carry out its judgments, had been grossly assaulted by mobs and prevented from performing his duty. It was a mistake to say that the bailiff had been assaulted only once. He had been seriously assaulted over and over again, and what he and his hon. Friends contended was, that the Local Authorities and the Home Secretary had failed to see that the bailiff, who was an official of a legally-constituted Court, was properly protected in the performance of his legal duty. If the titheowner obtained a judgment from the proper Court that he was entitled to certain tithes, surely he had a right to the payment of those tithes, and it was the duty of the authorities to see that the judgment of the Court was properly executed and the law carried out. In this respect, however, there had been culpable neglect in the case in question, and the result of the attitude which the Home Secretary had taken in the matter had been, most unfairly, to make the just and legal collection of tithes in Cardiganshire increasingly difficult. The right hon. Gentleman was usually very rigid in his view of Ministerial responsibility and the enforcement of the law, but in this particular case he seemed to have thrown in his lot with the law-breakers. He very much regretted the attitude which the Home Secretary had taken up, and under the circumstances he hoped his hon. Friend would press his Amendment to a Division.

***MR. W. REES DAVIES** (Pembrokeshire) said, he had been repeatedly assured by the Chief Constable of Pembrokeshire that a small police force was more effective than a large force in effecting tithe distraints. The noble Lord opposite was entirely mistaken in supposing that the task of the bailiff would be made easier if a dozen or 20 or 100 policemen accompanied him. The resistance was simply made as a protest against tithe altogether; and, in his opinion, the Nonconformists of Wales were fully justified in a Constitutional agitation against it. He could assure hon. Gentlemen opposite that they were entirely mistaken if they supposed that they would silence the agitation by the means suggested. A case had now been stated for the opinion of the High Court as to the bailiff's right to cross over hedges and gates in effecting tithe distraints, and

it was well-known that the people in resisting this were acting in accordance with the opinion given by the Law Officers of the Crown. Of course, the bailiff, in the action which he had taken, had been bolstered up by the clerical party in Wales; but he entreated the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary to pay no heed to the noble Lord or to the hon. Gentleman, who were entirely misinformed as to the facts, but to leave the matter entirely in the discretion of the Chief Constable, who was responsible for law and order, and who had the full support, in the course which he had adopted, of the representatives of the ratepayers on the County Council. An increased police force would mean an increase in the rates, and would increase, if possible, the hostility to tithes.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY admitted that much of what the Home Secretary had said justified him in the course he had taken. It was perfectly true that he had the power of refusing a certificate of efficiency, and thereby his Ministerial connection with the action of the police force was technically established. He agreed that it was only in an extreme case that he would be justified in refusing that certificate, but the policy of moral suasion by means of a small police force did not cover cases of intimidation that did not proceed to actual assault. The Home Secretary must know that the system existed in Wales of collecting crowds and causing them to observe an attitude so menacing that the commission of actual violence was rendered unnecessary. Cases of that kind required police protection. He protested against the doctrine laid down by the right hon. Gentleman, that what was sauce for the goose was sauce for the gander in this matter. Those, on the one hand, to whom the right hon. Gentleman alluded were maintaining the existing law as to tithe distraint, and neither advised nor instructed the Chief Constable to do anything in excess of that law; whereas, on the other hand, it was notorious that the object of members of the Anti-Tithe League was to abolish tithes, and with that end in view their policy was to paralyse the law by sanctioning a series of acts that were on the border line between legality and illegality.

***MR. MORE** (Shropshire, Ludlow) said that in Cardiganshire the Chairman

Viscount Cranborne

of Quarter Sessions resigned because his ruling with respect to the authority of the Joint Committee over the Chief Constable was outvoted by a majority of Liberal Magistrates, who had made an expoliceman, supposed to sympathise with the anti-tithe movement, Chief Constable, in the place of one who had carried out the law, who was dismissed. It was not an ecclesiastical question at all, as in Cardiganshire only 25 per cent. of the tithes were paid to the clergy, the rest being paid to lay impropriators.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): I should like, Sir, to make a few remarks on the question of tithes.

THE CHAIRMAN pointed out that the only question before the Committee was the action of the Home Secretary, and that it would not be in Order to discuss the general question of tithes.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I will keep entirely to that question. What I want to do is to urge some reasons why the Home Secretary should use all the power which he possesses to secure the due administration of the law in reference to the collection of tithes, and I want to point out that this is not, as it is sometimes treated, entirely or even principally a question of ecclesiastical distinctions. It is perfectly true that the ground given for the refusal to pay tithes is the religious scruple on the part of the tithe-payers to contribute in any way to a Church with which they do not agree. So far as that goes, I, of course, have very considerable sympathy with the objectors. That was the principle on which the Quakers or Society of Friends resisted the payment of Church rates. [*Cries of "Order!"*]

THE CHAIRMAN said, the right hon. Gentleman must confine himself more closely to the question before the Committee. It was a much smaller question than the right hon. Gentleman seemed to think.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I must emphasise what I say. I must point out that this is a national question, which goes very much beyond the narrow question of disputes between religious bodies. [*Cries of "Order!"*] I am perfectly in Order. I am directing myself to showing the importance of the Home Secretary, who is not concerned in these disputes, taking proper measures to secure the payment of tithes. Whatever sympathies one might have

with those who object to pay tithes from conscientious scruples, we all know that other influences are brought to work, and, although those scruples are to be respected, it must be borne in mind that, whether tithes are paid to the Church or to a sect, in any case the contention of those who are opposed to a State Church is that tithes are a national fund. If, as is contended by a great number of hon. Members who are supporters of the Government, the tithe is a national fund, it behoves the Government to take care that the *corpus* of that fund is not destroyed. ["No, no!"] If hon. Members will not be quite so impatient I shall not occupy many moments. If this fund is a national fund, what we have to do is to preserve the *corpus* of the fund. As to the destination of the fund, that is a totally different question, and we may hold different opinions on that point. Some may desire to see it appropriated to purely national purposes, others to the National Church. But, whatever opinion we hold on that matter, it is of the first importance that the fund itself should be preserved intact. The persons who are now tithepayers are pledged to this burden, and it is the State they rob, and not the Church, when they refuse to pay the tithe. Under these circumstances, whether they agree with those in favour of Disestablishment or not, it is the duty of the Government to maintain the law and see that this fund is not destroyed. Well, Sir, the fund is being destroyed. How is it possible this fund can remain intact or be protected when it is well known that the sympathy of those locally called upon to administer the law is against the payments, and when they practically gave instructions to the Chief Constable to be lax in his duties. ["No, no!"] We know perfectly well what happened. We know how the Chief Constable appointed before the agitation was forced to resign his position, and a mere creature of the majority who compose this Committee appointed in his place. This Chief Constable has not taken the steps which anyone in his position, acting impartially, would have taken, and the result is that, in my opinion, this fund from tithes in Wales is seriously endangered. I think it is a case in which the Home Secretary ought to exercise the fullest powers in his possession. [Mr. ASQUITH: What are

they ?] They are to refuse the certificate of the Chief Constable, and it is perfectly certain—I do not think it would be necessary to go to that extent—that if he showed he was prepared to exercise that power we should see a very great difference in regard to the administration of the law. But because it is known he will not exercise that power—and he has practically expressed in this House that under no circumstances will he exercise that power——

*MR. ASQUITH: I said the exact opposite.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Then I beg my right hon. Friend's pardon. I was misinformed. If that is the case, and if he is prepared to withhold the certificate from the Chief Constable, I have no complaint to make of him. But when I suggested he should do that he tossed his head and gave an ironical cheer. Therefore, I did not understand what his exact position is. If he is prepared to withdraw the certificate if this action, or rather inaction, on the part of the Chief Constable continues, then I am perfectly certain that the Chief Constable, and those who are his legal masters, will be better advised in the future than they have been in the past.

*MR. ASQUITH: I very much regret that my right hon. Friend should not have taken the trouble to be present at this Debate if he intended to take part in it, as on the matters as to which he has attacked me and the Government he has obviously been misinformed. At least, we are entitled to expect from my right hon. Friend that proper and orderly conduct which is generally practised in this House in regard to its Debates, and by which it is understood that right hon. Gentlemen should not take part in them unless they are prepared to take the trouble of ascertaining what has passed. My right hon. Friend gave us a disquisition as to the value of maintaining the *corpus* of a national fund, which was interesting, no doubt, as an expression of his opinion, but which, I venture to think, was totally irrelevant to the question. The sole question before the Committee is whether I, in the character of Home Secretary, have done something I ought not to have done, or have omitted something I might and ought to have done, in relation to this particular case. My right hon. Friend does not know what I have done, or what

I have omitted to do, and yet he comes down here prepared to join in an attack on the Government, and, I suppose, vote for the reduction of my salary. I think that shows an impulsiveness on the part of my right hon. Friend to think evil of his political antagonists that, I confess, I did not give him credit for. I have already explained my action to the Committee. I must point out again that I took the opinion of the Law Officers as to the duties and powers of the officers of the law in this matter. They advised that the bailiff had no power to make a forcible entry. I communicated that to both the bailiff and the Chief Constable, but, at the same time, I expressed my opinion—I had no direct power over the Chief Constable—that it was the duty of the Chief Constable and police to protect the bailiff against assault and breaches of the peace. Well, Sir, what more does the right hon. Gentleman think I should do? He says I ought to have done something I have not done. What more could I have done? So far as I am aware, no one who applies a rational and unprejudiced mind to the consideration of the question, and who knows what the duties and responsibilities of the Home Secretary are in relation to the management of the local police, can say there is anything in this matter I could effectively do which I have not done.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: My right hon. Friend has referred to my remissness in my Parliamentary duty, but I do not find my absence from the House for a very brief period has in the slightest degree interfered with my accurate knowledge of what had taken place during my absence. The right hon. Gentleman asks me what he could have done and what he has omitted to do? I thought I had told him, but I will repeat it. In the first place, let us see what happened here. I am perfectly aware that the bailiff would have been going beyond his legal powers in endeavouring to make a forcible entry. But he was entitled to the protection of the constables, and I understand, on a review of the whole circumstances, my right hon. Friend communicated to the Chief Constable his opinion that this man had been insufficiently protected—[MR. ASQUITH: On one occasion]—and that, as a matter of fact, in consequence he was brutally assaulted. ["No, no!"] He was not, says an hon. Member from Wales, but

Mr. J. Chamberlain

at all events, a Crown prosecution was instituted by the Home Secretary and one of the bailiff's assailants got three months' imprisonment, which I do not suppose was a bit more than his deserts. That is the state of the case. I admit the Home Secretary did all he could do at that moment. He warned the Chief Constable that in future he ought to give greater protection than he had done, and that in consequence of not having given sufficient protection personal injury had been done towards this man. I want to know what the right hon. Gentleman has done, and what he is prepared to do in future, to see that his recommendation is accepted? because we have reason to believe that the Chief Constable treats the opinion of the Home Secretary with perfect contempt, and that, secured in his position by the Joint Committee by which he is appointed, he is prepared in the future as in the past to withhold sufficient protection from the persons who are engaged in the collection of tithes. That is the position, and I want to know if there is another assault on the bailiff, and the right hon. Gentleman again employs State money in order to carry out a Crown prosecution, what is he going to do with the Chief Constable? Will he withhold his certificate? If he says he will, then I shall be perfectly satisfied.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby): I should like to make one observation, and that is with respect to the authority and power of the Home Secretary over the local police. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham knows something about local administration. I should like to know what they would say in Birmingham if the Home Secretary were to communicate with the Chief Constable in Birmingham and tell him if he obeyed the orders of the Watch Committee and not the orders of the Home Secretary he would withhold his certificate? I think I know very well what the Watch Committee would say on that subject. But really I do not think it necessary to enter into further argument on the subject with the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, because last night he informed us that he is prepared to vote against any Supply being granted to the Government.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I rise to a point of Order, Mr. Mellor. Is the right hon. Gentleman justified in going into matters which occurred at previous Sittings?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I am not going to refer to it—

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I ask for your answer, Sir.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Chancellor of the Exchequer is quite in Order.

SIR W. HARCOURT: The hon. Gentleman opposite will, perhaps, not be so precipitate in future. But, Sir, I was going to say that when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham has adopted the principle of refusing all Supplies to Her Majesty's Government because he does not think them entitled to have any, really he might spare the House the trouble of listening to any other reasons for his votes, because the principles on which he acts are thoroughly well understood.

MR. GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN remarked that the Home Secretary appeared to be under the misapprehension that the bailiff was engaged at the time he was assaulted in making a forcible entry. That was not the case, because the man was assaulted in his carriage before he had time to get out. The Home Secretary said he was only assaulted on one occasion, but the bailiff said he was assaulted on five occasions. Why had he not been assaulted recently? Because of the intimidation and neglect to send a sufficient force there had been no attempt to collect the tithes, and that would be the mode of proceeding in future. He believed the majority of those elected to the Joint Committee by the County Council were members of, or interested in, Anti-Tithe Leagues, whose ostensible and avowed object was to prevent the payment of tithes, and who, therefore, connived at law-breaking in order to accomplish their object.

***THE CHAIRMAN** (interposing): The Home Secretary is not responsible for that. He is only responsible in the matter so far as he himself indicated—namely, in the advice he gave.

MR. GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN said, he thought it was a matter of some importance what advice the right hon. Gentleman gave to a County Council so constituted, and he contended there was

ample ground for refusing the Chief Constable's certificate.

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes 46 ; Noes 135.—(Division List, No. 295.)

Original Question again proposed.

MR. BRUNNER (Cheshire, North-wich) desired to know if the Factory Inspectors' assistants, who had been recently appointed, were under the same regulations as their superior officers, and one of whose rules required that they should not disclose trade secrets? The Factory Inspectors were men who could be thoroughly trusted in this matter. He would not insinuate for a moment that the smaller literary acquirements on the part of the Inspectors' assistants rendered them any less worthy of confidence than their superiors, but he wanted the assurance that they were bound by the same rules.

*MR. ASQUITH : With reference to the Inspectors' Assistants, they, like the Inspectors, are strictly forbidden by their instructions to reveal trade secrets. The Inspectors' Assistants, who are 15 in number, were appointed mainly for the purpose of assisting in the inspection of workshops rather than of factories ; and the great object was to provide by a more efficient and vigilant system of supervision against the evils of sweating, which prevail so largely in the workshops of our great cities. The number at present appointed is, I hope, only the first instalment, because, of course, it is obviously impossible that this work should be carried on over the whole country by 15 men, and the 15 men appointed this present year are exclusively stationed in London and Glasgow, and there is one in Ireland. They are put under the superintendence of Mr. Lakeman, one of our most efficient Inspectors, who has a considerable acquaintance with the industrial conditions of the Metropolis, and who has almost done more than any public servant in the past to provide for protection from, and the abolition of, sweating. The object being to obtain quickwitted and practical men who can go about amongst workshops in an informal way and make themselves acquainted with what is going on, it appeared to me a very much lower standard of educational qualification was required

in the case of these men than in the case of Her Majesty's Inspectors, and accordingly the scheme of examination they had to submit to is of an elementary kind. It comprises handwriting, spelling, and arithmetic, including fractions, and a general knowledge of the law relating to workshops as laid down in the Factory Act. Further, each candidate was required to write a simple report of a practical character on a given subject connected with workshops. By means of an examination of that simple kind, coupled, of course, with the testimonials I received from practical persons of the experience of each of these gentlemen, I believe I was able to select 15 thoroughly competent men. In future I intend still further to simplify the scheme of examination, as I am not satisfied that the particular requirements as to vulgar and decimal fractions may not possibly have excluded men, otherwise well-fitted for the purpose. I do not think you ought to make the literary part of the examination so important. We have carried the literary side of examinations for the public service to a ridiculous extent, particularly when dealing with men like Factory Inspectors—men as to whom what you really want is no doubt a certain kind of scientific equipment, but chiefly some practical knowledge and ability. I am strongly in favour, as far as possible, of reducing the literary side of the examination. They must be able to read and write and spell, and have sufficient facility of composition to be able to tell us in a simple, and perhaps homely, but intelligible way what they have seen. I do not think we ought to include much more than this in the examinations, and I think on this there will be a general agreement on both sides of the House. All these assistants are members of the Civil Service, and they will become entitled to pensions in the ordinary way and on the ordinary terms. As I pointed out to the hon. Member behind me, they will be forbidden to reveal trade secrets, and I need hardly add that the general rule of the Civil Service which forbids others to take an active part in political agitation will be rigidly enforced in the case of these men.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY : What is the age limit?

MR. ASQUITH : The age limit is between 21 and 38.

Mr. Griffith-Boscawen

*MR. M. AUSTIN (Limerick, W.) : Has the age not been extended to 40?

*MR. ASQUITH : Yes ; it has been extended to 40. I have received a report from Mr. Lakeman, who tells me that great good is being done, particularly in and around London, by their investigations. I was able some months ago to extend an order made by my predecessor, requiring certain trades to keep a list of out-workers—a very useful provision of the Factory Act. I have been able to extend that order to other branches of trade, and to take steps which, I believe, coupled with the appointment of these assistants, will prove very effective in putting down some of the worst forms of sweating. As the hon. Gentleman opposite probably knows, what the Act of Parliament enables the Home Secretary to do is to require the occupier of a factory or workshop to keep a list of all persons employed outside in carrying on his business. By first requiring the occupiers to keep these lists, then having them inspected by Her Majesty's Inspectors and sending the Assistants to visit the out-workers at the place of address given in the lists, we have been able to track to its home a great deal of the industrial sweating which now exists. I hope we may see a very considerable extension of these orders in the future. For the purpose of their being effectively carried out throughout the country, it will be absolutely necessary to increase the staff of Inspectors' Assistants; and if the Chancellor of the Exchequer promises to give me the requisite sum, I hope to be able to make this increase in the course of the next year. As to salaries they begin with the very modest figure of £100, rising by increments of £5 to £150. That is a very small sum, and I should be glad if I could make it larger. But small as it is it has enabled me to secure thoroughly competent and efficient men for the purpose, and on the whole I can report very favourably on the progress of the experiment. In no sense is it a Party question, and I trust on both sides of the House there will be a disposition to further the extension of the system in the future.

SIR J. GORST (Cambridge University) : I do not rise for the purpose of moving a reduction of the Secretary of State's salary, but I do so for the pur-

pose of inviting him to make a statement to the Committee upon what I venture to think is an extremely important question, that is the progress which is being made by the Executive Department of the Home Office in carrying out the provisions of the Factory Act of 1891—firstly, with reference to noxious trades ; and, secondly, with reference to sweating. The right hon. Gentleman has already made some statement as to the policy and progress of the Home Office in reference to sweating ; but I should like to have some further and fuller statements made. Now, I was extremely pleased to hear the Home Secretary say, in a little speech he made a few minutes ago, that he regarded these questions as not being of a Party character ; and I hope, at least in this House, they may be discussed as questions which are not Party questions. But it is very much to be regretted that the admirable sentiment which the Home Secretary expressed in this House as to the non-Party character of these social questions should not be observed by him out-of-doors, because I notice that out-of-doors no one is more given to confer a Party character upon these social questions than the Home Secretary himself ; and this very speech, upon which I am inviting him to make some explanation to the House, affords an instance of it. In January last I read, with great interest, an excellent speech made by the Home Secretary at Liverpool to the National Union of Liberal Associations—an opportunity which a Leader of a Party might have made use of to point out the non-Party character of these questions. But, instead of that, I am bound to say I read with pain that the Home Secretary practically invited those whom he was addressing to recognise him as the Executive authority who was very earnestly endeavouring to carry out the Factory Act of 1891, and reflecting upon his predecessor in Office, who had made the Act, as he then stated, practically a dead letter. I am perfectly ready to give to the Home Secretary every credit for being perfectly sincere, and honest, and energetic in carrying out these Acts in the interest of the local population, and especially the poorest and most distressed parts of the local population ; but I think we have a right to expect that a person in his high position and with his

great authority should give equal credit to his predecessor in Office, and I hope that hereafter he may give equal credit to his successor in Office. As to the exercise of powers under the Factory Act of 1891 with reference to noxious trades, the late Home Secretary was making inquiries with a view to putting the powers given by the Act into force, as no one knows better than the Home Secretary himself, although he did not tell his audience at Liverpool that that was the case. But, unfortunately, in January, 1892, the late Chief Inspector, Mr. Whympster—whilst he was at Manchester making inquiries into the manufacture of white lead, and preparing rules for that particular trade which is one of the most noxious and unhealthy carried on in the country—was seized with a serious illness which ultimately resulted in his death, and that was, no doubt, the reason why considerable delay had been occasioned in carrying out the provisions of the Act. But at Liverpool, in January last, the Home Secretary expressed his intention of acting in this matter with considerable vigour. I am informed that the whole matter as to the necessary rules in the white lead and chemical works was fully threshed out 12 months ago, and the only thing now wanting, and that has been wanting for some time, is action on the part of the Home Secretary. I am sorry to say that instead of giving that a Departmental Committee has been appointed—that universal refuge for persons who cannot make up their own minds, and who require some delay. That Departmental Committee has hung up all matters with regard to these works, and there is no expectation of any rules being made for an indefinite time to come. I hope the Home Secretary will be able to make some statement to the Committee which will show that within some reasonable time the powers given by the Act of 1891 will be really carried out—that rules will be made and promulgated, and that progress will be made in giving effect to such provision as Parliament made in 1891 for the protection of the workers in these particularly noxious and dangerous trades. I think the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary will agree with me that two years having now elapsed since the Act became law, it is high time that its

provisions should be, at least in some trades, enforced. Of course, all progress in legislation and in administration of this kind must be of a rather experimental character, but when you find that so long a period as two years elapses from the passing of an Act before the experimental carrying out of that Act by the Executive Government, it is not unreasonable to ask for some explanation of the delay, and some assurance that that delay will come to a prompt conclusion. So much for obnoxious trades. I should like now to ask the Home Secretary to make some further statement about the action of the Executive Government in regard to sweaters. I am sure the right hon. Gentleman must regret having stated at Liverpool that nothing had been done by his predecessor. He stated here to-day that the late Home Secretary had issued an order for lists of out-workers to be given, and that the present Government had extended that order, but in Liverpool, when addressing his political partisans, he said that the credit due to the present Government was on account of its superior administration, and he instanced, as an example, the order for the lists of out-workers, making no reference whatever to the order made by his predecessor, leaving it to be inferred that the Act had been treated by his predecessor practically as a dead letter. Well, I want to ask how is sweating actually going to be suppressed? The issue of lists of out-workers will not suppress sweating in the East of London, in Glasgow, and in Ireland, to which places this action is confined. What I want to ask the Home Secretary is whether he sees his way to any large and comprehensive policy for really suppressing sweating? I must say I have long thought that however costly the central office in London may be, you will never be able through the action of a central office to suppress sweating all over the multifarious industries of this great country. You never can really reach the sweater until you devise some method of local inspection as distinguished from centralised and Imperial inspection. I do not at all wish to undervalue the inspection of the Central Authority in London. It is desirable and necessary; but if you really mean your law to be carried into execution you will have to enlist the sympathy and assistance of

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particular localities. You cannot carry your law into execution unless you have Local Authorities—controlled by the people of the localities—with you, with officers of their own, to see that the law is obeyed. I do not quarrel with the Inspectors the right hon. Gentleman has appointed. As an experiment, I have nothing whatever to say to the arrangement. I have nothing but praise for it; but these Inspectors are confined to the small area of London and Glasgow. They cannot exercise any sort of influence or power over the whole Kingdom, but as an experiment I must praise it—unless, indeed, the right hon. Gentleman should think praise from me an impertinence. I was very pleased to hear the right hon. Gentleman say he had determined not to require literary attainments from the Inspectors. I agree with the right hon. Gentleman that we have driven the demand for literary attainments, and especially for spelling, to an almost absurd extent. There is no reason why competent people should not serve the State, though they may not have acquired all the elements of a liberal education, and may not on all occasions be able to spell correctly. But what I want particularly to ask is whether the Government have any policy as to extending the system of inspection by making it in a sense local. If the right hon. Gentleman says, “We have no policy in regard to local inspection, and intend to restrict ourselves entirely to inspection from head quarters,” we shall know where we are. Those of us who think that local inspection is essential for putting down sweating will be able to endeavour to ventilate our opinions in the country and to get the country to press on the Government the necessity of taking proper steps in this matter. I do not know whether the present would be a convenient opportunity for saying anything about the Inspectors themselves. Perhaps not; I had better reserve my observations about the staff and the arrangements for inspection to a later period. My object now is to get the right hon. Gentleman to make a more extended statement as to the progress being made in carrying out the Act of 1891, especially in regard to obnoxious trades, and also to give a full account of the policy Her Majesty’s Government intend to pursue in regard to the suppression of sweating.

SIR H. JAMES (Bury, Lancashire) said, that before any reply was given there were two subjects to which he desired briefly to call the attention of the Home Secretary. All these questions affecting factory legislation ought to be of great interest, especially to those who represented constituencies in which factories existed. There were two questions in which he took particular interest, and as to which he wished to have some information. In the first place he desired information with regard to the clause in the Factory Act of 1891 called the “particulars clause.” He believed it was the 24th clause. That clause came into existence by virtue of the demand made by the operatives. They asked that they should always have information as to the amount of wage they were entitled to receive, so that they might know how much at the end of the week or day they were entitled to obtain by way of recompense. It was very easy to make the demand, but it was very difficult to carry it out. It required great practical knowledge to know the exact amount of particulars which should be given to the operatives without the *employé* discovering the secrets of his trade. The late Home Secretary appointed one Inspector, a gentleman whom he was sure the present Home Secretary would agree was about the best fitted man that could be found for the post. He meant Mr. Birtwistle. This was the only Inspector employed, and he presumed that this gentleman’s task was an almost overwhelming one. He knew that inspection of the kind which was necessary under the clause he had named required peculiar practical knowledge and that inspectors like Mr. Birtwistle were not easy to find. But the Home Secretary had been good enough to give assistance to those who wished to extend the clause. He (Sir H. James) hoped that that clause would be extended not only to the particular trades or class of trade mentioned in Clause 24, but to almost every textile industry. He wished to know whether it was the intention of the Government to appoint additional Chief Inspectors or sub-Inspectors for the purpose of seeing that these particulars were duly given. There was a great difficulty in selecting sub-Inspectors. The whole requisite was confidence. They could not send an Inspector into the factory hostile to the employer, and they, therefore, would

have to find men who could almost act as judges between employer and employed. Then, with regard to the carrying out of the Cotton Clause of the Act of 1891, that Act was also founded on the demand made by the operatives, who complained, with the greatest possible reason, of the high temperature which existed in some cotton cloth factories. The temperature was taken for the purpose of sizing fabrics so as to put substance into shoddy materials, and the temperature was raised to such an extraordinary extent as to be dangerous to the health and very existence of the operatives. The disclosures made were perfectly frightful as to the effect in winter time on young men and women who had to pass into the cold air from the overheated sheds. He had received a great many communications in consequence of having had charge of the Bill, saying that there was a great deal yet to be done.

*MR. ASQUITH ; There is one Inspector to look into the subject the right hon. Gentleman refers to.

SIR H. JAMES : Yes, Mr. Osborne ; and I am aware of the ability and zeal he displays in carrying out the Act. Perhaps the Home Secretary, by the appointment of additional Sub-Inspectors, if necessary, would see that the provisions of that Act were fully carried out.

*SIR F. S. POWELL (Wigan) said that any legislation which would benefit the Lancashire operatives would receive the unanimous support of the Lancashire Members. As representing a manufacturing town in Lancashire himself, he could endorse what had fallen from the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury. With regard to the Report of the Committee on Inebriates, which the hon. Member for Sheffield had alluded to, he hoped the Government would not let the matter sleep, but would remove the difficulties which now interfered with the fulfilment of the hopes of those who felt strongly on this question. He complained that the Shop Hours Act had been to a great extent a dead letter, owing to insufficiency of inspection. The Reports of the Inspectors of Workshops and Factories and the number of visits they had paid under the Act was sufficient justification for legislation. A great deal might be done by giving publicity to these Acts. He believed many Acts affecting the industrial life of the

people remained totally unknown to many persons in whose interests they had been passed, and he was glad that the Government had taken some steps by means of the post offices to impart this information. They had arranged to distribute 30,000 notices in one case and 20,000 in another. When these notices were published and were read by the people in the post offices and the local newspapers there would be no room to complain that these Acts, at any rate, were unknown to those whom they affected. He observed that in France a most wholesome custom prevailed of publishing the Acts of Parliament passed for the benefit of the people with statements showing the benefit of the legislation. He did not know that in a country with a free Press like England it was desirable to adopt the French system, but the system was sound in itself, and he was glad to see that something approximating to it had been adopted by Her Majesty's Government in two instances. The next point to which he wished to refer was that of licences for overtime. The statements made by Inspectors on that subject were truly melancholy. In some instances persons of tender years were employed as improvers in clothing shops, and were kept at work 14 hours a day without wages. Could sweating assume a worse form ? These people in return for their labour were supposed to obtain skill in their trade, and the moment they became skilful and asked for wages they were discharged ; beginners, condemned to like labour, being taken in their places. He was glad that the Government were appointing women Inspectors, and he should be glad to know if they were considered by the Home Office to be a success. No doubt the advantages of their employment were clear and obvious ; but he felt some doubt whether women would be found to possess strength enough for their labours or to command sufficient technical knowledge in the exercise of their duties. With regard to the Reports of the Inspectors, they often had a very wide range. The Inspectors frequently went beyond their legitimate duty, dealing with the state of trade and questions of co-operation, technical education, and other subjects. Some years ago the Reports of the School Inspectors became dis-

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cursive, and the attention of those officials was invited to the failing; a request being made that they should devote their attention rather to the schools than to the state of society generally. He did not wish to discourage general observations, but he did think that where complaints were made that Inspectors were insufficient in number it was probable that there would not be so much room for objection if in Reports attention were more confined to the subjects in hand.

MR. HANBURY (Preston) said, that they were now discussing the most important Labour Department of the Government, and he was sorry to find that not one of the Labour Members was present.

*SIR C. DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): They are all at Belfast at the Trades Union Congress.

MR. HANBURY thought that the House of Commons was just as important as the Congress at Belfast. He urged that the Inspectors should not be taken from the matters with which they were specially competent to deal. To make Factory Inspectors deal with quarries was ridiculous. Such work ought to be done by the Inspectors of Mines. Some years ago the late Home Secretary issued a Circular against the practice of imposing heavy costs with small fines, but he was afraid that it was being disregarded. There was a tendency on the part of Magistrates' Clerks, who had, he believed, some pecuniary interest in the matter, to disregard the Circular.

MR. ASQUITH: Not as a rule.

MR. HANBURY said, that whether as a rule or not it was undoubtedly the fact, as one knew from one's own experience. In spite of the Government Circular, many Benchmen of Magistrates were glad to pile up heavy costs when the fine was only small. He had had during the past few weeks brought under his notice a case in which, where the fine was only 1d., the costs were 14s., and another case in which, where the fine was 5s., the costs were £2 2s.

*MR. M. AUSTIN (Limerick, W.) said, he hon. Member (Mr. Hanbury) had referred to the absence of the Labour Members; but he would remind the hon.

Member that there was at present holding its sittings in Belfast a Labour Parliament, not, perhaps, of a less important character than that honourable House. He wished to call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary to the disparity in the payment of Factory Inspectors. If quick-witted and intelligent workmen were needed as Inspectors they should be recompensed in the same degree as those appointed from another class. He thoroughly agreed with the right hon. Gentleman that some modification in the examination papers was necessary. Though they might appreciate a literary standard, still sound common sense and practical knowledge of the inner life of the workshop was far more desirable than mathematical problems in seeing that the provisions of the Workshops and Factory Acts were carried out. Then there was the question of female Inspectors. There had been only two female Inspectors appointed up to the present—one in London, and the other in Glasgow—although there were something like 100,000 female workers in the North of Ireland. Surely they were entitled to be looked after as much as female workers in Glasgow. He thought it necessary also to call attention to the want of Factory Inspectors in Ireland. There were only three such Inspectors at present in the country—two of them for the North, and one for the Midlands and South. In many portions of Ireland there were numerous small mills which were totally neglected as far as inspection was concerned; some months ago there was a deplorable accident in the South of Ireland owing to the want of inspection, the place not having been visited by an Inspector for years. He trusted that the Home Secretary would also take into consideration the desirability of recompensing the working men who were appointed as Inspectors in proportion to their ability.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping) said, he wished to call attention to a subject of an entirely non-political character—namely, inspection under the Cruelty to Animals Act of the 39 and 40 Vict., popularly called the Vivisection Act. His reason for doing so was that there was a very large increase in the

number of experiments which took place under the Act. This increase had made the outside public very anxious about the carrying out of the Act, and there was great eagerness to have the matter brought forward in order that in future the measure might be properly carried out. He had no intention or wish to enter upon the question of vivisection or anti-vivisection. His desire was to try to obtain the general support of the Committee. Anti-vivisectionists were very often accused of being sentimental; but he assured the Committee that there was a great deal more fact than sentiment at the bottom of their agitation. He was sure that no one could accuse the Home Secretary of being a sentimental man; but he (Colonel Lockwood) would be glad if the right hon. Gentleman would find some room for sentiment, of course subserviently to his official feelings. The United Kingdom bore a very high name for its humane treatment of animals; and this was, he believed, chiefly owing to the action of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Great Britain alone, of any country he was aware of, had interfered to prevent the needless infliction of cruelty on animals under the name of science. Previous to the passing of the Act he referred to, no person was allowed to ill-treat or torture any dumb animal, but that measure allowed the granting of licences and certificates both for painful and painless experiments. He wished to be guided in his remarks by the action of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. That Society was above suspicion on the question of accuracy of statement, and the evidence of its Secretary (Mr. Colam) before the Royal Commission on Vivisection was treated by the public with the greatest confidence. The Committee of the Society had called attention to the subject in their last two Reports, and had pointed out that the experimentation, which was 270 in 1881, grew to 2,661 in 1891, and to 3,960 in 1892. No one could accuse the Society of fanaticism on the subject of vivisection. Indeed, they had been found fault with by other Societies on the ground that they had not taken sufficient action on the question. The Committee reported in the following language:—

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“ Even if the enormously-increased experimentation sanctioned by the late Home Secretary had been followed by satisfactory inspection it might be contended that the Act had been properly administered, though even then with a prodigality of experiments. Your Committee have year after year, for the last 12 years, called attention to the fact that the Returns made by the experimenters have, in some instances, been the only means on which Her Majesty's Inspectors have been enabled to make their Reports instead of by personally witnessing operations. A few may have been personally inspected, but the majority of the experiments are reported to the Inspectors by the very persons whom the Inspectors are appointed to inspect. In Section 13 of the Act it is provided that the Inspectors shall visit the places registered for experiments for the purpose of complying with the provisions of the Act. Seeing that the provisions of the Act refer to the mode of experimentation, it will be obvious that the Legislature intended personal inspection. On a careful study of the present Return it is evident that the imperfect inspection has not been intelligibly improved, and still consists mainly of an examination of Returns only; but they are also constrained to give expression to a sense of painful anxiety arising out of the present Return, which in 10 years shows the enormous increase of 1,000 per cent. in the number of experiments.”

He begged the Committee to remember that this was not the Report of an Anti-Vivisection Committee, but the Report of the dispassionate men who formed the Committee of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Under no other system of inspection would it be allowed that the very individuals whom it was desired to keep under inspection should make their Reports unchecked to the House. An Inspector of Mines did not report on the Reports furnished to him by the owners or the workers in the mines, nor would an Inspector of Factories report on the *ipse dixit* of the owners or representatives of factories. He asks that the inspection under this Act should be as thorough, searching, and effective as were the other inspections carried out by Government officials. The system of inspection under certificate was arrived at as the result of a series of compromises under the Act of 1876. He believed the public were too greatly influenced by the Reports of the great medical authorities who were in favour of vivisection; and they, therefore, refuse to abolish it altogether; but they believed that the well-authenticated stories of some of the cruelties inflicted on dumb animals were too true, and the result was that the Government determined to put a stop to the un-

licensed practice of vivisection. By the passing of the Act it was proved that unnecessary cruelty had been practised on dumb animals. He did not wish to overstate his case. He believed that a good case had been greatly injured in the past by the use of statements which could not be proved, and he was extremely anxious to preserve as moderate a manner as he could under the circumstances. He might say, in passing, that he believed the British public, who were so humane in the treatment of animals, would see in time that vivisection was altogether anomalous, and would refuse to allow it to continue. The Government Inspectors were supposed to stand between the vivisectors and their subjects, the dumb animals, in order to insure what the Royal Commission declared to be the claims of the lower animals to humane consideration, vivisection being, in the opinion of the Commission, from its very nature, open to abuse. There were three Inspectors for the United Kingdom, one covering England as far North as Newcastle, one covering Scotland and England down to Newcastle, and the third covering Ireland. These gentlemen were not occupied solely and entirely with the inspection of the physiological laboratories, but had other work to do, and many of their statistics were obtained from hearsay. One medical gentleman went so far as to say that the whole inspection was an absolute farce. He (Colonel Lockwood) would not go so far as that, but he maintained that it was not sufficiently efficient. The first Inspector (Dr. Buss) showed his partiality by alluding to the agitation of the Anti-Vivisectionist Society as a senseless and mischievous one. That being so, he could hardly be called an impartial man on the subject. The next Inspector (Mr. Allison) was a well-known advocate of vivisection, and the present Inspector (Dr. Poore), who was, he believed, universally respected, held appointments at the University College Hospital, at which, in 1893, there were 16 vivisectionists at work. A gentleman who was constantly in association with 16 men engaged in the work of vivisection could hardly be regarded as perfectly impartial. The two British Inspectors had 69 places to visit in

England and Scotland, and he maintained that it was impossible for them to do the work properly. According to the last Report, they paid rather more than two visits, on the average, to each of these laboratories in the course of a year. He knew that several visits were paid to certain laboratories, and therefore he presumed that some of the laboratories were not visited at all. He believed the Home Secretary preserved a very equal mind on the subject, and thought he might ask him that for the future it should be stated in the Returns whether all the laboratories were visited. He hoped also that in the future, if possible, the names of the operations should be given, as well as the dates, and that it would further be stated whether the operations were going on at the time of the Inspector's visit. Further, he should like to know whether the visits were all surprise visits? Some time ago the Home Secretary stated that some of the visits were surprise visits; but he (Colonel Lockwood) desired that they all should be surprise visits. At the present moment, except so far as it prevented people without certificates practising vivisection, the Act was fallacious and misleading. He confessed that he himself was much exercised in his mind to find what an enormous increase had taken place in the experiments. In 10 years the returns had risen from 42 men licensed, 20 practising, and 406 experiments in 1882, to 180 men licensed, 125 practising, 55 stating on their own authority that they did not practise, and 3,960 experiments in 1892. In 1891 the experiments numbered 12,661, so that was an increase of nearly 1,300 in 12 months. He maintained that the supervision, as at present carried out, was absolutely inefficient. He might be told that a great number of these experiments were inoculation experiments, and were painless. *The Times* newspaper, which had never been very favourable to anti-vivisectionists, however, made the following remarks in a leading article on Dr. Klein's investigations for the discovery of the bacillus:—

“On rabbits the the results of inoculation were ‘altogether nugatory.’ Twelve monkeys were inoculated, and 11 of them remained unaffected. The 12th became the subject of pneumonia, and was killed by chloroform as

soon as its recovery seemed hopeless. The inflamed lung contained numerous influenza bacilli; but together with them were bacilli of another kind, and it was impossible to say which of them, if either, had produced the pneumonia. . . . So far, therefore, the only results of the investigation ordered by the Local Government Board are such as were foreseen. We have some statistics of very uncertain accuracy and of no particular applicability to the affairs of life. We have a bacillus previously discovered by others, and we are entitled to believe that it does not live long after having made its way into the current of the circulation. During the acute stage of influenza it is abundant in the living secretions, and it disappears as the disease subsides. Its characters are sufficiently distinctive, and it is not known in any other conditions. These results were hardly worth obtaining at the cost. We do not speak of the cost in money, which in all such matters might be properly disregarded by a wealthy nation. The real cost has been the skill and labour of trained observers, directed from worthy and useful purposes and applied in directions in which failure was a foregone conclusion."

This was an opinion which went to show that these experiments upon dumb animals were absolutely useless for the purpose for which they were undertaken. It was said that these experiments were beneficial. He believed that these experiments were not properly supervised, and that it was advisable and necessary that from time to time there should be a searching public examination into the working of the Act in order to guard against its abuse. At present the Act was carried out in a misleading and unsatisfactory manner, and that was unfortunate for the reason he had stated. He was occupying the House a little longer than he expected, but he was anxious to place the case before the Committee as clearly as possible, and hoped he should not go too far in asking the Home Secretary—not wishing to move a reduction, he left it for the present in his hands, and he wanted to ask him whether in future Inspectors under the Act could not be appointed by him in conjunction with the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and the Anti-Vivisectionist Societies? He saw that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Asquith) smiled; perhaps he would rather be content with going direct to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals? He should also like to ask whether the character of the experiments could not be stated in future Reports, and also how many visits

Colonel Lockwood

were paid by the Inspectors to each place; and, again, whether it could not be arranged that all the visits of the Inspectors should be surprise visits? He would also like to press upon the right hon. Gentleman that it was widely and strongly felt that the carrying out of painful experiments on dumb animals before bodies of students in order to demonstrate for their instruction facts already known was unnecessary cruelty and ought to be discontinued. He was grateful to the Committee for listening to him upon a subject in which he took the greatest interest, and which he believed was of the greatest interest to other Members, and to everybody who was satisfied that they are right in the position which they had taken up.

*MR. S. T. EVANS (Glamorgan, Mid) said, perhaps the Committee would allow him to occupy a few moments. He wished to draw the attention of the Home Secretary to the existing deficiency in the inspection of collieries, particularly in the South Wales district. He wished to see a larger number of Sub-Inspectors appointed, whose duty would be to go through the coal districts to see that the regulations of the Coal Mines Act were enforced. He found from the Report of Mr. Robson, the Inspector of the district, that there were no fewer than 366 mines in the South Wales district, and though it was one of the largest coal districts in the United Kingdom it had the smallest number of Inspectors attached to it. He did not make any complaint at all about the present Inspectors: they had too much work to do. The Chief Inspector had shown in his Report for 1892 that, while taking the average in all the coal districts of the United Kingdom there was only one fatal accident for every 816 persons employed, there was one such accident for every 506 persons employed in the South Wales district: and whereas there was only one death caused for every 676 persons employed on the average of the United Kingdom, there was one death for every 291 persons employed in South Wales; and he expressed the opinion that there was urgent necessity for the further adoption of measures calculated to increase the safety of the workmen, and that there

should be a more stringent enforcement of the Rules and Regulations in order to lead to a diminution of accidents and loss of life. The number of inspections was altogether insufficient. In 1892 there were only 341 underground inspections, and this did not amount to one inspection per annum for each colliery in the district. In these circumstances, he hoped the Home Secretary would be able to see his way to appoint a large number of Sub-Inspectors, and that when he did so he would select experienced men for the work from among the workmen themselves. Many such men could be found of great practical experience, who would command the confidence of the workmen, and see that the Act was carried out. He hoped this matter would be considered.

MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.) said, the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Hanbury) asked why the Labour Members were not in their place to deal with the Home Office Vote this year. Many of the Labour Members were absent, as they knew ; but, in addition to that, they had a state of affairs that never existed before. The Vote for the first time contained something like a concession of what they had for years been fighting for. Fifteen Assistant Inspectors were appointed and two female Inspectors, and he desired to thank the Home Secretary for what he had done in this direction. That was a good reason. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would carefully consider the question of the remuneration of these Inspectors. There remained, however, the question of examinations for these appointments. While the Labour Members agreed that there should be an examination in practical knowledge, they thought it should be of such a character as would meet the case of men whose lives had been spent in workshops, and whose opportunities for education had not been many. There would be 20 districts, as between these men and others. It would often happen that the man who had gone through a high-class literary education was the best man for this class of work, but the literary man was by no means always a capable man for the work. They wanted men who, from their practical knowledge of what was required of them, would find no difficulty in discharging the duties in

a satisfactory manner. The Member for Wigan (Sir F. S. Powell) spoke of Inspectors going out of their way in their Reports, and he made a comparison between School and Factory Inspectors. The Factory Inspectors made reference, it was said, to things that did not come before them. There was the case of Co-operation. It was a question upon which he (Mr. Rowlands) had a strong opinion ; and he believed that the Inspectors could make valuable representations upon the question as to distribution and production—questions which, in his opinion, were within their scope. For example, he thought that any information the Inspectors could give in reference to technical education in any industry was within the sphere of their duties. Any information on matters of that kind was bound to be useful. He had only again to thank the right hon. Gentleman for his attention to the business of this Department, and he hoped his further efforts would be equally beneficial in their results.

MR. WHITELEY (Stockport) said, he had listened to what had been said by one of the Irish Members regarding the supervision of Irish industries. As representing a manufacturing constituency, and as a manufacturer himself, he (Mr. Whiteley) was glad to see that there was an increased number of Inspectors in England. But he would impress upon the Home Secretary the necessity for a general overhauling of factories, and for insisting on a more stringent enforcement of the provisions of the Act by the Inspectors. Then there was the question of overtime. Many firms worked their *employés* overtime by starting their engines five or ten minutes before the hour in the morning, or running five or ten minutes late in the evening. The matter was, no doubt, a very difficult one for the Inspectors to tackle ; but he would ask that the attention of the new Inspectors should be specially directed to this question of running overtime. Then as regards the state of factories, he wished that the Inspectors should keep a factory register, and that they should visit factories as soon as the interval permitted by law for cleansing had elapsed. An important fact for consideration was that in some cases the Inspectors were really incompetent to

carry out the requirements of the Act in regard to the ventilation of factories. All these points showed conclusively that the present number of Inspectors was insufficient, and he was glad to hear that an increase was contemplated. An increase was necessary. He was glad to hear that matters were progressing in Ireland.

*MR. M. AUSTIN said, they would progress under Home Rule.

MR. WHITELEY said, it appeared from what they heard that the number of industries in Ireland was insignificant as compared with Great Britain. If it were the fact that factories were springing up in Ireland, and that an increase in the Inspectors was necessary, it disproved a favourite argument of the Prime Minister in another matter. He hoped there would be a more careful inspection of factories in the future. He thought there ought to be more working-men Inspectors appointed, men who were practically appointed with the conditions of employment in factories, and who had the welfare of the working classes at heart.

MR. W. ABRAHAM (Glamorgan, Rhondda) urged that there were not sufficient working-men Inspectors. He wished to call attention to what the Chief Inspector in Wales himself said when he gave evidence before the Labour Commission in 1890. He said that the inspections made were 323, a total falling short by 49 of the number of collieries in the district. Therefore, in that extremely dangerous district, the Chief Inspector himself had admitted that there were 49 collieries that were not inspected during the year. As to the nature of inspection, the Inspector said that in most cases several days were required to make a thorough examination; but he admitted that they had only been able to devote, on an average, three hours for the purposes of inspection and examination. The Chief Inspector further stated that he considered he had fulfilled his duty by satisfying himself generally that the managers were carrying out the provisions of the Mines Act. If, then, it came to this, that they were content with what the managers were doing, where was the need for inspection at all?

Mr. Whiteley

According to the same authority, about one-half of these examinations were made after the accidents had occurred. This was a grave admission. It meant that the collieries had no real inspection before the accidents. What was really required, if accidents were to be prevented and avoided, was that the Government should appoint a class of men with knowledge of the collieries, who could make a practical and thorough examination. He also thought a large staff could be employed in inspection at considerably less than what was now paid, though he did not complain of the present remuneration.

MR. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough) said, that there ought to be inspection of mines before fatal accidents as well as after. He wished particularly to call attention on this point to the Northern part of the Kingdom—a place called Scotland—to which the House had given little consideration. During a visit which he paid to that country a few months previously, he was asked by the miners themselves to represent to the Home Secretary their anxious desire that there should be inspection of mines before as well as after accidents. He had sent these views in writing to the Home Secretary, and he trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would give them his consideration. It was in the interest of the owners as well as of the men that mines should be inspected with a view to prevent accidents.

*SIR A. ROLLIT (Islington, S.) said, he desired to support the point raised by the hon. Member for West Limerick (Mr. M. Austin), in regard to the appointment of working men as Sub-Inspectors. The Home Secretary had taken that course in North London; and he thanked the right hon. Gentleman for making a new departure, which would do good to the State, and give satisfaction to those whose lives and health were dependent on the proper inspection of factories and workshops. He did not think that the remuneration in these cases was adequate. The commencing salary was £100 a year. Persons qualified for these Sub-Inspectorships were persons with a practical and thorough trade knowledge, and he must be a poor mechanic who could not earn more than the salary

attached to this office. Therefore, in respect to the salary, the Government had not set that good example as employers, of which the House had declared its expectation. The salaries were also very disproportionate to the salaries enjoyed by the Inspectors. Some of the Inspectors had sources of income three or four times more than the salaries given to the recently appointed Sub-Inspectors, though they rendered services in some respects as valuable as those rendered by the Inspectors. He recommended strongly that there should be a readjustment of this disproportion between the salaries of Inspectors and the salaries of Sub-Inspectors. Then, as to the examination, he thought it should not be of the searching character that members of other branches of the Civil Service were subjected to. He did not desire, in the least, to depreciate literary attainments; but it must be apparent to all that what was most required in the men who filled those positions was technical knowledge, for the attainment of which there were now special advantages in almost every part of the Kingdom.

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston) said, he also desired to express his satisfaction at the appointment of working-men Sub-Inspectors. No one should, in his view, be appointed to inspect a factory who had not a competent knowledge of the industry carried on in the factories and workshops he was required to inspect, and also with the general conditions under which those industries were carried on. The appointment of men of this character as Inspectors had been urged on the Government year after year by those who represented the industrial communities. It was about eight years ago that he formed part of a deputation that waited on the present Chancellor of the Exchequer who was Home Secretary at the time, and urged the appointment as Inspectors of men who had a practical acquaintance with the trades they had to inspect.

*MR. ASQUITH : Considering the multifarious duties of the office I hold, I cannot complain if the discussion on the Vote should be of a discursive character. I feel bound to acknowledge with gratitude the very considerate and kindly

tone which has marked the large majority of the criticisms of hon. Gentlemen. There were two main subjects discussed. One related to by far the most important department under the Home Office—always, of course, excepting the exercise of the prerogative of mercy—the department connected with factories and mines. But there have been one or two incidental criticisms which I propose to dispose of before I come to those important questions. First of all, the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Hanbury) referred to the Home Office Circular issued to Magistrates, calling the attention of their Courts to the provision of the Summary Jurisdiction Act of 1879, which enacts that where a fine does not exceed 5s. there shall be no costs unless expressly ordered, and suggesting that they should give a wider effect to that provision than they have hitherto done. The hon. Gentleman asks me what authority the Home Office has for making its wishes effective, and what means we possess of obtaining a knowledge of the actions of the Magistrates in those cases. I am sorry to say I cannot give a satisfactory answer to either of those questions. The Home Office has no direct authority in the matter at all, and the only way we can obtain a knowledge that this section has not been observed in Courts of Summary Jurisdiction is when the cases are brought before me for revision. I strongly deprecate the imposition of costs upon a defendant where the fine does not exceed 5s., except in very exceptional cases; and I make it an invariable practice to call the attention of Magistrates to the fact that, in imposing costs in such cases, they are violating, if not the letter, at least the spirit, of the Act. I am not, however, satisfied with the result, and I have it in contemplation to call for a Return from all Benches of Magistrates in the country of all cases during, say, a twelvemonth in which costs have been imposed where the fine does not exceed 5s.; and if the Returns show that the practice is widespread, I shall have to consider what steps may be necessary to make the provision of the Act mandatory instead of discretionary. The question of vivisection has been raised in a very temperate, and— if he will permit me to say it—very able speech by the hon. and gallant Member

for Epping (Colonel Lockwood). If any hon. Member thinks that experiments on live animals for scientific purposes ought to be prohibited, his first step must be to obtain the repeal of the Act of 1876, by which these experiments are made legal. I will not express an opinion one way or the other on the general question. All I have got to do is to administer the Act as I find it; and I may say that there is no part of my duty that gives me greater solicitude, or to which I pay, as time allows, more constant attention. In no case, I think, since I have been in the Home Office has a licence to experiment upon dogs, cats, monkeys, and the higher class of animals been granted without the matter having come before me personally, and receiving my individual attention. We take the most careful precautions that these licences shall not be granted, in the first instance, except to persons whose qualifications are undoubted, and as to whose *bona fides* and desire for scientific research alone no reasonable doubt could be entertained. Further, no licence is granted unless the applicant is recommended by eminent medical men, such as the Presidents of the Royal College of Physicians and the Royal College of Surgeons, and the application is then sent on for observations to the Society for the Propagation of Knowledge by Research. Until these preliminary recommendations are obtained, the application is not considered at all by the Home Office. If a licence is granted, the licensee is bound to make Reports to the Inspector, and he is always liable to visits from the Inspector, which are as often as not surprise visits. It is impossible, however, to lay down a rule that all visits must be surprise visits. The Inspector has often to arrange an inspection in order that he may see the various stages of the experiment. An additional security is afforded by the fact that none of these experiments are allowed to be conducted in private places; and, for the most part, they take place in the great Medical Schools and the laboratories of Pathological Institutes. The area in which the experiments are carried on is narrow. In the whole United Kingdom there are only 59 licensed places for these experiments, and as these 59 places are contained in 37 institutions, the

Mr. Asquith

Inspector has only 37 different places to visit. The hon. and gallant Gentleman asked me to appoint an Inspector in consultation with the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, or the Anti-Vivisection Societies. I am afraid that if I had to arrive at a conclusion with the Anti-Vivisection Societies, we should remain without any Inspector at all. The hon. and gallant Gentleman complains that the Inspector has not made a sufficient number of visits. The Act of Parliament requires that the registered places should be, from time to time, visited by the Inspectors; but it does not require that each experiment or any experiment should be witnessed by the Inspector, though I quite agree that the Inspector would not be discharging his duty properly if he did not make himself personally acquainted with the manner in which the experiments themselves are actually performed. Every licensed place is visited yearly, some of them three or four times a year; and the Inspector is in constant communication, by letter, with the licensees throughout the country, making suggestions and offering advice. We ought not, however, to look upon these scientific men as criminals, who are to be treated to constant surprise visits, and caught out in attempted infractions of the law. Only two or three cases have come under my notice in which the experiments violated the conditions of the licence. When that happens the most severe notice is taken of it, and unless a satisfactory explanation is forthcoming the renewal of the licence is refused. I do not think, therefore, that there is anything wrong in the method of inspection. If there has been an increase in the number of experiments, there has not been a corresponding increase in the amount of pain inflicted on animals during the last year. I would point out that the large increase in the number of experiments is almost entirely due to what is called inoculation. These are performed without anæsthetics, because they are perfectly painless; but it is a rigid condition of the certificate allowing these experiments that if pain supervenes after the experiment the animal is to be at once killed.

MR. LEES KNOWLES (Salford, W.): I might point out that the great increase is also due to experiments in

connection with the Royal Commission on Tuberculosis.

*MR. ASQUITH: That is so. I will only say, in conclusion, that the working of the Act is being very carefully watched. In regard to the inspection of mines, I admit that the South Wales collieries are the most dangerous in the country, and perhaps in the world, and they must demand and receive the anxious attention of all those who are responsible for them. I was glad to hear the tribute which has been paid the Mines Inspector. I do not believe there is a more efficient Inspector. My attention has been specially directed to the mines in South Wales, and the Inspector has drawn up special regulations for them. These are under the consideration of the Under Secretary and myself. I think a *prima facie* case has been made out in this district for additional inspection, and I hope during the Autumn to deal with the question and that of quarries, which by an extraordinary legislative freak have been treated, not as mines, but as workshops. It may become desirable to transfer them from the Factories to the Mines Acts. I will not forget Scotland in this matter. As to factory inspection, I think that the pay given to the Sub-Inspectors is adequate, especially taking into account the fact that they become permanent Civil servants, entitled to a pension. Their pay is fixed at £2, rising to £3 per week. In the direction of noxious trades, I have at least done as much as any of my predecessors in Office. The Commission on the white and other lead trade has visited almost every factory in the country, and has taken a large mass of evidence, both as to the magnitude of the evil, and, what is even more to the point, as to the possible remedy. I strongly believe in the work of such Departmental Committees, and I have appointed them in four of the most dangerous trades—namely, lead, potteries, chemicals, and quarries. My attention has been called to the condition of the linen-workers in Belfast, who are mostly women and children, and I sent over a competent man to inquire. His Report, which goes to the very root of the evil, shows that there is a very large mortality from phthisis, owing to the excessive humidity and high temperature

under which the work is carried on, as well as to the quantity of dust generated in the process of manufacture. Rules have been framed and submitted to the manufacturers, and the result, it is confidently anticipated, will be largely to reduce the rate of mortality in Belfast. As to sweating, I believe that any orders would have been but waste paper had it not been for the Inspectors' Assistants, whose appointments have led to valuable results. I think, therefore, that this system should be extended to other parts of the country. I do not share the very sanguine views expressed as to the results that would flow from making inspection local rather than central. I think no change has been found more necessary than that of the appointment of women Inspectors, of whom I have, as yet, only been able to appoint two. I hope, however, to increase the number. I am quite sure that the present women Inspectors have more than justified their appointments. Abuses have been found to exist in large West End establishments, and a large number of prosecutions and convictions have followed during the six months since the appointments were made. This has resulted in the law being better observed. As to the remarks of the right hon. Member for Bury with reference to the Particulars Clause of the Act of 1891, I can only say that if it is found necessary to appoint additional Inspectors I will see that it is done. The question of overtime occupies a rather peculiar position. Under the Act of 1878 there are some employments in relation to which there is a statutory right to work overtime, and in the case of other employments the Home Secretary has the power to relax the restrictions of the law. I am very careful in granting this relaxation, and only do so in cases where strong reasons are given in favour of it. Important changes in matters of this kind so closely affecting trade cannot be made without very careful consideration. I trust the Committee will now pass this Vote.

MR. A. C. MORTON asked the right hon. Gentleman whether it was not a fact that three of the Factory Inspectors were pluralists—officers who had retired from the Army or Navy and were in receipt of pensions?

*MR. ASQUITH said, he believed the statement of the hon. Member was correct, but he certainly did not think that previous service in the Army or Navy should be regarded as a disqualification for the office of Factory Inspector.

CAPTAIN NAYLOR - LEYLAND (Colchester) pointed out that, although the staff of Inspectors under the Factory Acts had been increased by 27 during the last year, there were still only 86 Inspectors for the whole country, and he contended that this number was wholly insufficient to fully and effectively carry out the provisions of the Factory Acts. He thought also that greater power should be given to the Inspectors to enable them to deal more directly and promptly with insanitary workshops. If the premises happened to be a dwelling-house the Factory Inspector could not enter them without a warrant, and the result was that in 99 cases out of 100 warrants were never applied for, and sweating went on just the same. He should like to have a Report as to how this wonderful reform was working at the present time. He should like to see all matters appertaining to factories and the appointment of Factory Inspectors transferred to a responsible Minister of Labour. Whilst the law was extremely good, it was not enforced in many cases; and it was, in fact, perfectly useless to enforce it without an adequate number of Inspectors, the present staff being wholly inadequate for the purpose of carrying out a thorough system of inspection of factories and workshops. The Commission on the subject of Sweating, in their Report published in 1892, were of opinion that workshops, including under that description a factory, workshop, or domestic workshop, should be required to be kept in a cleanly state, and should be treated for sanitary purposes as factories were treated under the Factory Acts. By the Act, at present, this was purely a matter of administration on the part of the right hon. Gentleman; and from that day to this not a single thing had been done towards carrying out that important recommendation. The Commission also recommended an increase in the number of Inspectors, who, they thought, should have the power to enter all workshops within their jurisdiction at reasonable times without a warrant—that was to

say, that where a workshop was also a dwelling-house they should be allowed to enter it without a warrant. There were many other recommendations of a similar character, and he wished to impress upon the Home Secretary that it was false economy to endeavour to enforce the law with such an inadequate staff of Inspectors, and instead of 15 extra they wanted a very much larger number. He was willing to believe the Home Secretary himself was, possibly, extremely anxious to carry out these reforms, but his position was that of a number of gentlemen on the Treasury Bench—"Heaven save me from my friends," and Heaven save him in particular from the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, unfortunately for the factories of the country, was reclining in ease and opulence on the flesh pots of the Treasury; he had got a tight hold of the money bags of the State; and for no purpose, not even for the purposes of the working classes of this country, would he relax his grip. He would appeal to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to dole out a little sum to enable the Home Secretary to increase the Factory Inspectors, the present number being absolutely insufficient for the work they had to perform.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said, that after the very full and satisfactory discussion on this Vote, and the very fair and candid statement of the Home Secretary, he thought the Committee would feel the time had arrived when the Government should have the Vote. He only desired to say that he was not going to press the reduction he had on the Paper. It was a reduction of the salary of the Private Secretary to the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary, and he put it down with a number of other similar reductions in the case of pluralists. This gentleman was a Clerk in the House; he was Private Secretary to the right hon. Gentleman; and he was also Gentleman Usher at the Court; and there did, therefore, seem to be a reason why his case should be carefully considered. He did not propose, however, to enter into the case that day, because he had not yet got the full list of pluralists which he intended to deal with generally, from top to

bottom, when he got it; and as he was not in possession of this list he felt it would be invidious if he dealt with this particular case.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Resolution to be reported.

*SIR R. TEMPLE (Surrey, Kingston) said, he believed that upon this Vote it was open to any private Member to challenge the general policy of the Foreign Department. If he were in Order, he wished now to challenge the policy of the Government in reference to the burning, or rather the blazing, question of Siam. The hon. Baronet the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs would not, he was sure, think he had put this challenge in any unfriendly spirit. He was hopeful that his challenge might lead to a satisfactory answer. He could assure the Government that an answer was expected from them by public opinion in all well-informed circles in this country; that they were, in a certain sense, on their own defence at the bar of the national sentiment; and that the *onus probandi* rested upon them at this moment to show that they had done all that duty required for the just interests of England. He earnestly hoped that they would be able satisfactorily to discharge that onerous task. They had had, as yet, no Papers laid upon the Table upon the question; and, therefore, they were at some disadvantage in respect to interpellations. Several of them had put questions to Ministers at various dates, and though they had received official answers, he must be pardoned if he said that these answers were never quite so explicit as to be satisfactory. They were afraid always that behind these answers, which appeared so full at first sight, there might lurk some danger. Public opinion was greatly exercised at the declaration they understood to have been made at the outset by the Government, that England had no interest in the quarrel between Siam and France. Had this been merely a matter relating to boundaries, or to some local question, they admitted that England would not have a share in that quarrel. But the quarrel assumed far larger proportions, and affected the very safety, honour, the independence and integrity of Siam.

When they came to a quarrel which extended to the cession of a territory, perhaps 100,000 square miles, which comprised the occupation of districts, the employment of naval forces, and menaces of a most formidable kind to the capital of Siam, that was a quarrel of the largest dimensions. It might be a vital quarrel, and he contended that our interest was immense, and that it was a most unfortunate thing if any such declaration was ever made by the Government which would make Siam think that England would not stand by her, but would almost cast her to the wolves. He was sure it was no exaggeration to say that Siam was led to fear she would be thrown to the wolves. It was a most unfortunate declaration. He knew not how far exactly it was made; but if the hon. Baronet could assure him he was labouring under an utter misapprehension, no one would be more thankful than he (Sir R. Temple). He contended that Siam was led to apprehend something of that kind, and in consequence of that declaration she yielded to the ultimatum of France. With regard to the integrity and independence of Siam, the House would recollect that originally they had the comforting assurance from the hon. Baronet that the French Government declared themselves just as anxious as we were to preserve the integrity and independence of Siam. But that integrity and independence were menaced in the most critical manner. The hon. Members then repeated their questions in this House as to whether the French adhered to their assurance as regarded the independence and integrity of Siam, and he understood the hon. Baronet to say that in general terms the French did adhere to that declaration; but that they put their own interpretation upon the meaning of this integrity and independence. The French were as much entitled as we were to put their interpretation upon these very vital and important words; but the question, however, was what construction the English Government applied to these words. What he apprehended was, that France had been allowed to interpret the words in their own way, and that England had acquiesced in that very dangerous interpretation. He submitted that it was the duty of Ministers to put

the English view into juxtaposition with the French view. In the next place, when this matter was last before the Committee he raised certain questions which he must be pardoned for saying were not answered, the hon. Baronet devoting his attention to the speech of the hon. Member for Southport, whose questions were rather more sharply defined. That must be his excuse for briefly recapitulating these questions now, which either ought to be answered, or England ought to know the reason why they were not answered. The River Mekong was the *fons et origo* of all the trouble. The proposal of Siam was that the cession to France should end at the southern corner of the bend in the river. The French contention was that it should end at the upper corner of the bend at Luang-Prabang. The consequence would be that the whole of this bend—a great stretch of country containing tens of thousands of square miles—would go by the board to France, and would enable France to have the weight of territorial influence right into the very heart of the Kingdom of Siam. Supposing we had to acquiesce, or that Siam had to agree that the cession should go as far as Luang-Prabang on the north-east of the bend, he wanted to know whether the whole of the territory inside the bend was to be given to France or not, or was a straight line to be drawn by means of negotiation or delimitation from the south to the north end of the bend? If such a delimitation could be secured he admitted that, after all the diplomatic disasters that had happened, this would be something of a retrieval for this country, and it would be greatly to the credit of the Foreign Office if, even at the eleventh hour, they could secure something of this kind. He would ask whether, in the negotiations, this territory inside the bend was to be ceded to France or not? Of course, if the hon. Baronet said that negotiations were still going on, and that it would be prejudicial to answer, he must accept such a reply; but he could assure the Under Secretary that the British interests in that part were directing close attention to this important point. He understood that somewhere about the 21st degree of North latitude there was to be a neutral zone—somewhere between Luang-Prabang and

Sir R. Temple

the British Protectorate or British protected territory. He desired to know whether the negotiations were going on satisfactorily in reference to this neutral zone, and he would also like to know what was to become of Luang-Prabang itself? He apprehended that half of it would go bodily to France; and that the other half would be somewhere inside Siamese territory, or perhaps in the neutral zone. Further, the French had made the monstrous claim that for some distance along the right bank of the Mekong River there should be no Siamese troops; thus the right bank, or the portion that was spared, would remain absolutely under French control, so that the whole river on both banks would be under the French command. That was a cruel expansion of the original claim. Was it not enough to take the whole of the left bank for some comparatively trifling offences which Siam had committed—if they were offences at all—but that, in addition, they must alienate from Siam all that bank which still nominally belonged to the Siamese? They were entitled to know whether this article was included in the ultimatum, and whether it had been accepted?

It being half-past Five of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his report to the House.

Resolution to be reported To-morrow; Committee also report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

SUPPLY—REPORT.

Resolution [5th September] reported.

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS, 1893-4.

CLASS I.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH, (Bristol, W.) said, he understood that they would have a statement as to Business. When might they expect it?

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. MARJORIBANKS, Berwickshire) said, the Chancellor of the Exchequer would make a statement to-morrow. He might add that Vote for salaries and expenses of the officials of the House of Lords would be postponed till then.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) inquired whether the Vote could not be postponed until Monday?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said, on a point of Order, he would like to know whether they could postpone a matter of this kind on Report?

*MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes.

Resolutions read a second time.

Res. 1. "That a sum, not exceeding £142,176, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894, for the Erection, Repairs, and Maintenance of Public Buildings in Ireland, for the Maintenance of certain Parks and Public Works, and for Drainage Works on the Rivers Shannon and Suck."

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.) said, he would like to draw attention to the necessity for providing the Suck Drainage Board with the necessary funds to complete the works. He had been informed by The O'Connor Don, a Member of the Board and a former Member of the House, that the works could be completed in November if the money was provided, and he hoped the Secretary to the Treasury would see his way to provide the money.

*THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Sir J. T. HIBBERT, Oldham): said, he was in entire agreement with the hon. and gallant Gentleman on this question. According to his information, it was probable the money would be found for carrying on the works; but he was not prepared at the present moment to say how it would be found, and he hoped the hon. Member would not press him on the point.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, for his part, this being a question he wished to raise, he was prepared to accept the statement of the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.) said, he wished to ask what had been done with regard to the Shannon Drainage Works. Had the Board of Works' scheme been approved by the Treasury?

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: Yes.

*MR. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough) said, the hon. and gallant Colonel (Colonel Nolan) wanted to get more money.

COLONEL NOLAN: Not exactly.

*MR. A. C. MORTON said, if there were money to spare he thought they should have some of it for Peterborough.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, the money referred to by the hon. Member was obtained under Act of Parliament.

*MR. A. C. MORTON said, it was the duty of the Government to pass an Act of Parliament.

MR. JACKSON (Leeds, N.) said, he wished to ask a question about Arklow Pier. It would be in the recollection of the House, when the pier was about to be constructed, that the estimated amount was £7,000, half of which was to be provided by the Government and the other half by the Local Authority. The work was going on, and he did not know whether the work had been completed, or whether the whole sum had been voted. With regard to the Suck Drainage Works, was he to understand from the Secretary to the Treasury that if the money was required means would be found for saving the landlords and the Local Authority from the very large loss of interest which they would otherwise suffer, because he understood that the interest was falling due at the rate of £5,000 a year? But, so far as that was concerned, he understood the money would be found, so that the difficulties might be considered at an end.

*SIR A. ROLLIT (Islington, S.) said, he was anxious to know what conclusion had been arrived at with regard to running the Baltimore Railway to the water side? It was a matter of great moment to the fishing industry in Ireland.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: This is a different Vote.

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, in reply to the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Jackson), it was expected that the work at Arklow would be completed this year, and that the money would be sufficient.

MR. JACKSON: And all the money would be expended?

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: Yes.

Resolution agreed to.

SIR A. ROLLIT said, his question had not been answered.

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT was understood to say he had dealt with the matter at a previous period in the Debate.

Res. 2. "That a sum, not exceeding £8,676, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894, for Payments under 'The Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act, 1883,' and 'The Light Railways (Ireland) Act, 1889.'"

SIR T. ESMONDE (Kerry, W.) said, he wished to know whether any action had been taken in regard to the inquiry into the Tralee and Dingle Railway accident? The matter was one of a good deal of importance to his constituents. It was now three weeks since the interview on the matter had taken place with the Secretary to the Treasury, and he wished to know what the Government intended to do?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Is not this the very question you ruled out of Order last night? [*Cries of "Order!"*]

*MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: My ruling last night related to the management of the railway, and that question is out of Order on this Vote.

MR. SEXTON (Kerry, N.): May I point out that what my hon. Friend is asking is as to what steps the Treasury have taken or are about to take upon the statement made by the Secretary to the Treasury, that an inquiry would be instituted?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I ask you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, whether this matter is not out of Order? I submit that the principle is the same as the question raised last night, and which was ruled out of Order?

*MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I think the hon. Baronet is out of Order.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, he would just say, in reply to the hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir A. Rollit), in the matter of the Baltimore Railway, there were at present no funds available for the completion of this railway to the water-side. The work was not included in the Railway Vote, and unless funds could be obtained from the Congested Districts Board, who had money at their disposal, he did not see how this small portion of the line could be completed.

*SIR A. ROLLIT: Will the right hon. Gentleman bring the matter under the notice of the Congested Districts Board?

SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, he would do this.

MR. SEXTON: I wish, Sir, to ask the Secretary to the Treasury with regard to the charge to the Treasury of £2,400 included in this Vote for the Tralee and Dingle Railway—

MR. MACARTNEY: I rise to Order — [*Cries of "Order!" and "Chair!"*]

MR. SEXTON: I am perfectly in Order, and I submit that, notwithstanding the great intellectual powers of the hon. Member (Mr. Macartney), he is unable to say what I am about to ask until I have asked it.

MR. MACARTNEY again arose amid cries of "Order!"

*MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order! Mr. Sexton.

MR. SEXTON: What I wish to ask is, do the Treasury propose to take any steps to alter the incidence in regard to this sum of £2,400 in respect of the guarantee of this line?

MR. MACARTNEY: That was the very point I was wishing to raise last night, when I was asked to sit down— [*Cries of "Order!"*]

*MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: If the point is that which was raised last night it is clearly out of Order.

MR. SEXTON: Is it out of Order to ask, in regard to a charge of £2,400 to the Treasury actually included in the Vote, whether the Treasury propose to make any arrangements to alter the incidence of that charge?

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I submit that the hon. Member for North Kerry is endeavouring to evade your ruling of last night.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: May I suggest to the hon. Gentleman that if he will put the question down on the Paper for to-morrow I will endeavour to answer it?

Resolution agreed to.

CLASS II.

Res. 3. "That a sum, not exceeding £22,595, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come

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in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Offices of the House of Lords."

Resolution postponed.

Res. 4. "That a sum, not exceeding £33,223, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894, for the Salaries and Expenses in the Offices of the House of Commons."

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

Mr. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston) said, he would ask that this Vote should be postponed, for the purpose of obtaining fuller information than was given last night. The promise made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer was not clearly understood by Members of the House, and they should have a fuller statement. He was prepared to move the Adjournment of the Debate in order that they might have a more definite statement.

Sir J. T. HIBBERT said, he could not agree to any postponement of this Vote, as it was included in the Ways and Means Bill, which must be introduced this evening. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had, he thought, given a very fair answer last night, having offered to confer with the Chairman of the Kitchen Committee.

Mr. ANSTRUTHER (St. Andrew's, &c.) said, he was sorry the right hon. Gentleman was not able to assent to the suggestion of the hon. Member (Mr. Cremer). But he hoped, at any rate, the matter would be made clear. As he understood it, the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be willing to confer with the Kitchen Committee on the question of accommodation. But the hon. Member for Croydon (Mr. S. Herbert), as Chairman of the Committee, made a request for an extra sum to meet the necessities of the case. They would like to know whether it was intended that this sum should be granted to meet the views of the Chairman of the Committee? They should have a little more definite information. They should know whether, whatever sum might be granted, it was to go to structural alterations, or, if not, what the money was to be applied to?

Mr. MARJORIBANKS said, the Chancellor of the Exchequer distinctly stated that he was not prepared, upon the present Vote, to go into the question of structural alterations in the Kitchen and Dining Room. He said he would confer with the Chairman of the Committee as to granting of an extra sum of money, which he said he would be personally anxious to see granted, and he thought it was understood that the money so granted would go to an improvement in the waiting staff and kindred matters.

*Mr. A. C. MORTON said, he might further object to grants, but he did not object to structural alterations. The question was not altogether as to the accommodation for Members, but also as to the accommodation for servants. What was wanted was that the Government would promise to consider the question of structural alterations, so that both Members and servants could have proper facilities. He did not rise to continue the discussion now, but he begged to move the adjournment of the Debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—*(Mr. A. C. Morton.)*

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR hoped the hon. Member would not press the Motion. They always recognised the reasonable nature of his views; but this matter had been discussed at considerable length. He thought the House should be satisfied with what had been said by the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

An hon. MEMBER said, he hoped the Government would arrange reasonable hours for the sittings, and so avoid the necessity of their dining in the House of Commons.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL said, it was perfectly well-known that, while complaining of sweating outside, they were sweating the people in the Kitchen downstairs, and that in a worse way than anything that existed outside. They should look after their own House before troubling with outsiders' houses, for theirs was much worse.

Mr. R. G. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.) said, it would be for the benefit of the Members if they had better accommodation in the Kitchen and Dining Room. They should adjourn the question for consideration.

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, he would point out the uselessness of adjourning the question. If they succeeded in discussing the matter on this Vote, as some hon. Members wished, they would be unable to deal with the matter of structural alterations.

*MR. S. HERBERT (Croydon) said, he was sorry the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir W. Harcourt) was not present. He said that the right hon. Gentleman's reply last night was somewhat sympathetic, for half a loaf was better than no bread. The question now raised was one of accommodation, and he thought it was clear that they were unable to give accommodation to all the Members who wished to dine unless they got better facilities both as to space and as to service. What the Chancellor of the Exchequer had said went some way to meet their views, and his statement had been endorsed by the Secretary to the Treasury or the Patronage Secretary. He should like to have had a more definite statement from the Chancellor of the Exchequer; but as the right hon. Gentleman was not now present, he would press the Secretary to the Treasury to go a little further and say something more definite. They (the Kitchen Committee) had to make arrangements for the future, and it was but fair that they should know exactly how they would stand. He hoped, in the circumstances, the right hon. Gentleman (Sir J. T. Hibbert) would not press the Vote through to-night.

MR. MARJORIBANKS said, he would point out that, under the Resolution recently passed, no dilatory Motion was permissible unless proposed by a Minister of the Crown.

*MR. A. C. MORTON: Mr. Deputy Speaker, were not Wednesdays excluded?

*MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order! I had not the terms of the Resolution before me when I accepted the Motion for Adjournment to be discussed. The Motion of the hon. Member for Peterborough is clearly out of Order. It refers to a matter of Government Business.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall) said, he objected to the attitude of the Government on this question—[*Cries of "Time!"*] He was not going to occupy the time of the House—[*Renewed cries of "Time!"*]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, he merely wished to enter his objection to the attitude of the Government in refusing to adjourn this matter. He thought there was reasonable ground for complaint in the absence of a definite statement.

MR. ANSTRUTHER wished to know, on a point of Order, whether the Question of Adjournment could be out of Order, since the Motion for Adjournment had been put from the Chair?

*MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I proposed the Question from the Chair, but did not put it to the House.

MR. ANSTRUTHER said, with great respect, he would ask what question were they discussing—the Report of the Vote or the Question proposed from the Chair? [*Cries of "Order!"*]

The following is the Entry in the Votes:—

Notice taken, That the Motion for the Adjournment of the Debate, not being moved by a Minister of the Crown, was contrary to the Order of the House of the 4th instant, and thereupon Mr. Deputy Speaker again proposed the Question, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

Question put, and agreed to.

Res. 5. "£52,458, to complete sum for Salaries and Expenses of Her Majesty's Treasury and Subordinate Departments."

Resolution agreed to.

Postponed Resolution to be taken into consideration To-morrow.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Resolution [5th September], reported;

"That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894, the sum of £11,856,191 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom."

Resolution read a second time and amended by leaving out "£11,856,191," and inserting "£11,833,596."

Resolution, as amended, agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Mellor, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Sir John Hibbert.

Bill presented, and read first time.

And, it being after Six of the clock, Mr. Deputy Speaker adjourned the House without Question put.

House adjourned at ten minutes after Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 7th September 1893.

Several Lords—Took the Oath.

SAT FIRST.

The Marquess of Normanby, after the death of his father.

GOVERNORSHIP OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF ONSLOW asked the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for the Colonies (having given him private notice of the question) whether it was the intention of Her Majesty's Government to agree to the proposition which it was understood had been made by the Colony of South Australia, to the effect that no successor to the present Governor, the Earl of Kintore, should be appointed, but that the functions should be discharged by the Chief Justice of the Colony?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (The Marquess of Ripon): My noble Friend the Earl of Kintore, has, I am glad to say, consented to prolong his stay in South Australia. Some time ago I heard, to my surprise, that the Earl of Kintore thought his term of office was only five years, whereas, as the noble Earl knows, the office of Colonial Governor is held for six years. When I heard that I have communicated with my noble Friend, representing to him the strong desire of myself and the Government that he should remain the full term of six years, and assuring him of the confidence of Her Majesty's Government and of their recognition of the ability with which he has discharged his duties. I am happy to say that at considerable personal inconvenience the Earl of Kintore has consented to remain until the expiration of his full period of six years, and, in these circumstances, therefore, the proposition of the Government of the Colony falls to the ground.

VOL. XVII. [FOURTH SERIES.]

GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND BILL.

(No. 265.)

Order of the Day for resuming the Debate on the Amendment to the Motion for the Second Reading, read.

Debate resumed accordingly.

*THE EARL OF SELBORNE: My Lords, in the observations which I mean to address to your Lordships on this occasion I shall endeavour to keep in mind that we are now concerned with the principles, and not with what may properly be called the details of this measure. But in this case the principles are very large and very far-reaching, and it might be possible sometimes in dealing with such a Bill as this to make a confusion between matters of principle and matters of detail. All I can say is that I will try to avoid this. The first observation which I think it right to make is that the title and the Preamble of this Bill are essentially misleading. The title is "An Act to Amend the Provision for the Government of Ireland." The Preamble is that

"It is expedient that, without impairing or restricting the supreme authority of Parliament, an Irish Legislature should be created for such purposes in Ireland as in this Act mentioned."

It might be thought that we were dealing with a question of which the purview was confined to Ireland. That is very far from the case. The real nature of this Bill is to establish a brand-new Constitution of a kind for which no precedent is to be found in the history of this country, in the history of any of its Colonies, or, I believe, in the history of the world, not for Ireland only, but for both branches of the United Kingdom, on this side of St. George's Channel as well as upon the other. Nothing can be more puerile or more futile than to speak as if anyone could reasonably vote for the Second Reading of this Bill, as simply affirming some abstract notion or principle of giving some form or other of Local Government to Ireland, whether to a greater or less extent. When you have a new Constitution put before you, you should look round it and ascertain the true character and bearings of that Constitution, and examine everything which throws light on that question. I will first address myself

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An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

to the question, what would be the effect of this Bill upon the Union between Great Britain and Ireland? Your Lordships will see delicate phrases employed, and the words "United Kingdom" occur not infrequently; but what is the United Kingdom which would be left if this Bill were passed? Let us look at both sides. In Ireland there will be, I will not say a new Queen, but our Queen in a new position and new capacity, as the head of a new and different system of Government from that of which she has been the head before—and a new Parliament—not, indeed, called by that name in the Bill. That is one of the disguises which we may perceive here; but if I may venture to prophesy—I will prophesy as little as I can—but I do prophesy, that when this scheme comes into operation, if ever it does, the form and style of the Acts of the new Legislature will run in this fashion—"Be it enacted by the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, with the assent and consent of the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly of Ireland in Parliament assembled." There is not a word in the Bill to prevent it—there is every possible motive for doing it, and I am so bold as to prophesy that it would certainly be done. Well, after all, that may be matter of name and of form; but it would correctly represent the substance, and the distinctions of phraseology affected by the Bill make no difference in the substance of that which this Bill creates—a new Parliament of Ireland consisting of two Legislative Chambers, an imitation in form of this Legislature, of which your Lordships are part. Then there is to be an Irish Ministry, and all the Executive government in Ireland is to be handed over to that Ministry. What is left of the existing Union after that arrangement, except rags and tatters, to cloak the wrong which the provisions of the Bill would inflict on Great Britain? Well, my Lords, I will take first the effect of the provisions of this Bill, if it should be passed into law, upon Great Britain. In the new scheme there are to be 80 Irish Members in the British Parliament. That scheme in its working form in the Bill was, if, I am rightly informed, never discussed or considered, never resolved upon by any deliberate vote in the other House of Parliament. The Schedule which contains it is

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among those parts of the Bill which were excluded from all debate and all consideration. What is the scheme? There are to be 80 Irish Members sent to the British Parliament, one or more of them from every Irish county or borough, even, as was noticed by my noble Friend Lord Camperdown last night, from Galway, Kilkenny, and Newry, not one of which three boroughs has as many as 2,000 electors. But the University of Dublin is struck out, I may safely say the most intelligent of all the Irish constituencies, and the best qualified to contribute wisdom and instruction to the deliberations of the British Parliament. Why is it left out? Is it from a preconceived opinion that Universities ought not to be represented in Parliament, and that an opportunity may be found in this Bill to put in the thin end of the wedge for that purpose? I should have suspected that, but for the fact that the University of Dublin is to have a place in the new Irish Legislative Assembly, where its wisdom perhaps may not be as fully appreciated as it has usually been in this country. Well, but I have not done with the scheme; because, though I do not attribute great importance to any details of the Bill in comparison with its principles, yet they throw some degree of light on the animus with which this part of the Bill has been conceived. What is the manner in which these 80 Representatives are to be chosen? At present every county in Ireland is so divided, that each elector has only one vote for one division, however many Members the county in the aggregate may return. That system of distribution was deliberately established, both for this country and for Ireland, as recently as 1885, with the full consent of the present Prime Minister and many of his colleagues. But under this new scheme that system of distribution is entirely reversed, and under this Schedule all those divisions of counties are swept away and abolished. In all the 22 counties which are now to return some three, some two Members each, the matter is so arranged that the aggregate of the whole representation is thrown into a single focus, so that one man is to have three votes in some counties and two in others; and that proceeding comes from a Government which, in the same

Session and in the Queen's Speech, among other measures, recommended for the consideration of Parliament a Bill for establishing equality of the franchise by the limitation of each elector to a single vote. I come to the principle of the retention, under the circumstances which this measure would create, of 80 or any other number of Irish Members in the British Parliament. I attribute so much importance to this, that perhaps I may be pardoned if I deal with it in some detail. I regard this question as vital, and so does the Home Secretary; for upon the Second Reading of the Bill, on April 14, he said—

"For my part I regard the question of the retention of the Irish Members as vital to the Bill."

He added that he did not think it signified much how it was done. My view, on both points, is opposite to his; but we agree in regarding the principle as vital. I observe that last night the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Ripon), addressing the Opposition, said—

"You objected to the removal of the Irish Members in 1886, and now you object to their retention."

That is all he thought it worth while to say upon this subject. Whoever objected to the removal of the Irish Members in 1886, I certainly was not one of them; for, feeling then as I do now the enormous magnitude of the Constitutional principle and the practical consequences involved in the retention of the Irish Members under such circumstances as would be created in Ireland by this Bill, I publicly protested against it in the strongest possible terms, using words which I will now venture to quote. I pointed out the manner in which I conceived such an arrangement must work, and how the upshot of it would be to afford a chance to the Irish of becoming our masters as well as their own; concluding thus—

"That any ordinary Englishman or Scotchman with ordinary spirit and intelligence, and without any unpatriotic purposes, should wish or consent to bring about such a state of things as this, seems to me nothing short of political madness."

Those were my words addressed to the British public in May, 1886, and I repeat them now. Did I stand alone in that view? The Duke of Devonshire in more than one speech referred to those words, and

said he saw no answer to them. What is the effect of this arrangement? Your Lordships all know it, but no harm can be done by bringing into prominence, over and over again, the importance of so vital a matter. I distinguish for the moment Imperial or quasi-Imperial from domestic affairs. As to Imperial or quasi-Imperial matters, this arrangement enables these 80 Irish Members, or a majority of them, in any case of political difficulty where Party feeling in England runs high, and in which the numbers which divide a majority from a minority are not overwhelming—in every such case it will give them a casting vote, and enable them to turn the scale and the balance, whether as to peace or war, as to foreign relations, as to naval or military establishments, or as to the constitution of the Administration which is to govern the affairs of this country. Have you given any such power over Imperial affairs to your great Colonies of Canada or Australia—Colonies which, without disrespect to Ireland, may be well excused if they think themselves not less important parts of the British Empire? If such a thing ought to be done on principle, how could it be refused to them? But neither they nor anyone else has ever supposed that any principle required it, and reasons of Constitutional importance have prevented it, with their full consent. Then with regard to domestic affairs, what is to become of the principle that taxation and representation go together? Under this Bill, as it stands, these 80 Irish Members—as to whom you will have renounced practically and for all purposes, except such as might occur in case of civil war or insurrection, the power of domestic government, the power of legislating for Ireland, and the power of taxing Ireland—are to come here and to tax the inhabitants of Great Britain with burdens in which they will have no share. They are to be brought in to turn minorities into majorities, for the overthrow or change of British Institutions from the greatest to the least, for the disestablishment of Churches, for changing the constitution of the British Parliament, for anything else which a party in this country, not being otherwise in a majority, may desire and demand, without having themselves any stake or direct interest in what is

done. That is to establish a despotism and a tyranny in favour of British minorities over British majorities. Am I putting a case which could not occur? Do not the circumstances of the present moment furnish the best possible example of it? What is the majority upon which the Government are now living from day to day except an Irish majority? If the Irish Members were taken away would they be in a majority? I have tried to imagine either a practical reason or a reason of principle for this arrangement, but I can only think of one, which, if it be the true one, it would have been better candidly to avow. It is this—We cannot afford to do away with our majority, and we should be in a minority if the Irish Members were not here. It is no exaggeration to call such a scheme as that—in its effect, whether or not in its intention—a scheme for establishing the domination in Great Britain of a minority over a majority. Have you in the past done anything like it? Certainly not in Canada, not in Australia. And it seems to me that the thing has been done in a manner as remarkable as the thing is in itself. A sort of cynical humour seems to have dictated the phraseology of those who have been parties to it. They have talked of this measure as *omnes omnia*. Who are the *omnes*? The Irish; they are to have the *omnia*. But the Representatives of Great Britain are not to have in Ireland the powers which the Irish have, although the Irish here are to have the same powers that they have. This is as strange a form of *omnes omnia* as can be imagined. In 1886 the principle of the Irish Members ceasing to sit in the British Parliament for all ordinary purposes was effectually recognised; it was only to be an extraordinary and exceptional purpose, for some revision of the provisions of the Act itself, that they were to be called in and admitted to a share in the deliberations of this Parliament. That might, without difficulty, have been extended to any case of British legislation for altering or increasing the incidence of taxation in Ireland. Nothing could be easier to understand in principle than making an exception for such a Constitutional purpose. That was the proposition of 1886; but we are told that the country decided against it. I

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deny the fact; but for the present I reserve that point. On February 13 of the present year this Bill was introduced in its original form, and it must have been the subject of careful consideration in the six or seven years during which it was not thought expedient to admit the public to a confidential knowledge of the things that were intended to be done. It must have been long considered. At all events, when the present Cabinet was formed, they at once proceeded to deliberate upon it, and the result of their wisdom was the plan of turning the British House of Commons into an Assembly for two distinct purposes, endeavouring to separate and define Imperial as distinct from local questions, and giving the Irish Members a place there to vote for Imperial purposes, and for those alone. I could never conceive why they, any more than Canada or Australia, should sit in the House of Commons for Imperial purposes, and I could see plainly the extraordinary deadlock to which such a mode of constituting a single Legislative Assembly might in some circumstances bring the affairs of this country. I cannot feel any surprise that that scheme should have been publicly condemned. But the scheme we have before us now is very much worse; and if it be proved that you cannot settle this matter upon any reasonable and Constitutional principle as long as the lines of the new Irish Constitution are such as they are in this Bill, then you must give up the attempt to give a new Constitution to Ireland on those lines, and not ruin our Constitution for the sake of dealing in that way with Ireland. What was done? The Bill went through several stages in another place. Early in July the Prime Minister was understood to state, in answer to a question, that the Government adhered to their plan, and would propose it for the acceptance or rejection of the House as it then stood in the 9th clause of the Bill. He may or he may not have been rightly understood. Later in the month, when that clause was reached and came under discussion, the Prime Minister suddenly sprung upon the House and the country by surprise the naked announcement that the arrangement which was called "in and out" was to be abandoned, and that the Irish Members were

to sit in the House for all purposes whatever. Was it the deliberate conviction of the Government to whom the destinies of the country were committed that it was right or wise to make that change, or was it by some hole-and-corner process which no one knows that some people whom no one can name persuaded the Prime Minister that it was necessary so to alter the Bill without debate in the House, without explanation or reason, without anything to enlighten the mind of Parliament or the country? Was the Prime Minister himself convinced? He had on more than one occasion in 1886 nailed his colours to the mast: at one time he said he would never be a party to such a plan as that which is in the present Bill, and at another time, in a passage quoted last night by Lord Cross, he said it was "perfectly clear that such a plan as this could not be thought of." Does it appear that upon these points the Prime Minister has really changed his mind? I know that is a process of which he is not incapable; but on this particular subject I see no reason whatever for suspecting that it has taken place. Well, he made that sudden announcement, at a time when it could not be debated; for the Closure was applied to the whole discussion on that clause the very next day. And this change was effected by Irish votes. Now I should be the last person to deny that an Irish majority upon a merely Irish question is to be regarded with respect and is perfectly legitimate; but that our Constitution also should be altered by Irish votes against the sense of the British majority is a thing which seems to me, in the circumstances, and having regard to the nature of such a Bill as this, in the highest degree illegitimate and intolerable, and I hope the country thinks so too, and will show it. That they should not only obtain for themselves a Constitution separating their Government practically from ours, but also by their preponderating voices impose a new Constitution on us giving them a very large share of power here—one-ninth as near as possible, of the whole power of the House of Commons, seems to me to be a thing unprecedented, and nothing less than prodigious. A good many Liberal Members thought so too, probably more than we know. Mr. Labouchere was against it; so

were Sir C. Dilke, Mr. Atherley-Jones, Mr. R. T. Reid, Sir E. Reed, Dr. Clark, Mr. Wallace, and Mr. Rathbone—the last named as honourable, fair-minded, and reasonable a man, and as loyal a Member of his Party as anyone that exists—and how many more I do not know. But the majority of these dissentients, for the sake of Party allegiance, or for the sake of whatever value they attached to other provisions of the Bill, voted for the Third Reading; though Mr. Wallace and Mr. Rathbone maintained the courage of their convictions and did not. I say there has not been any opportunity of taking the real sense of the House of Commons, under these circumstances, on that proposal. Before leaving that branch of the subject, I must ask your Lordships to allow me to read what, on the 31st of the same month, after the thing was done, Mr. Gladstone wrote to a gentleman in Edinburgh, Mr. Cowan. He said in that letter that the country was in favour of the retention of the Irish Members; and that assumption seems to be the reason which led him to act as he did; but I want your Lordships to note his testimony, which he gave after the thing had been done, as to the principle involved—

"It was impossible to regard Ireland as having a claim to vote upon questions of an exclusively British character while she was to be provided with a Legislature in Dublin to deal in an exclusive manner with Ireland's ordinary domestic affairs, subject only to the supremacy of Parliament. . . . The Cabinet made their proposal because they were unwilling to admit even the semblance of a right or claim on the part of Ireland to share in the management of English affairs while charged with the separate management of her own."

I must take it, therefore, from Mr. Gladstone himself, that Ireland not only had no claim, but not even the semblance of a right, to the power which the Bill, as it now stands, gives them; and yet this change has been made by Irish votes, by the votes of those who have not "even the semblance of a right or claim" to do it. What ground is there for the assertion that the country was against the exclusion of the Irish Members from the British Parliament? None whatever, except criticisms of the Bill of 1886, founded entirely on the feeling that the Act of Union should not be abrogated; and there is not the smallest justification for asserting that the country has declared itself in favour

of the retention of the Irish Members in any form whatever consistent with a Bill upon the lines of the present Bill. It has been said that the Irish Members are in Parliament at the present time, and that, therefore, the Bill does not make any substantial change. But upon what grounds and what conditions are they there? As an integral constituent of a Body having universal authority, as much in Ireland as throughout Great Britain, in which every Member has equal power, equal duties, and equal rights, and, if they would but see the matter as it stands, in which every Member has an interest and a stake in all that is done for every part of the country. If taxes are to be borne, each has to bear his share; if anything else is done which is capable of being dealt with on the same principle throughout the United Kingdom, it is applicable to Ireland as well as here. It is an equal Parliament for all purposes all round, and for every part of the United Kingdom; and to say that it is the same thing to retain the Irish Members when you cut off Ireland and give her a separate autonomy, because the Irish Members are here already, is to contradict reason and common sense. The Constitutional principle involved is altogether different. A more absurd, a more ridiculous argument was never adduced than that of its being the same thing as is going on now. Then we are told by the Home Secretary that the change which has been made in the Bill is unimportant, because under its original form an Irish majority could have decided the fate of Ministries. I can only say that those who do not wish to see Churches disestablished and everything done which a British minority may happen to desire see a great deal of difference. It is bad enough to give Irish Members a voice in Imperial affairs; but why in the world you should also put us under their heel and enable them to govern, to rule us, and to domineer over us I cannot understand. Having no interest in British domestic affairs, when the Irish Members have any objects of their own to secure, that will determine their political alliances and political action with the view of gaining what they can in the direction they think desirable. The Attorney General tells us, that in British affairs British opinion will always prevail. That may be true

when there is a great preponderance of British opinion on one side, but there will not always be such a preponderance. In the case of not very overpowering majorities on either side, the effect of the Bill as it stands would be to throw the balance of power into the hands of those who had become strangers to the interests of this country. Then there is another argument. When it is said that it is proposed to do these things against the will of the majority of the Representatives of Great Britain, and of a still greater majority of the Representatives of England, we are told that we ought not to dissect majorities. Well, if it were intended to go on as a Parliament of the United Kingdom on the footing of the contract and arrangement prevailing since the Act of Union, I could understand it. But to apply that argument to a Bill by which it is proposed to dissolve that contract and arrangement, and to separate Ireland for all the practical purposes of the Legislative Union from Great Britain—to say that you are not then to look at the sense of representatives of each of the parties to the contract seems to me perfectly ridiculous. When you are giving to the Irish Members, who are to have their own new Constitution, one-ninth of the power of the British House of Commons, to say that you are not then to look to the opinion of Great Britain as expressed by her Representatives is not an argument which can be seriously used by anyone, least of all by those who are continually telling us of questions upon which the majority of the Scotch or Welsh Representatives ought not to be overruled by the majority of the Representatives of Great Britain;—least of all when the whole argument for the Bill itself is founded on separating the opinion of Ireland as expressed by its Representatives from the aggregate opinion of the whole United Kingdom as expressed by its Representatives. If it is alleged, as an excuse for keeping 80 Irish Members for all purposes, that some of the arrangements of the Bill are provisional, the answer is, that the provisional character of those arrangements is the fault of the authors of the Bill, and is, in itself, a very grave objection to it. And the words “unless and until Parliament otherwise determines,” at the be-

ginning of the 10th clause, do not in the same way make that clause temporary. I think it very likely indeed that if this Bill were passed by your Lordships it would be only the beginning of the destruction of the British Constitution, and that other claims would spring up in consequence. Should we not hear more about Scotch Home Rule and Welsh Home Rule? Could it lead to anything but attempts to substitute for our present system a Federal system, and further to disintegrate the Empire? The importance of this subject is in my eyes so vital, so extreme, that I will not apologise for the time which I may have occupied. But I should not discharge my duty if I said nothing about the effect this measure would have in Ireland. I take first the Land Question, and looking at what I find in the Bill, and to what has happened before, I must say I was much surprised at the speech which we heard from Lord Spencer. We know that for years the Land League and the National League have been agitating against landlords, and for the abolition of what they call landlordism in Ireland against the payment of rents, and against any settlement except by themselves of the rents to be paid by the tenants. In 1886 a Bill was introduced on the subject of the land, as well as for the government of Ireland. There were reasons which made that scheme practically impossible, and I cannot help thinking that they were from the beginning more or less understood, if not by all the Members of the Government, at least by the Prime Minister. That scheme fell to the ground, and what has happened since? Lord Spencer referred to the Land Purchase Acts, since passed, and now in force. But those Acts depend entirely upon voluntary agreements between landlords and tenants. They give no security. What guarantees are there in this Bill? I find none except the delay contemplated by Clause 34. For some reason not explained the powers of the new Irish Legislature to deal with Irish land and with the relations between landlord and tenant are to be held for three years in suspense; but at the end of those three years uncontrolled power to deal with the property of the landlords will belong to the Irish Legislature. It is true that in the 8th sub-section of

the 4th clause the Irish Legislature is restrained from doing anything which might deny to any person the equal protection of the law, or by which private property might be taken away without just compensation. But new legislation makes new laws; and who is to decide the question of just compensation? It is certainly not a thing that the Privy Council or the Exchequer Judges could possibly decide; it is obviously meant to be left to the Irish Legislature; and exceptional taxation would also be completely in their power. What indications have you of the ideas of justice on this subject which would prevail among those who would have power in Ireland, or even with Her Majesty's Government? The only light derivable on that point is that which we have obtained from the Evicted Tenants Commission, and from the support given by the Government to a Bill to carry out the objects of that Commission. The expectations thus excited can only whet the appetite for the plunder of land wherever it exists in Ireland. It is a vital and a cardinal principle that the power of the British Parliament to protect minorities should never be parted with; and if there be any Party on whom that obligation is more incumbent than another, with reference to that loyal minority in Ireland whose rights of property are at stake, it is the Party which passed the Irish Land Acts, which in each successive stage professed, and were, in my belief, really intended to do justice to landlords as well as to tenants, and to create a tenure under which the rights of both should be vindicated and preserved. It would be the lowest depth of dishonour for any British Parliament not to fulfil that obligation, and yet it seems to me that under this Bill it would not and could not be fulfilled. So much for the Land Question. Now, my Lords, much has been said about the cardinal principle of Imperial supremacy; but the words on that subject of the Preamble and the 2nd clause are in themselves no more than chaff for birds willing to be caught by it; the question is, how is that supremacy to be maintained practically? The answer which anyone who reads and studies this Bill must give to that question is that by this Bill, if it were passed into law, all practical power to enforce that supremacy except by war is abandoned, and all practical

power to resist it is conferred on the new Irish Legislature. What is the value of your exceptions and restrictions? Are they likely to conduce to a permanent and peaceful settlement? Are they sound in themselves? Have you anything like them in your self-governing Colonies? Some of the powers which are excepted in this Bill are expressly given by the Canadian and Australian Acts to the Canadian and Australian Legislatures. Are they really consistent with the professed principles of the Bill? Take the subjects of religion, education, and trade. How often have we been told that Ireland ought to be governed according to Irish and not according to English ideas? I ask, are the ideas contained in these exceptions and restrictions English or Irish? Beyond all question, English. It has often been argued that it is one of the greatest blots on the British administration of Ireland that there should have been no fulfilment of Mr. Pitt's intention to do something for the maintenance of the Roman Catholic clergy of Ireland. Yet this Bill expressly prohibits everything of that kind, and the restriction cannot be said to be in accordance with Irish ideas. No; it is done to suit English ideas, and the very same persons who are responsible for this restriction are continually telling us that in Scotland and Wales there ought to be local option on the subject of religious establishments and endowments. In Ireland, however, there is to be no local option on that subject. Then it has been constantly said that we have not duly considered the wishes of the great majority of the Irish people as to University education; and one might have thought that the power of establishing or supporting out of public funds Roman Catholic Colleges, or a denominational Roman Catholic University, would be given to the Irish Parliament; but the power is withheld from them. There is also the question of trade and commercial relations. All the Colonies have the right to deal with that subject as they like, and is it not quite certain that according to Irish ideas Ireland ought to have the same power? Do you think that restrictions of this sort, which are contrary to colonial precedent and at variance with the fundamental principle upon which this measure is

based, are likely to be maintained? But those who have thought it right to impose these restrictions have done a very curious thing; for these exceptions and restrictions relate only to legislation, and do not apply to Resolutions. Considering what might be done by way of Resolutions in critical and dangerous times, the reason of the limitation is not easy to find. Regency is among the subjects mentioned; but that is the very subject on which Grattan's Parliament proceeded, not by Bill, but by Resolution, in a manner involving conflict with the British Parliament—Volunteers also are mentioned. In the time of Grattan we know that there was a great body of Volunteers in Ireland, self-paid and self-equipped. What is there to prevent the Irish Legislature from passing a Resolution in encouragement of a similar body of Volunteers? What is there to prevent them from standing by while these Volunteers may be raised, and extending approval to their enrolment? As to the veto, I wish to ask, is it to be used, or is it not? Are you going to abide by, or depart from, the precedents afforded by the Colonies? I say deliberately that in our self-governing Colonies the veto is not used except for temporary and suspensory purposes, and that if a Colonial Legislature should persevere, even with a Bill to which grave objections might be made, and which would introduce anomalies which it would be very desirable to prevent, the veto after a time would be withdrawn and the Colonial Legislature would have its way. What reason is there to suppose that it will be otherwise in Ireland? And if it should be, what would be the consequences? Perpetual Motions in the House of Commons that the veto should be used, or that it should not be used, and intolerable friction between the Imperial and the Irish Parliament. The Lord Lieutenant would be the vehicle for conveying the opinion of British Ministers to his own Ministers; but I doubt greatly whether he would be able to do anything whatever *proprio vigore* in matters affected by the restrictions and limitations in this measure. Then as to the Exchequer Judges. In the United States the authority of the Federal Court is not merely a judicial authority, but it is armed with Executive powers, and the President has

further Executive powers behind to support the Court and its officers. Here you have two Judges taken out of the general body of the Irish Bench, and appointed by the Ministers in England. What are they to do? They are only to have cognisance of and to regulate certain proceedings in the ordinary course of law, and if they make decrees in any of those proceedings which are not obeyed, they may appoint some person to carry them out; but, against popular opposition, and with support from the Executive Government, what could any person, who might be so appointed, do? What power will this country have, short of war, to compel the Irish Government to execute the Exchequer Judges' decrees? Resistance to judicial decrees is not an unheard-of thing. There was the case of the successful resistance of Georgia to the Supreme Court of the United States, and there is the recent case of the Corporation of Limerick, which has hitherto defied successfully the order of the Irish Courts that it should raise and pay certain sums for services rendered by the Constabulary. You may say that none of these things will occur. I should be equally entitled to say that they all will. It is not necessary, however, to go as far as that. We must remember that we are not legislating for to-day or to-morrow; we must consider what may happen in the course of time and in various contingencies—what might happen, for example, if we were embroiled with the United States, or with France, and engaged in controversies that might lead to war. In this Bill the dragon's teeth are sown in every clause. It is not a measure of finality, in the sense of a settlement, likely, in its general substance, not to be disturbed. The temporary and provisional character of its financial and other arrangements even invites disturbance. What are the means by which it has been obtained? They are written at large in the Report of the Special Commission of 1888-90. It has been practically a capitulation by the Government to a certain organisation in Ireland. We are told that when the wishes of Ireland are strongly expressed they ought to be considered, upon the principle of conciliation as against what is called coercion. Why that principle should be good for the purpose of forcing

this Bill upon the country, and have no application to the natural consequences of the Bill, it is very difficult to see. If an Irish Legislature were set up, it would be filled by ambitious men seeking to gain power and popularity in the country, each Party by bidding the highest, and it is impossible to set bounds to their ambition. Mr. Parnell said, in 1885, that neither he nor his friends ever could or would attempt to set bounds to the national aspirations of Ireland; and nobody can pretend that this Bill fulfils, or nearly fulfils, those aspirations. It is said that the administration of the country by an Irish Parliament would add to the material comforts of Ireland; but I have never heard any man make an intelligible suggestion as to the way in which it would add to the material comforts of Ireland. But, my Lords, even if it did, the Nationalists would be encouraged by that very fact to demand that they should have freer play. On the other hand, if it should fail in producing that effect, discontent would be aroused, which would give an immediate impulse to the disposition to ask for larger powers. What has been the action of the Nationalist Party in the past? Have they ever contented themselves, in what they have said in past times, with asking for such a mongrel Constitution as this? The question with them has always been not how far they should go, but how far they could go, and now Mr. Redmond says expressly that this Bill is provisional, and can be accepted only as an instalment. There are, no doubt, others who now roar like sucking "doves": they may be sincere; but were they not equally sincere when they formerly spoke as Mr. Redmond does now? And what is to prevent their returning to their former state of mind? What does the National League say now? What do their American sympathisers say now? And in what direction do the voices of past Irish history, the voices and the examples of the great men of the past—of O'Connell and Mr. Grattan, and Mr. Gladstone's own denunciations of the Union lead them? Grattan used language as strong as language could be about the absolute right of equality, about going on to get more, about the folly of speaking of gratitude or ingratitude in these national matters, about making use of the opportunities arising out of foreign complica-

tions. And Grattan would take nothing less than the exclusive power of an Irish Legislature to make laws for Ireland on all subjects ; and he got from the British Parliament what he demanded. All these examples only point in one direction, the direction of going on and not being contented. Nor is there in this any reproach to anybody. In the circumstances in which Members of the Irish Legislature would be placed they would have a perfect right to pursue their ambition. We are asked to pass this Bill as an act of faith, but I prefer reason. And now, my Lords, I have only one other subject to touch upon, and that is the question, Has there been a mandate for this Bill from the country such as your Lordships ought to recognise ? Looking to Ireland, you find that the great majority of Ulster, by no means the least important and powerful among the constituent parts of Ireland, is entirely against it, so that it cannot be said that there is anything like a desire or mandate from a united Ireland ; and the majority in Great Britain shows that there is no mandate from that part of the United Kingdom. How has the question been brought to its present position ? Suddenly in 1885 the idea was taken up. In 1886 the Bills of that year were introduced. Parliament decided against them, and the country decided against them on a Dissolution. During the years of political agitation which followed nothing was more assiduously instilled into the minds of the people than the fact that that Bill was dead. Still, the agitation went on for two or three years, founded chiefly upon attempts to discredit all that was being done for the maintenance of law and order in Ireland. Then came a change. Mr. Atherley Jones, a Liberal Member of advanced opinions, and beyond doubt an honest man, wrote a paper in a certain periodical, in which he frankly stated that the English Liberals generally did not care about Home Rule for Ireland but wanted other things ; and that the only way towards success was to urge those other things forward. It was not long before his advice was taken. From about that time the Home Rule Question was presented, like Richard the Third, between the two Bishops ; but its sponsors were many more than two, and some of them, perhaps, not so good as they were repre-

sented to be. And when this Bill was announced in the Speech from the Throne it was with a bodyguard of 10 or more other measures, in defiance of the rule established by authority and experience, that many great things cannot be done in the same Session ; and obviously with a view to obtain sectional support for a Bill which could not otherwise be carried. And now that Bill is before your Lordships, passed in the House of Commons by a majority of the Irish Members against a majority of the Representatives of Great Britain ; and if there be any duty, the shrinking or retreating from which would be an act of the most abject meanness and cowardice, it is the duty of giving to the British people an opportunity of saying whether, upon this subject, they agree with the majority of their own Representatives or not.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Earl of ROSEBURY) : My Lords, I am quite sure I speak the feeling of everybody in this House when I say that we have heard the speech of the noble and illustrious Earl—an effort remarkable at any age, but much more remarkable when we consider the advanced age at which he has arrived—with the greatest satisfaction and admiration. I do not deny that on this side of the House at any rate that satisfaction is somewhat of a mingled kind. It has been our fate in the past to hear the noble and learned Earl speaking on the side of the House and on the side of the question which we ourselves espoused, but I can assure him that we take his rebukes patiently. They are not mingled with any of the venom of those which we sometimes receive, and we give him all the credit that we demand ourselves for conscientious opinion. The speech of the noble Earl, as I heard it, divided itself into two distinct parts. The last part was of a kind with which all readers of history are familiar, in which the word “capitulation” frequently occurred, and from which the phrase “unknown and rash experiments” was not absent ; exactly the type of speech, in fact, which has been made against every great reform of the century—Catholic Emancipation, the first Reform Bill, and the Repeal of the Corn Laws. The first part of the speech was of a more detailed character. I do not propose, and, indeed, I should not be

The Earl of Selborne

competent, to follow the noble and learned Earl in that critical and legal examination of the Bill to which he subjected it with the arts of a great lawyer, the arts of a great Chancellor, but I hope he will not think me disrespectful if I say that that argument, elaborate and interesting as it was, only added to the unreality of the Debate in which we have been taking part. He supplied in one of his closing sentences the reason why it is unnecessary to discuss the criticisms which he has submitted to your Lordships, because, he said, "you are not legislating for to-day or for to-morrow." He was right. We are legislating for this day six months. This is not a dissecting room; it is the chamber of death itself. Somewhere in the passage, in that short Lobby that leads from the House of Commons to the House of Lords, this Bill caught its death of some passing chill; and it is, if I may say so humbly, an interesting but an academic discussion, unreal in every part and particle of it to which we have been listening for the last three days. If any Peer will say that he came here with his mind open to argument, prepared to consider the Bill on its merits, prepared, if necessary, listening either to the accents of noble Lords below the Gangway or to the accents of the noble Lords above, either to accept or to reject this Bill according to the arguments that were offered, I confess he will have made a very considerable breach in the opinion that I have formed of this Debate. Your Lordships observe that I have waited a moment for any noble Lord to rise and state that his mind was in that state of angelic candour, but as none has chosen to place himself in that position I may take it for granted that my opinion is correct, and that none of your Lordships has entered this House except with a preconceived resolution for or against the Bill. I think that from one or two noble Peers I did hear with a sort of blushing diffidence that they were of opinion that this Bill would ultimately be rejected. The other reason for which this discussion has been unreal and academical is that there is no equal division of Parties in this House. There is only one Party in this House and a percentage of another. I do not know what is the exact number of the legion which my noble Friend who leads this

House with consummate ability professes to muster under his standard; but I venture to think it would be most fitly described by the couplet that Sidney Smith put into his description of the salad—

"Let onion atoms lurk within the bowl
And, half suspected, animate the whole."

Under the circumstances of this Debate it is scarcely remarkable that the speeches have divided themselves mainly into two categories and classes. There are the speeches of denunciation, and among these I will give a high and honoured rank to the speech of the noble Duke (the Duke of Argyll), whom I do not see in his place, who told us with an engaging candour that he could not treat this subject with rosewater. I have nothing to say except in a spirit of gratitude of the noble Duke. He treated me in a spirit to which I am entirely unaccustomed from him, and, if I may reverse an expression in Scripture, I expected a stone and he gave me bread. He was good enough to praise a little book which I not long ago published. He read extracts from that little book, as if they were in any respect damaging to the position of the Government regarding Home Rule. From not one of the statements he read out, or from any of the statements in that little book, have I seen the slightest cause to recede; but at the same time, it does not in any degree impair my general loyalty to the course which has been pursued by Her Majesty's Government. One of the great specialities of the noble Duke is this—that he is always going to make a speech about Home Rule on every subject which may present itself to your Lordships, but that he never gets to Home Rule. Just as he is approaching it, just as we think we are on the clue to the argument for which we have so long sought, he is seized by that fatal and malignant disease to which he is more subject, perhaps, than any other of the many invalids who suffer under it in both Houses of Parliament—*lues Gladstoniana*. He is led away by some morbid spirit to discuss and analyze the views and the speeches of the statesman whom he is proud and pleased to call, in every term of affection, his "right hon. Friend." I do not see why candour should not reign among friends, but I do think the noble Duke reads

more into the character of my right hon. Friend than even his greatest admirers have been able to perceive. He reminds me of the lines in *The Rejected Addresses*—

“Who makes the quartern loaf and Luddites rise?”

Who fills the butchers' shops with large blue flies?”

I cannot help thinking that as my right hon. Friend and the noble Duke advanced along the vale of years, the flies perceived by the noble Duke get larger and bluer on every occasion. I know that we on this Bench are below his notice. We are merely Gladstonian items, blind tools of an imperious and, if I rightly understood him, a partially insane Prime Minister. It is some little comfort, under these circumstances, to find out that he had once been one of these Gladstonian items himself. I had almost forgotten the lapse of time since he left the Liberal Party, but he reminded us last night, with a good deal of expression and force, that he had been a Member of a Cabinet that had proposed a Bill which he considered eminently absurd—a confession which I do not suppose that any one of my colleagues on that Bench, who have been longer in Gladstonian Cabinets than I have been myself, has been able to make on this or any other occasion. I pass from the choice specimen of invective provided by the noble Duke to the more full-flavoured, and perhaps from my point of view equally interesting, specimen provided by the noble Marquess last night. It was one of the most interesting speeches I ever heard in my life. It was like a dictionary of animated quotations. He had an enormous mass of elegant extracts in his hand, and he read them out sometimes from Irish sources and sometimes from Ministerial sources. He is bitten by a disease parallel, but not exactly similar, to that under which the Duke of Argyll is suffering. His disease is the *morbus Spenceranus*. As I heard him, I began faintly to imagine the course of debate in an Irish Second Chamber when that Irish Second Chamber should come into being, because it was like a Cicero of Ulster denouncing a Cataline of Cork with outstretched fingers, piercing eyes, and quivering at every interruption; and I am glad to find that my noble Friend is able to be present on the Ministerial Bench this evening without any material

deterioration of his health. I said there were two classes into which the speeches of this Debate divided themselves. One is mainly the speech of invective. That, I confess, is the speech I myself prefer, as being more lively. The other is the speech of detailed examination of the measure that you have determined to destroy. I do not know why noble Lords think it right to fire this sort of military salute over the grave of this Bill. Every one of their speeches is couched in the spirit of Marc Antony's speech in the Senate House—“I come to bury Cæsar, not to praise him.” We do not expect praise of the Bill from noble Lords below the Gangway or from noble Lords opposite; but I think they might, under the very delicate circumstances of the case, spare us any detailed criticism, or, in fact, any detailed reasons founded on the Bill, when they have already made up their minds so completely upon what they are resolved to do with it. May I take three instances of what I mean? I will take the instance of the noble and learned Earl who has just sat down. He discussed at great length, and with every variety of treatment, the question of the retention of the Irish Members in Parliament. Now, I say that the retention of the Irish Members in Parliament, though a very important detail, though an organic detail, is only a detail still; and that if the noble and learned Earl had any genuine and sincere wish to discuss this Bill on its merits, he might perfectly well have voted for the Second Reading, reserving this point of the retention of the 80 Irish Members for a subsequent discussion in Committee. I think he might give us some credit for the fact that the retention or exclusion of the Irish Members is not a point unattended altogether by difficulty. In 1886 we proposed their entire exclusion. From what I understand to-night the noble and learned Earl has a preference for that course. I wish he had told us so in 1886.

THE EARL OF SELBORNE: I did.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: I am greatly obliged to the noble and learned Earl; the circumstances escaped my recollection. What we did hear were much louder voices demanding the retention of the Irish Members as essential to the integrity and supremacy of the Im-

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perial Parliament. If the noble and learned Earl prefers that course, I can tell him that, as far as I can gather from his public speeches, he has a very illustrious Colleague in that preference—no less than the Prime Minister himself. No one who read the speech of the Prime Minister on the Second Reading—no one who has read his speeches in the country, will doubt that it was owing to the overwhelming pressure of public opinion, both within and without his Party, that he gave way on that particular point to the wishes of those around him. And I must say this about the rather jaunty manner in which noble Lords opposite bestow their criticism on this Bill: They seem to think that any criticism is fatal to any clause; as if the Bills which they are in the habit of introducing are essentially perfect and unamendable; and that the subject with which we have had to deal, if properly dealt with, presented no difficulty at all. To-night I would ask to waive all discussion of the Bill, for the reason that in my opinion, first, that discussion is an unreal discussion; and, secondly, the point on which we are at issue to-night is much larger than this Bill, or than any Bill. It is the vast question of the policy which we propose for Ireland—a policy which, on the one side, is founded on the experience of the past, and which, on the other side, is in the womb of the future. I cannot help thinking that in taking this view of this discussion, and in making it a question of a policy and not of a Bill, we might do something to raise both the Debate and ourselves. We might do something better than chew the dry bones of the Bill, or what has been left of them, by the keen and unwearied teeth of the House of Commons, and we might at least desist from the petty and pitiful personal recrimination which has been too often indulged in. There is not one of you, my Lords, who in his heart believes that we are Separatist and traitors and place-hunters. There is not one sane Member of your Lordships' House who believes in the imputations which are made freely outside though not inside this House on the honesty of our motives. And we, on our side, do not believe that you are statesmen anxious to tyrannise and ride roughshod over the Irish people, and imbrue

your hands in Irish gore. The truth is very simple: and if we were to open our eyes to and recognise that truth we should greatly facilitate discussion. We are two political Parties disagreeing as to the best practical method of governing and conciliating Ireland. That is a very great question in itself. No much greater question could occupy us. It is a question which has puzzled the wisest minds of ages past; and I do not believe that we, in attempting to arrive at an honest conclusion on this subject, will much further our purpose by blackening the political morality of a political Party. You may be certain, in regard to this controversy, of the infallibility of the course you have pursued or propose to pursue. I may frankly say that I am by no means sure of mine. I am not certain about anything with regard to Ireland. [*Opposition cheers.*] I was never more gratified than by those cheers. They show that there are some points, at least, on which noble Lords opposite have not yet made up their minds definitely. They are not quite certain about Ireland. That is, at least, a ray of hope. I say that I am not certain about Ireland; but I can at least say this—that I have come to the conclusion at which I have arrived after a long and painful study—that I have arrived at the convictions which I hold in the teeth of all, or almost all, that would tend to make me take the other side. We here have known the bitterest pang that can fall to public men to suffer. We have known the separation from colleagues and friends. We have known not merely separation from colleagues, but the bitterness of their denunciations of us; and I venture to say that if we had been anxious to lead a quiet life or a pleasant life, if we had been willing to sacrifice our convictions, as you think or assert that we have sacrificed them, it would not have been in the direction which we are pursuing that we should have gone. My Lords, I say, then, to-night that it is not the Bill but the policy which is at issue, and nobody knows that better than your Lordships who sit over against me. Your treatment of the Bill shows it both in the House of Lords and in the House of Commons. It seems to me that there were in the House of Commons two logical courses to pursue, and only two, with regard to the Bill. The first was to say that you could not

touch it in any shape or form ; that you would have no dealings with the accursed thing ; that you would vote for its rejection on the Second Reading ; and that nothing would induce you to incur any responsibility for any detail of the Bill, of which you have so great a horror. The other course was this. Having accepted the Second Reading as the expression of the voice of Ireland on its own destiny, and the voice of the House of Commons as to what it thought best for Ireland, that you should endeavour at any rate to manipulate it in order to get it as much to your minds as possible. And I am perfectly certain of this—and I am speaking without consultation with, but in the hearing of, many of my colleagues—that if you had taken that second course, and frankly accepted the principle of some large measure of local legislation in Ireland, and had offered *bonâ fide* suggestions with a view of bringing that to pass in a manner consonant, as you believed, with the safety and the integrity of the Empire, we should have held out not one, but both, hands to welcome your assistance. My Lords, the Opposition in the House of Commons did not care to take either course. The course pursued reminded me of a very interesting national sport to which, perhaps, none of your Lordships are addicted—I mean the Spanish bull-fight. The bull-fight in Spain is a national and almost sacred institution. They have to kill the bull—that is the primary purpose. You had to kill the Bill—that was your primary purpose ; and you went about it very much in the same way. The first act of the drama is when the *toreadors*, or lance-bearers, attack the bull openly. The bull generally gets the better of them, and they are hurried from the scene. That stage is analogous to the Second Reading of our Bill. Then comes the stage when the light infantry of the bull-ring—I never can pronounce their name, but I could write it on paper—attempt to fix light darts into the bull, to prick it all over, and to annoy and exasperate it in every way, not for the purpose of killing it or wounding it seriously, but apparently out of general “cussedness.” That, I think, reflects not unfaithfully the Committee stage of the Bill. Then comes the last and most solemn process of all, when the *matador* comes into the ring. In one hand he holds the sword for the

purpose of killing the bull, and in the other a cloak with which to mislead the bull as to his intentions. And I think I recognise in the noble Marquess opposite the features of the *matador*. The contrast in the treatment of the Bill by the two Houses is very remarkable. The House of Commons lingered over it with a sort of affectionate solicitude. If they saw the slightest danger of its departure they hastily pinned new sheets of Amendments to its wings, and it might be said almost that they viewed its appearance and disappearance with equal regret. I do not know of anything like it since the occasion when the well-known traveller, Herman Melville, was surrounded by almost every luxury and attention on the Island of Tahiti, when nothing was too good for him, and he enjoyed it all, till he found out that it was only preparing him for a meal that was subsequently to take place on his own fattened carcass. But the House of Lords treats this Bill in a very different spirit. It gives it a very short shrift indeed. Less than a week is sufficient from the time of its leaving the House of Commons for its destruction in the House of Lords. Here there are none of those little attentions which distinguished it in the House of Commons. There are no Amendments, no Instructions to the Committee, and no Committee to instruct. I do not know that there is anything which this Bill in its treatment so much resembles as the old recipe for cooking a pike. You fill the pike with everything that is most rich, rare, and toothsome in quality, and having done that you fling the pike out of the window as being of no value at all. This was very humorous behaviour of the Tory Party in the House of Commons, and it is not altogether without humour in the House of Lords. But surely your conduct is hardly respectful to your colleagues in the House of Commons. At what price do you value all their ability, their energy, and their time ? I know that they did not attempt obstruction ; such a course as that they would indignantly repudiate. But they did attempt legislation. They did succeed in introducing some clauses into the Bill ; and the result of all their efforts, of all their quips and cranks, of all their philippics, of all their physical and even pugilistic encounters is that at the moment the Bill arrives at

the House of Lords you have nothing to say to it except to tell it to begone. I do not know whether we are to consider that the course of the House of Commons was entirely a matter of blowing soap bubbles; that it was merely a sham fight; that it was merely the playing of a big fish, while confident in the knowledge that the noble Duke was on the bank ready with the gaff for it. There was one very instructive illustration of the way in which this Bill was treated by the Conservative Party in the House of Commons. And when I say the Conservative Party, I do not mean the free and uncontrollable free-lances of the Conservative Party, but the solid and respectable and almost venerable occupants of the Front Bench. I will take the clause on which the noble and learned Earl has spent so much time to-night, the 9th clause—now, I think, the 10th. Let us apply to that the test of either not touching “the accursed thing,” or only touching the “accursed thing” in order to amend it in some given and fruitful direction. On July 10 the Front Conservative Bench voted in Committee for retaining the whole of the 103 Members instead of 80 to vote for Imperial purposes. That was a large and liberal allowance, even larger and more liberal than the noble and learned Earl would be inclined to concede. This was the way in which the Conservative Opposition in the House of Commons endeavoured to avoid the evil of too large an Irish mixture in the Imperial Parliament. The same day they voted on an Amendment by Mr. Heneage for the total exclusion of all the Irish Members. On July 11 an Amendment was proposed by Mr. Seton-Karr to reduce the number to 48; on July 13 they voted in favour of the “in-and-out” arrangement against Mr. Gladstone’s final proposal of 80 Members for all purposes; and, last, they voted to omit the clause together. [“Hear, hear!”] “Hear, hear,” says the noble Viscount opposite. Will the noble Viscount tell me the object of these tactics? Was it to bring Parliamentary Institutions into contempt? I do not credit the noble Viscount, one of the pillars of the Constitution, with any such nefarious design; but to the rank outsider, the arm-chair critic, it appears as if the real design was to bring Parliamentary Institutions into disrepute. It has had that

effect; I do not know whether it was meant to bring them into disrepute and invite some Cromwell to put an end to them both for Imperial and Irish purposes. I say that, great as has been the responsibility of the House of Commons in this matter, your responsibility is ten-fold greater. You have undertaken a tremendous responsibility. I will not ask what means you have taken to fortify yourselves for the contest in which you are preparing to enter. I will say nothing as to the general position of this House. I have never concealed my opinion as to the unfortunate position of an unreformed House of Lords. On two occasions I have brought that subject before your Lordships. For any Peer holding the opinions that I do to bring any subject in any circumstances before this House is merely waste of time and breath. But I will say this, and I say it in sober seriousness, without any wish to say anything that could be disagreeable to the noble Marquess opposite, for whose abilities I entertain a sincere admiration. I do believe that perhaps the gravest reproach that posterity and history will bring against his six years of government is this—that he made no serious attempt to reform the Second Chamber, which, after all, is the pillar of the Conservative Party. I am sure that he himself will be the last to disclaim any such description for the little Bill which was being withdrawn by the late Mr. Smith in the House of Commons at the time he was about to explain it to us in the House of Lords. But, my Lords, I venture to think, with regard to this contest in which you are about to engage, there is a particular consideration which should have not much less weight with you than the general consideration which I have submitted to you. The noble Marquess (the Marquess of Zetland) alluded the other night, in terms of some disparagement, to the fact that the Benches behind the Government were not swarming with Irish Peers. Well, they do not usually swarm with Peers of any kind, and I do not particularly know why on this occasion they should swarm with Irish Peers. There are, as I see from a Return recently issued, 113 Irish Peers who have seats, I think, in this House. I want to know—because it is an important fact, at least an important factor in fighting five-sixths of the

popular representation of Ireland—how many of those Irish Peers can be said in any sense whatever to represent any part of Ireland, except that fraction of a Province which you choose for your own purposes to call the loyal Province of Ulster? I say it without the slightest desire to say anything that may be offensive to Irish Peers opposite; but, at the same time, it is true. The noble Lord (Lord Muskerry), who spoke with great vehemence from behind the Opposition Bench the other night, told us two or three times in the course of his speech that he knew all about Ireland. That is not the question. The question on this occasion is—I do not wish to put it offensively—what does Ireland know about him? Does he represent Ireland in any shape or form? Because, if this House is going with 113 Irish Peers—who, I venture to say, can only represent one class in Ireland—to enter into a contest with the House of Commons on a subject in which they are face to face with five-sixths of the Irish representation, on a subject which concerns all and every class in Ireland, then I say they are very insufficiently equipped for the battle. My Lords, that was a digression about the House of Lords. But, with regard to your responsibility, I repeat that, in my opinion, your responsibility with regard to this Bill is infinitely greater than that of the House of Commons. I will tell you why. It is because you are masters of the situation, and you have the power absolutely in your hands. The noble Duke who moved the rejection of this Bill, and whose speech I had the misfortune not to hear, at Ilkley recently spoke of the reasons which made him desirous to move the rejection of this Bill. One of the reasons he gave was that the Bill has not had adequate opportunity of discussion. Now, I say, you are in the position of being able to give it the fullest and freest opportunities of discussion. If your objection to this Bill was really on the ground that it had not had sufficient discussion, you could in a moment put an end to that complaint, and give it more discussion than any Bill ever received. You could, if you have any wish to settle this Irish Question in a way in which I have sometimes felt it will be settled—by an agreement between both the political Parties—you have an opportunity on this

occasion, which I suppose you are going to throw away, of obtaining adequate discussion, and of having a Conference which should settle the terms on which Ireland should have self-government in the future—a Conference not less elaborate, not less important, and not less representative than that which met in May, 1787, to settle the matchless Constitution of the United States. You may say that you do not wish to have anything to do with any form of Home Rule. But that is not the case. I do not know what it may be with noble Lords opposite; but, after all, noble Lords must remember that many of the reforms they have opposed with the greatest ferocity they have come to propose themselves in course of time; and, therefore, they must not be too absolutely certain that this is the course they are always likely to pursue on this question. But with regard to the Liberal Unionist Leaders the case is very different indeed. We have the election addresses of Mr. Chamberlain and Lord Hartington in 1886, in which they plainly state and lay down the fact that after all Home Rule is mainly a question of degree, and they state the limitations succinctly and definitely within which they may be prepared to grant Home Rule. Are they of that opinion now? If so, the noble Duke was singularly ill-advised in moving the rejection of this Bill, because what might you have done? You might have allowed the Second Reading to pass *sub silentio*, or have carried it with any form of protest which your Lordships chose; but when you got into Committee you might have modelled the Bill to your liking. You might have struck out every clause you disliked—perhaps you will say that would be every clause—then it would have been open to you to substitute what clauses you preferred. You might have had an opportunity—which, of course, you are not going to take—of declaring and defining your policy with regard to this great question of Ireland. Your Bill might then have gone down to the House of Commons, where it would have met, no doubt, with a stout resistance. But what would ultimately have come about, what would have happened if you and they had both insisted on the mass of your Amendments? A Conference would have taken place between

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the two Houses which might have led to a fruitful result ; and I say that the patriotic course for your Lordships to have taken, unless you have determined never to devolve any local business to Ireland, was to give this Bill a Second Reading, and take an opportunity of settling with the other House. I find that suggestion receives very little favour from noble Lords opposite. I can quite understand the prospect of spending laborious days and nights in Committee right through September, far into October, with, perhaps, a Conference in November, is not particularly inviting ; but I am not sure, according to the precedent we have before us, that we are not likely to spend a great deal more time in other ways if some such course as this is not adopted. We have been constantly taunted by noble Lords opposite with changing our minds in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the bidding of a scarcely responsible politician. For us, after all, knowing what our fate in the Division is likely to be, this is the main question :—"How did it come about that in the year 1886 a great English Party, comprising responsible men—an ex-Viceroy of Ireland and an ex-Chief Secretary—deliberately proposed a measure of Home Rule, a measure which they resisted for 80 years ?" The noble Earl has given his history ; and I should like, on the other hand, to be allowed to give mine, because, after all, it is a point on which our characters are at stake, and I think we ought to be heard. I speak as a witness, but not as an enthusiastic witness, in favour of Home Rule. With me, at any rate, if I may speak for one moment of myself, Home Rule is not a fanaticism ; it is not a question of sentiment ; it is scarcely even a question of history. It is not a counsel of perfection ; but it is, on the whole, the best of our courses to be pursued in dealing with a highly critical and complex subject. With me, at any rate, it is merely a question of policy politic, and as such alone I argue it. I argue it simply as a question of policy, and I take it no higher and no lower than that. It seems to me that the function of any one who pretends to be a statesman is to attempt to sever what is really wheat from what is really chaff. It is a long and laborious process,

and it is attempting to do that with regard to the Irish Question that I have become a supporter of Home Rule. I will go one step further. I say that I am not an enthusiastic witness on this subject, and I will make one or two other admissions. The noble Duke (the Duke of Argyll) spoke strongly last night about the Union ; he said it was a matter of necessity, and I entirely agree with the noble Duke. I believe that there is scarcely any statesman who, if he had been in Mr. Pitt's place, confronted with such a war as that which he had to face, confronted with the Rebellion of 1798, would not have sought in that remedy a refuge and a guarantee against Irish disaffection. But I must also add this—the Union was only a portion of Mr. Pitt's policy. I believe that if the whole of his policy has been adopted ; if the payment of the Catholic clergy, if Catholic Emancipation, if the abolition of tithes had all been carried concurrently with the Act of Union, we should not now be discussing a Home Rule Bill. So far we seem to be in some measure of accord. But, unfortunately, much has happened since the Union. The Duke of Argyll said that the last utterance of Grattan was in favour of the Union. Well, I think the most striking sentence in all Grattan's speeches occurs in the last of those speeches ; and it is not favourable to the Union. It is this—"The ocean protests against separation, and the sea against the Union." What he meant, I take it, was this—that while separation from the Imperial control of Great Britain was impossible because of the ocean which surrounds these islands, it was equally impossible, because of the sea that separated them, to attempt to administer Irish local affairs at Westminster. That is all the admission I have to make with regard to the history of the question. I had some other quotations from Mr. Barton and Mr. Lecky with regard to it, but it is not necessary to labour it further. Our views of Home Rule are founded upon history ; but they are founded on a history somewhat more recent than that of the Union—on very recent history indeed. The noble and learned Earl said, very truly, that the departure in favour of Home Rule was taken in 1885. Now,

I am going to approach a subject on which the noble Marquess the Leader of the Opposition is extremely sensitive, and I shall be greatly surprised if I get to the end of my few sentences without an interruption or interpellation from him. What occurred in 1885 to make this charge in our course? It was simply this. We left Office upon a side issue; I think it was a vote with regard to the Beer Duties.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: The Budget.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: It is a matter of perfect indifference. We went out prepared to renew certain clauses of the Coercion Act, certain clauses which we thought necessary with our detailed knowledge of Irish administration and affairs. The noble Marquess came in. Last night the noble Marquess said he was most unwilling to come in—that he was forced to come in. That is very much at variance with my recollection. I do not, of course, know what the internal feelings of the noble Marquess were; that no one can judge but himself. If he means that he was obliged to come in because his followers wished him to come in, I believe that what he says is strictly and accurately true. But if he says he was in any sense forced to come in by our Government his memory is playing him a trick. What occurred was this: I remember perfectly well. The noble Marquess entered into some negotiations with the outgoing Government as to the measure of support he would receive if he was prepared to take Office.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Only between and during the interval that was to elapse before the General Election.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: Of course. The noble Lord did not ask for a blind support for his policy for ever. He would have asked for too much if he had. What he did ask for was the support of the Government until the General Elec-

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tion took place, and he said that without that support he would not take Office. We were unable to give him that support; we told him so; and yet he took Office. Therefore I am under the impression that if there was any compulsion on the noble Marquess to take Office it was not, as he implied, from this side of the House, but it was from his own side. What happened? The noble Marquess without the slightest examination into the facts of the case, without even the 24 hours he thought necessary in 1886 to examine the state of Ireland, without any possible examination of the state of the case, said he was determined to try the experiment of governing Ireland without what was called coercion. That was a very grave announcement, because it cut altogether the ground from beneath the feet of the Liberal Party. Coercion is a valuable instrument, but coercion demands continuity. If either Party is prepared, as a matter of Party politics, to abandon any idea of administering coercion without regard to the circumstances of the case, from that time coercion becomes impossible. I will give an illustration, but I will not give it as from myself; it would not be proper to do so, because of the office I have the honour to hold. I remember that Mr. Chamberlain, in a famous and much-quoted speech, said that the rule of England in Ireland was parallel to that of Russia in Poland or of Austria in Venice. I do not know what takes place in Poland now. Therefore I would rather take the case of Austria in Venice, which is now merely matter of history. Austria held Venice entirely by coercion. Would Austria have been able to hold Venice if every four or five years a Party was to come in and announce that it had not examined the case, but was prepared to drop coercion? Does it stand to common sense? The Venetians might have been better off, but the rule of Austria as described by Mr. Chamberlain would have come to an end, and that is important. The Liberal Party, forced, and I think happily forced, from coercion, was obliged to try a new experiment and a new departure. We were face to face not merely with the abandonment of coercion by the Party opposite, but we were also face to face with the moral and material failure of

the Act of Union to secure prosperity to Ireland. What was the proof of the moral failure? It was that 80 or 90 Members out of 100 came back from Ireland prepared to strike a mortal blow at that Union. The proof of the material failure was given last night, copiously and with much wealth of statistics, by Lord Playfair in his extremely interesting speech. The late Lord Chancellor of Ireland cast a good deal of ridicule upon statistics of potatoes grown to the acre now as compared with former days, and seemed to think these details were beneath the notice of a statesman; but I venture to think that, if the proverb correctly describes as the greatest benefactor of his species the man who makes two blades of grass grow where one grew before, it is not unnatural to take the correlative view, and say that that Government is not the greatest benefactor of its species that makes one blade grow where two grew before. We then were driven, and not unwillingly driven, to the policy of Home Rule; all other policies we had tried and failed; this alone remained, and we tried it. The Bill of 1886 was introduced with a burst of enthusiasm, and rejected by a considerable majority in the House of Commons, and at the polls by an overwhelming majority. I do not regret that defeat, and I am sure noble Lords opposite will not regret it either. I do not regret it, because it was good for the Liberal Party to have a full experience in opposition of the advantage of the measure they had proposed in 1886 by contrast with the policy proposed by their successors. It was good also, because it made the Irish Party more known to the Liberal Party; and, in the third place, because it tested the professions of the Government and of their Liberal Unionist supporters. The professions of the Liberal Unionists were to have no coercion and no land purchase. Since that time circumstances have widely changed. There has been a Land Purchase Bill involving an expenditure of £10,000,000, and there has been a Coercion Bill accompanied by the curt instruction—"Do not hesitate, if necessary, to shoot." And this confirms our view, that the course we had chosen was the one and only alternative to coercion. After that

experience we came to this Bill. But we have also other motives besides history for coming to this conclusion. We have, in the first place, an Irish representation which is almost unanimously in favour of it. We have also the difficulty of understanding Ireland in England, which seems to me to be as great now as it was when we first began to govern her. I do not suppose that all wedded unions of over the year old are in the precise position to gain the historic fitch of bacon at the end of 12 months, but even then they are not always considered a failure. But what is to be held of a couple who, after a silver or a golden wedding, come to the Divorce Court on the ground of incompatibility of temper? That is the case with regard to Ireland. We had, besides that, the necessity of devolution on both Imperial and local considerations. We were sick of always voting Bills that the Irish always opposed, and we were sick of voting money that the Irish always disregarded. I myself would have preferred some scheme of devolution which would have been applicable to all countries alike in the United Kingdom, such as that I indicated in that speech at Paisley, which has formed so favourite a theme with the Opposition. But you cannot get all you want. There is a fatal objection to an equal scheme of devolution. The maximum you want for England would not be the minimum you want for Ireland, and so you would cause discontent to both parties without achieving your object. And we had, further, this object, that we wanted to get Ireland out of the way. We want to get Ireland out of the way in order that the time and energy that it engrossed in our Parliament might be better given to other purposes. There is another motive that I would wish to give for this Home Rule policy, and it is perhaps a more homely one. It is to some extent a feeling of mortified pride that makes the Liberal Party take up Home Rule. No one can doubt that if you could set Ireland afloat at this moment and float her across the ocean till she reached the shores of America, within 10 years, as a State of the Union, she would be as prosperous and contented as any other State of the Union. I say it is a reproach to our Empire, to our Government, and to our Parliament

that, while we covet every square inch of unoccupied ground that we can administer of the world, right at the core of our Empire there is, and there has been for seven or eight centuries, a difficulty, we openly confess, but with which we are hopelessly unable to deal. May I give two other reasons—reasons which are usually given as arguments against Home Rule, but which make me a Home Ruler at this time? The first is the phrase that is constantly used—the “dismemberment of the Empire.” A more meaningless phrase was never invented. It is because I wish to avert a practical dismemberment of the Empire that I stand before your Lordships as a supporter of Home Rule to-night. There has only been one great dismemberment of the Empire. That occurred about a century ago. It was when the United States broke off from their allegiance and set up as a separate State across the Atlantic. What was the cause of that dismemberment? Was it because of too great a respect for their local aspirations? No, it was your insisting on establishing your own views of law and order in that country, in disregard of the wishes of the colonists. And what I fear is this—that if we do not arrive at some such scheme as we propose, and I do not pledge myself to the details of the scheme, we shall have that practical dismemberment, which is implied by Ireland sullen, discontented, and rebellious, always at our side. There is another ground on which I am a supporter of Home Rule. It is constantly urged as an objection to any such Bill. It is on the ground of foreign policy. I am not at all sure that the Opposition are not right in saying that foreign Governments distrust the proposals for establishing a Home Rule Parliament in Ireland. But I put that down, with all respect to any distinguished Representatives of Foreign Powers who may be here, rather to that ignorance which all nations have of other nations than as a deadly argument against our proposal. But what is the case? At present we have from 25,000 to 30,000 troops in Ireland in times of peace. What force would you want in time of war? I would ask one more question. If you were engaged in a European war, what would be the first point at which your enemy would attempt to reach

you? What would be your most vulnerable point? It would, of course, be Ireland. I do not know whether they would be successful in establishing themselves there—they have made many attempts; but if, with the gigantic Armies of the Continent, anything were to happen to your Fleet, not 25,000, nor 30,000, nor 100,000 men would prevent the invasion of Ireland, and the invasion by a foreign force would find many friends on its shores. The true defence of Ireland from the point of view of foreign policy is to give Ireland something worth defending, to give her something that no liberating nation could offer, to give her institutions which she would value as much as we value ours, and, in fine, to set up that spirit of contentment which is so sadly lacking at the present moment. I pass by the question of Ulster, because I have too long trespassed upon your time. But I would venture to say that while these are positive arguments in favour of the proposal, there is an overwhelming negative argument. What do you propose? Have you any scheme—any such scheme as the noble Duke adumbrated in his election address of 1886, any such scheme as Mr. Chamberlain suggested in his election address of the same year? If you had such a scheme I venture to say it would find no unfriendly reception on these Benches. We are only too anxious to get the Irish question out of the way in order to make way for English, Scotch, and Welsh reforms. Have you any such policy? You must have. But we know enough of what has occurred in the past to feel no great hopes of the future. You must have a scheme. When we go out the 80 Irish Members will not go out too. They will remain with you. You may reduce them by a small percentage, and I believe that is part of your scheme, but that will not alter five-sixths of the representation of Ireland. You will not get rid of the 80 Irish Members; they will remain as a clot, a calculus, and an aneurism in the middle of your body politic, which you will have to take some drastic measure to remove. I remember what was the former policy of the noble Marquess—I do not know whether it remains the same—20 years of resolute government and free emigration. How

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are you to get your 20 years of resolute government? Twenty years means three Parliaments. Will you get three Parliaments to give you *carte blanche* to administer resolute government in Ireland? You have not so far been able to get more than one. I do not think we are prepared to give a perpetual dictatorship; but, on the other hand, there is a difficulty in any 20 years of resolute government. The democracy cannot govern, and will not govern, in the way you wish them to govern. You may have your Coercion Bills; you may have your "Do not hesitate to shoot" policy if you will, but you will also have incidents inseparable from coercion; you will have regrettable incidents which will inspire the whole country with a horror and hatred of your policy such as existed three or four years before the General Election. Is emigration any better remedy or more practicable than 20 years of resolute government? Emigration greatly increases the difficulty with which you have to deal, if you send out discontented instead of contented emigrants. If you are merely going to pour into the United States or Australia Irish peasants torn from their homes by the impossibility of living there, going with a burning hatred of your institutions and your Monarchy, you will raise up ten evils for one you are laying. Who were the best emigrants who were ever sent out? They were the Pilgrim Fathers who went out in the *May Flower*. And you will find there was difficulty with them, and in their distant New England home, the Government said that they were a peevish and discontented people. You have tried your policy and failed. It has already reduced your British majority, and it has produced no effect on the Irish Members in the House of Commons against you. I think that you have but three choices left, and they are all of considerable complexity. The first is the disfranchisement of Ireland and the conversion of it into a Crown Colony; the second is your former policy, which is, if I may so, both expensive and ineffective; and the third is some form of Home Rule. The first is impossible, and the third you have not come to yet, but you may not be long in coming. But what will happen if you pursue the policy you adopted in the last Parliament? We shall have Ireland always on our back,

that incubus that we have been so anxious to shake off by Home Rule. The noble Marquess, in 1887, said, "The politics of the present are all summed up in the word 'Ireland,'" and he was perfectly right, but we should be entitled to expect, from his utterances as to resolute government and emigration, that we should have had some time for English and Scotch legislation. But how was the time occupied in the House of Commons? In 1887 there were 39 private Irish Bills and eight Government Bills, occupying 96 days. In 1888 there were 43 Private Bills and 13 Government Bills, taking 63 days. In 1889 there were 32 Private Bills and nine Government Bills—total, 41—occupying 52 days; and so we go on with an equal story all through those six years, though you promised us that we should discharge that burden of English legislation and Irish business by your resolute government; but it was found equally as heavy, as obnoxious, and as encumbering as it had ever been in any previous Parliament. I put aside the expense with which this policy is accompanied, the £1,000,000 or so spent on light railways and sops to feed the Cerberus of Irish discontent, which you are unable by any means to allay. But in pursuing the policy of Irish Home Rule we are guided quite as much by discontent and dread of what you propose as by any special content with what we have proposed ourselves. We see in the future that if your policy be pursued we shall have all those secret societies of assassination and outrage once more brought to work their way in Ireland, because the one hope which inspires the Irish people to withstand the incentives to rebellion and outrage will then disappear. We see Parliament encumbered, we see great expense, we see great waste of time; and we know that, whether you plaster Ireland with your garrisons or with your gold, the end of it by some devious path or other will be only some form of Home Rule. It is animated by these considerations, both positive and negative, that we have adopted the course which has brought so much obloquy upon us both from our open foes opposite and our open friends on my right. We propose this Bill in the sense so much decried by the noble Earl as an experiment. I grant that it is an experiment. All legisla-

tion is experimental, and all Irish legislation is necessarily experimental. But it is at least a large and a generous experiment. I remember only two experiments of equal magnitude—I think they were of greater magnitude—that have ever been proposed to Parliament in my time. They both struck deep at the Conservative institutions of this country, and they both menaced all that I conceive that the Party opposite holds dear, and they were both, I need hardly say, proposed by a Tory Government. One was the establishment of the London County Council—an infinitely more perilous experiment than the establishment of an Irish Parliament could ever be, where you focussed into one small body all the social, all the revolutionary elements, all the discontent, and all the poverty of an unprecedented aggregation of 5,000,000 people. The second was the Reform Bill of 1867. I well remember the introduction of that Bill, which was brought in by the noble and brilliant Prime Minister of that time—Lord Derby—who tossed it on the Table with the exclamation, “My Lords, I bring you this. This is, after all, but a leap in the dark.” We claim that this Bill is not a leap in the dark. We claim that it is a leap towards the light, a leap and a long stride towards a more generous Irish policy, towards the reconciliation of two great nations, too long connected and too long divided, and, furthermore, a considerable stride towards that adjustment and devolution of local business which will alone enable the British people to support the vast and various burdens of their Empire.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH said, he must ask for the sympathy and the indulgence of their Lordships when he rose to follow two such speakers as those whom it had just been the privilege of their Lordships to listen to. He would merely say the first speech was full of argument and full of detail, and was a most clear and incisive declaration of the legislative proposals that were before them. The second also was an able and eloquent speech, and he would hesitate to say that it was not full of argument; but at first it appeared to him to be full of chaff, but not of the chaff

The Earl of Rosebery

which had been referred to by the noble Lord. From first to last he (the Earl of Rosebery) did not adduce a single argument for a Second Reading of the Bill. He had listened to a sick child who had caught a cold coming through the Lobbies, but a chill was not always fatal. But the noble Earl had stated that he would waive all discussion about the Bill. Until he said that, he (Lord Burleigh) was under the impression that they were there only for the purpose for learning what was for and against the measure. He would call their attention to the position in which they were placed. They had entered into a phase of a long controversy. How could they deal with it effectually, when they could not attach any distinct understanding to it? He had hoped that they would have had no more speculations about the principles of Home Rule. He thought they had got it in the Bill, and that they were in a different position to what they had been before, because they would be able to discuss it in a concrete form, and see whether it would be accepted by the country. In the case of the Bill of 1886 all sorts of excuses were made by its framers for its defects. They were told that it had been got up in a hurry, and therefore it was not perfect, but that if its authors were put back into Office again it would be seen what they would do. Well, they had been seven years about it, and there was some right to assume that the great abilities of the 17 cleverest men of the Liberal Party had been applied to shape the form in which the Bill was presented. But now, on the Motion for the Second Reading of the Bill in their Lordships' House, they were told that they were to have no argument about it, and no assistance from noble Lords opposite in discussing it. It seemed to him that, whether they had made up their minds or not upon that subject, the promoters of the Bill ought to have advanced some argument in its favour, in order that they might have had the opportunity of discussing the principles of that Bill on intelligible lines, but the noble Earl had given them no such assistance. The noble Earl would admit that the Bill would make the greatest change ever proposed in our Constitution. It was practically a new Constitution, not only for Ireland, but still more for the United Kingdom. He

accepted the fact that the Government had changed their policy with regard to Ireland, but he might be permitted to say that if the reasons they had given satisfied themselves, to those who differed from the Government they were ridiculously inadequate. The Government were bound to show not only that some change in the policy of this country with regard to Ireland was necessary, but that this particular change was the best that could, in the circumstances, be proposed. If they suggested that the speeches made to the country did not represent the real opinions of those who represented them he would give up his point at once. But he must assume that when a public man went on to a public platform—he must assume that he did mean what he said to the people before him. He could not see one trace in the measure proposed bearing out the promises and professions which Her Majesty's Government had made to the country. The Prime Minister, in moving the First Reading of the Bill in another place, said there were five conditions which must be observed; but, in order to make those conditions square with the Bill, they ought to put the word "not" before each of them. He would venture to say that in this measure there was no special provision made for the protection of minorities, such as there should have been, and there was no finality, and no promise whatever of its being a real and perpetual settlement. The noble Lord who spoke to-night has disposed once and for all of Imperial unity and Imperial supremacy. If you attempted to enforce the veto the Irish Ministers would resign, and you would find no other Member of the Irish Party to take up the policy of Her Majesty's Government, and Constitutional methods would be brought to an end. There is no equality in a Bill which provides that the Irish Party shall be dominant in the affairs of this country, while they would have nothing to do with Irish affairs. In 1886 the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Ripon) attempted to fix a charge of inconsistency upon the Opposition with regard to the exclusion or retention of the Irish Members. He denied that there had been any inconsistency in the attitude of the Opposition on the subject of the exclusion or retention of the Irish Members. Under the Bill of 1886 the

larger Island was put into a position of supremacy over the smaller one; but the position was now changed, and under the present Bill the smaller Island was put into the position of supremacy. That, in itself, would make a great difference. He would venture to say he did not think that noble Lords opposite could know how great the difference was; he did not think that they could realise the objection that could be taken by the Irish Members. It was all very well to say that they made it no worse than it was before. But they did. They prevented the representation of Great Britain having any control whatever; and, if he might borrow a not very elegant but very expressive phrase, they had a right to object to be under the hoof of Ireland. He did not think he was going too far when he said that in this matter there had been deliberate, organised, long-maintained concealment of the intentions of the Government. The original proposals of the Bill were never seriously meant; and, in his opinion, the Government had deliberately abstained from giving any information to the Representatives of the country. In another place Mr. Chamberlain complained of the Prime Minister's intentions to the House, and said that Government had always avoided the questions put to them, or refused to answer them, and Mr. Gladstone confessed it. He promptly replied that he quite understood the object of the questions, and was determined to defeat it. If there was nothing else, that fact alone would justify their Lordships in refusing its consent to the Bill. He was not surprised, under the circumstances, Lord Rosebery had declined to be drawn into a discussion of the provisions of the Bill, because if he had defended them out and out he would have given his influence in Scotland such a blow that it would take a very long time to recover. The real object of the retention of the Irish Members had been disclosed in the other House by the hon. Member for Govan, when he said he wanted to retain the Irish Members in order to use their votes for English reforms. That candid avowal went far to show the danger and the immorality of the policy which was being pressed upon the House for acceptance. He now turned to the financial aspect of the

question as affecting Scotland. At present Scotland contributed to Imperial purposes £6,526,000, and Ireland £2,103,000. But when the sums which this Bill proposed should be spent by the country on the Irish Constabulary and in defraying the cost of Revenue collection in Ireland were deducted from the gross amount of Ireland's contribution, the net amount which would come into the Imperial Exchequer from that country would be only £1,552,000. Was this a fair payment from the Scotch point of view? Adopting the tests of the Prime Minister, he found that if Ireland were to be assessed, for the purpose of Imperial contribution, in proportion to the Income Tax paid in that country, she would contribute £2,500,000 instead of £1,550,000, and that if the assessment were made in proportion to the amount paid in Death Duties, the sum which Ireland would have to pay would be £2,816,000. He would take another criterion. Ireland at present paid 13·35 per cent. of the taxation raised in the United Kingdom on tea, tobacco, and wine. If she were to contribute to Imperial purposes in proportion she would pay £8,086,000. If the financial provisions of this Bill were agreed to an Irishman would only contribute for Imperial purposes the sum of 6s. 7d., whereas the amount taken from every Scotchman would be £1 12s. 10d. But the point which influenced him chiefly in his opposition to this Bill was the inadequate protection of the minority in Ireland. In the working of legislation of this kind everything depended upon the character of the men who would govern Ireland under it. Noble Lords opposite tried to get out of the difficulty by saying that they were not selecting the men who would govern, and that they hoped that the Irish people would select the right men. But that would not avail as an argument, for it was certain, as far as anything in human affairs could be certain, that the men who would form the new Irish Executive, if this Bill were to pass, would be the present Leaders of the Nationalist Party in the House of Commons. The noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs had asked them to pass the measure as an experiment. What an experiment! It involved the lives, liberty, and property of those who had been most

Lord Balfour of Burleigh

loyal to the British connection. It was an experiment which would be made at the expense of men who said plainly that they dreaded nothing on earth so much as this legislation; and, in order that this experiment might be made, they were asked to trust the men who, the noble Earl opposite had told them, might in case of war take the side of our foes.

EARL SPENCER: Under present conditions.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: But those conditions, he believed, had had a great effect in Scotland, where the Prime Minister would do wisely not to rely on the support which he had hitherto received. That the views of large numbers of Scotch influential electors had undergone a change since the introduction of this Bill was shown by the great meeting held in Edinburgh in April. The minority in Ireland were one-third of the population; they represented the greater part of the education and industrial energy of the country; and yet their Lordships were solemnly asked to hand them over to the tender mercies of those whom they so much distrusted. He would not say anything against the Roman Catholic Church generally. In this country it commanded respect; but they had had glimpses of the priesthood in Ireland in magisterial inquiries and political battles and in the revelations of the Meath Election Petitions. Their Lordships were asked to hand over the minority to those who had been advocates of deliberate robbery and breach of contract, and had preached the gospel of revenge; but before they passed a Bill of this kind they would ask for a check, not only on rash and Party legislation, but for a real check, on those men who had started and worked the Land League and the Plan of Campaign. Noble Lords opposite hoped that the Irish Members would keep within the Bill, but there was only too much evidence that the sham safeguards imposed by the Bill were not loyally accepted by those who would have to

work it. They were told that to enforce the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament would lead to nothing but irritation. There could be no hope of a continuing settlement. The Government had either done too much or not enough. They had taken a most dangerous step in attempting to set up a Federal Constitution. They had weakened the United Kingdom for defence in a way most dangerous to the smaller countries embraced in it. He was convinced that, in any breaking up of the Imperial Parliament, Scotland and Ireland would lose more than they would gain. It was said that Parliament was overburdened, but, in his humble opinion, much that was said on that subject was grossly exaggerated. There was, he admitted, a substratum of truth in the saying; but surely a remedy could be found for it without separating the Executive Authority, and without taking the Constitution to pieces. Such a remedy could easily have been found if the market had not been spoiled by the hasty way in which Home Rule was swallowed by the Party opposite. Speaking as a pure Scotchman, he could say that they were proud of their history, proud of their struggle for independence, proud of their former separate existence. Their union with England was not popular for something like three-quarters of a century, but now they entertained a loyalty, not only to Scotland, but to the Empire, and he believed the enormous majority of his fellow-countrymen would now feel that it was as great a lapse in their patriotism to be disloyal to the Empire as to be disloyal to Scotland. He honestly believed that Ireland at no long distance of time would have been brought to the same feeling had not her hopes been excited by the Party opposite. Until the deliberate judgment of the country in the light of clear and unmistakable knowledge had been obtained on this question he maintained that their Lordships had no right to accept the Bill. Before they were asked to violate their consciences and to stultify their reason they had a right to know that the mass of the people unmistakably desired this measure, and he should certainly vote against it, because he believed it involved considerations not only of national safety, but of national honour and probably of national life; and he

supported the Motion for the rejection of the Bill.

***LORD THRING** said, he was under the impression that a mist of exaggeration pervaded everything Irish. Facts had been misrepresented and distorted, and impossible conclusions had been drawn from improbable premises. In the few words he would address to their Lordships' House he would endeavour to show that the Bill was founded on well-established precedents, and that the fears of its opponents were either simulated or based on imperfect knowledge. It was said that the measure would lead to the dismemberment of the Empire. What was the Empire? It covered a fifth of the habitable globe, and it contained men of every creed and language, living under diverse local Governments. The common tie that bound these people together was Her Majesty and the prerogatives of the Crown. These prerogatives were the power to make peace and war, the control of the Army and Navy, and the right to make Treaties with foreign nations. How did the Bill affect any one of these privileges? How could it possibly disturb the Empire. The Bill was really a Colonial Bill, and could not disturb the unity of the Empire in the slightest degree. If the Empire was to be shaken in such a manner it would have long since been shattered. It was contrary to their common intelligence to say that this measure would in any way affect the unity of the Empire. The Duke of Devonshire had drawn a great distinction between the unity of the Empire and the unity of the Kingdom. Since Irish Members were retained in the Imperial Parliament in reduced numbers, but with the same rights as they possessed now, it would be quite as sensible to say that if they altered the franchise in Ireland or the number of its Members that they affected the unity of the Kingdom. Some noble Lords were greatly exercised about the supremacy of Parliament. But Parliament remained as before. Not one single Parliamentary power had

been affected. Indeed, over-precautions had been taken to secure the supremacy of Parliament. It was a doctrine of the Common Law that Parliament could not if it would abrogate its supremacy. And in the Colonial Acts nothing was said about the supremacy of Parliament, it was assumed. But in this Bill there was a declaration of it in the Preamble, and an enactment in the body of the measure. Then there was the Imperial veto, which had always been applied in Colonial Constitutions to prevent gross injustice. He did not see how any injustice could be done or the minority be injured in any way when they had 80 Irish Members sitting in the Imperial Parliament who could be called to account for their misdeeds. The unity of the Empire, the unity of the Kingdom, and the supremacy of Parliament would be as safe after this Bill as they were now. The Bill was an ordinary Colonial Bill, adapted to the peculiar circumstances which existed between Great Britain and Ireland. There were two forms of a Bill of this kind. The old Colonial Bill was always in this form, it delegated powers to the subordinate Government to make laws for the peace, good order, and good government of the country; it dispensed with all restrictions, and left the Colony to do the best thing they could. They had been told the Bill was crude, and crazy, and revolutionary, and all sorts of bad things. He was bound to admit that during his 25 years of office; he never knew of a Bill which was not crude and crazy in the opinion of the Opposition. He challenged any noble Lord who understood Colonial legislation to point out any single clause which went beyond the ordinary Colonial limit. On the contrary, this was a more restricted Bill. When they were told that great wrong would be done under it he asked whether great wrong had been done in any of the 15 self-governing Colonies. Why was it supposed that under a Constitution more restricted than those of the Colonies the unfortunate Irish were to commit wrongs which the Colonies had not committed? It was said that the Irish Parliament would be composed of rebels and murderers, but precisely the same thing was said when a Constitution was granted to Canada. But the experience of history showed that the weight of re-

Lord Thring

sponsibility made men abandon their former methods and settle down to the work of government. Then as to the everlasting accusation of a conspiracy of secrecy, everyone had known for the last eight years that when the present Government came into Office they would bring in a Bill to give local government to Ireland, and a Local Government Bill could only contain certain definite proposals contained in every Colonial Bill. The employment of the Closure in the Commons could not be avoided in the face of the tactics of the Opposition. He did not blame them, but the Government could not do otherwise than apply the Closure. Everybody knew that the Colonial Bills and the Irish Bill involved great changes in the administration of the country, but that was the object for which the power was given that they might manage their own affairs. If Amendments had been moved to every delegated power in the Canadian Bill, for example, the end would not have been reached till the Judgment Day. The real question was whether Parliament did or did not intend to give local government to Ireland. It mattered little what the details were, but it mattered very much if they were prepared to give local government to Ireland or not. It was said that there was no argument in its favour. All history and experience taught that where countries or communities with peculiarities of race or creed or language were united by an incorporating union the result was not successful, but where they were united by a federal union national feeling was satisfied. He would only quote the one case of Austria-Hungary as that was the most apposite instance. Hungary had been discontented for centuries. Then within our own time it broke into rebellion, which was crushed with the assistance of Russia, and Hungary was incorporated with Austria. After the battle of Sadowa, Hungary's opportunity came Austria was prostrate, and Count Beust, to restore the Empire, dissolved the Incorporating Union and substituted a Federal Union. He was perfectly aware there had been differences, but on the whole Hungary became contented. If they looked at Canada they found that rebellion had been quelled by the grant of self-government, a Federal Union had since been established,

and that Canada was now one of the most loyal portions of the British Empire. He did not say that those instances were necessarily conclusive, but still they demonstrated the general principle that to give self-government to a discontented community was the easiest way of conciliation. One-fifth of the habitable globe rested content under the rule of Great Britain, with only one exception. That exception was one of the smallest of our dependencies—Ireland—and it possessed no local government. The Marquess of Salisbury has said that the term “national aspirations,” as applied to Ireland, was merely “modern jargon.” It might be jargon, but it was the jargon of Swift, of Flood, of Grattan, of O’Connell, of Burke, and of Lord John Russell. He was not ashamed to think that National sentiment and National aspirations were very good grounds for giving local government to Ireland; and he thought that our Colonial Institutions proved that the risk was almost infinitesimal. Above all these pleas there was a greater and nobler plea for giving Home Rule to Ireland. The honour of the Empire and of England demanded that justice and self-government should be given to Ireland. It was time to put an end to the taunts thrown in our teeth by every foreign nation that while we preached the gospel of liberty throughout the world Ireland was oppressed and denied even a small part of the privileges which we granted so liberally and freely, and almost without solicitation, to our most distant dependencies. That, he thought, was a very clear reason for giving self-government to Ireland. He knew that the opinion of an old and feeble man would avail nothing; but he was unwilling to remain silent in the Debate, because for 15 years he had been behind the scenes of Irish Government; and they were dark and dreary and ghastly scenes. He had also closely studied the Colonial Empire; and, before the Government of which he was a subordinate, he came to the conclusion that Home Rule was the only remedy which offered any chance of success in Ireland. He held that opinion strongly then, and he held it strongly now.

VISCOUNT MIDLETON said, with regard to the reasons given for introducing the Bill, he traversed the statement

most distinctly that there was any ground for urging that Ireland, in the period since the Union, had not steadily prospered to a greater degree probably than any other civilised country, America alone excepted. Showing the state of Ireland immediately preceding the Union, quotations had been given from the speech of Lord Clare bearing on the question. A steady improvement took place down to the time of the great famine of 1846. On that point he could speak from experience. He remembered that terrible visitation, having traversed at the time the districts in the South and West of Ireland. At that time artisans were employed at 2s. a day wages, and labourers could be obtained in any numbers for 6d. a day; whereas now men could not be got for less than four times that sum. So much for labour. The deposits in the Bank, which in 1850 were certainly below £8,000,000, were now £32,000,000. Large sums were now invested by the tenant farmers and small traders in securities. The whole railroad system of Ireland, for which England had contributed largely at the beginning, had passed gradually and imperceptibly into the hands of Irish proprietors; and the same might be said of the shipping and other great industries. Originally established with English capital, the shares in those undertakings had now very properly drifted across the Channel, and were now held almost exclusively in Ireland. Within his own knowledge some years ago a project was started which required a 10 per cent. deposit of £120,000. Applications were received in three days to the amount of nearly £130,000, so that the capital was subscribed more than ten times over. Those were not signs of decaying trade, or that the country was not prospering; and those results had been achieved in the face of agitation, of occasional failures of harvest, and of various other disturbing causes well known to those interested in Ireland. The only class in the community which could not be said to have prospered were the landlords—there was no mistake at all about that. No landlord in Ireland was now getting the rent he received 40 or 50 years ago; and although rents had rarely on the old estates been raised since the commencement of the century, they had, in most instances, been considerably cut down by

the operation of successive enactments which had passed through their Lordships' House. Ireland, no doubt, was not as prosperous as she might be; but it was the merest moonshine to put a lack of prosperity forward as the reason for introducing this measure. Ireland had not been stagnant in commerce and industry. She had, in fact, progressed steadily; and in those parts of the country where free scope had been given to the development of native industry, as in Ulster, the progress had been more remarkable, perhaps, than in any other part of Her Majesty's dominions. He would proceed to state the objections to the principle—not to the details of the Bill, which would induce him unhesitatingly to vote against the measure. In the first place, the safeguard of the veto was worth nothing. It was a mere nominal veto which the experience of the Colonies showed to be worth precisely the paper on which it was written. When any Constitutional strain occurred he did not envy the post of the first Viceroy of Ireland, should that Bill, unhappily, pass into law. He would have three masters to deal with, and it would be very difficult for him to determine to which of them he should turn for advice and guidance as each emergency arose—or, as might be the case, two or three emergencies together, which often happened in Ireland. So long as that remained undefined that was not a Bill, which, in principle, their Lordships would be justified in passing. Coming to the well-known 9th clause, the proposition in 1885 was that no Irish Member should appear at Westminster; and in this Bill, as originally introduced, they were to appear and disappear upon "the in-and-out system," as it was called—they were to appear on certain occasions, and then disappear into space when the occasion had passed away, and re-appear when necessity arose. That proposal was abandoned. A third proposal was now made. The Irish Members were not only to pass laws in their own country, but to assist in the legislation on this side of the Channel. The latter arrangement was a serious inconvenience at present, for English, Scotch, and Welsh measures were opposed, apparently, out of spite by different Irish Members who were not concerned in them in the slightest degree. Of course, that was a serious obstacle to all useful

Viscount Midleton

legislation. It was a problem which he believed to be utterly insoluble, and the objection to each of the three methods of dealing with the question seemed to be about equally strong. Then, coming to the financial part of the Bill, that was not a part of it with which their Lordships' House was specially entitled to deal; but, having given some attention to the matter, all he could say was that in the crude and immature financial proposals, which had been altered two or three times, he could see no ground for satisfaction. Great Britain was to be taxed for Ireland; but not only that—Ireland would probably soon have to face bankruptcy. In the absence of Imperial credit, through which so much good work had been done in the country, a far higher rate of interest would have to be made for money required for public works. The country would then suffer from chronic impecuniosity. Unless some wiser measure of finance could be proposed, their Lordships would certainly be justified in rejecting the Bill. This was not merely a matter of detail, but was essentially a question of principle. The provisions of the Bill were only to stand for six years, and then the whole controversy would have to be gone through afresh. As to the question of security to the minority, more than one noble Lord in the Government stood pledged by his own promise; and it had been distinctly stated that such securities should be inserted in the Bill as would reasonably satisfy the minority, especially in Ulster. Not for a moment could it be said that Ulster had been in any way satisfied. He did not wonder that Ulster felt aggrieved that Wales should be about to receive consideration at the hands of the Government; while that Province, with a larger population, larger area, and far more wealth, was not to receive any separate consideration from the rest of Ireland. That, again, was a question of principle. As to the Land Question, their Lordships, undoubtedly, stood in a somewhat delicate position. He could honestly say for himself, and for noble Lords connected with Ireland, that if he could see in that measure any hope of permanent benefit to Ireland, no personal interests would prevent him crossing the House to support it. But he could not understand what the Government proposed to do. The noble Earl (Earl

Spencer) said he had always been in favour of dealing with the Land Question; and it was not easy to see how the latest measure that had been passed absolved the Members of the Government from the pledges they had given. Some Member of the Government ought to give the House an indication of what their policy was to be in reference to the land if that Bill was passed. The condition of such a measure should be that it would settle the question for at least a generation; but there was no prospect of this Bill doing that. The Leaders of the Nationalist Party were not agreed upon the point. Mr. Justin M'Carthy might accept it in good faith; but what authority had he behind him? The Parnellite Leader, Mr. J. Redmond, declared that the word "provisional" was stamped on every line of the measure. Mr. Parnell, who, with all his faults was head and shoulders above the Leaders who had succeeded him, could probably have enforced discipline in the Party; but it was doubtful whether he ever intended to fulfil the pledges he had given. According to his own last speech in Committee Room No. 15, he accepted the Bill only *pro tanto*; but with whom was Parliament now dealing? Who were these Leaders? Where were the worthy successors of the galaxy of talent which made the closing days of the last Irish Parliament so memorable and so glorious for that country? Where were the Floods, Grattans, Ponsonbys, and Plunkets? Upon whom had their mantle fallen? The present Leaders must be judged by their own acts as summed up on the finding of the Commission—that they had been guilty of criminal conspiracy upon this Land Question. That finding applied to 36 of them—the exact majority by which the Bill was carried in the other House. The Irish Leaders had achieved no success in any other walk of life; and, looking to their own utterances, it was doubtful whether any bargain entered into with them would be honestly kept. They were now at the parting of two ways—one the path of political expediency, which the Government invited them to follow, and along which a child might tread with ease, and the other the steep and uphill track of duty and principle, which it might tax all the energy and ability of full-grown statesmen to climb. On the choice which

they made, whether the evil be selected and good refused, was likely to turn the future not only of Ireland, but of this country for many a long year to come. He trusted their Lordships would pause before they sanctioned any such course—before they forgot that the nation had inherited that which was not to be manufactured in a day, and which ought not to be taken to pieces in a single Session. They had inherited a Constitution from their forefathers under which they had lived and flourished as no other nation in the world had ever done, and which, if possible, they ought to hand down unimpaired in all its brightness and lustre to their children and their children's children.

VISCOUNT DE VESCI said, that ever since the first faint rumours were put about that a measure of this kind was about to be introduced by a great political Party he had taken a share, both inside and outside the House, in organising resistance to it. The noble Earl the Secretary for Foreign Affairs had alluded to the unreality of the Debate. He agreed that there was unreality in it, because to all the thrusts and cuts delivered by the opponents of the measure there had not been on the part of the Government an attempt to parry, or at a real defence. The noble Earl himself, even in his admirable and most amusing speech, had not gone into the details of the Bill, but likened the Debate to the bull-fighting of Spain. He did not, however, attempt to stir up the Bill; he did not stop one moment—to use a vulgar expression—to give the bull one twist of his tail. The First Lord of the Admiralty, in introducing the Bill, was put in a position of great difficulty, which entitled him to the sincere sympathy of the House. He performed the task with admirable dignity and moderation; but he told their Lordships really nothing about the Bill. He gave a long catalogue of crimes and misdemeanours; but he did not, as he ought to have done, attempt to forestall, to some extent, the arguments which had been brought against the details of the Bill, for he must have known, from what had happened outside that House and in another place, what would certainly be advanced against the Bill in Debate. Lord Brassey, in his speech, gave some reasons why all other noble Lords in the

House save himself should vote in favour of the measure. Lord Ribblesdale also spoke in its favour with his accustomed ability, and gave most excellent reasons for the course he had taken; but he told their Lordships nothing about the Bill, and, having explained his own change of opinions, stood on the penitential stool with all his accustomed grace. The noble Marquess the Secretary of State for the Colonies, speaking in defence of the Bill last night, did not attempt to meet Viscount Cross's criticisms on the financial sections of the Bill. The notice he took of those criticisms was very cursory. He reproached the Conservative Party with having a share in granting the franchise to the Irish in 1884; he used it almost as a taunt against them that they had done so, and asked why the Conservatives had not continued that policy in the direction of Home Rule. It was not his duty to defend the Conservative Party; but he submitted that that argument really fell to the ground. The opposition to the Bill in that House must be mainly on its principles; and although it was difficult to avoid allusions to clauses and details, its provisions involved gross injustice in some cases, and in others were so imperfect in affording protection to the minority as to be merely a hollow mockery. There was no doubt whatever that noble Lords in that part of the House would vote in favour of the Amendment of the noble Duke (the Duke of Devonshire) for the rejection of the Bill; and he submitted it was their duty to vote for its rejection, and it would be again their duty to do so should it be forced once more through the other House, until its supporters fulfilled their obvious obligation of submitting it, with all its details, to the verdict of the country. It had often been pointed out how studiously the electorate had been kept in ignorance by the present Government ever since the defeat of their Bill in 1886; and only at the last General Election was the name alone of Home Rule before the country, and only so far as it furthered the interests of other proposals, which were sufficiently important in themselves, but had not been sufficiently submitted to public consideration, to really come within the sphere of practical politics. It could not be denied that every detail of this Bill was in any way understood

Viscount De Vesci

by the people at the last General Election. In a speech delivered in Dublin on the 24th of August, after the election, Mr. Dillon, the Member for East Mayo, said—

"The Irish Party would not give Mr. Gladstone their support in the House of Commons unless he satisfied them on all the details of the Bill; had they been given before the election took place, the verdict of England would probably have been given not for, but against, Home Rule."

That was the opinion of Mr. Dillon. He went on—

"As far as my poor political knowledge carries me, the first thing to do is to secure your hare, and then you will see how you will cook it."

That was not a very civil way of talking about the Prime Minister. He went on to say—

"First get a great English Minister, and the House of Commons, and the electorate of Great Britain to pronounce in favour of Irish liberty, and we shall know how to deal with the details of the Home Rule Bill afterwards."

He would remind their Lordships that Mr. Dillon was a person of great eminence in the Irish Party, with a great knowledge of English affairs, and he most probably knew what was proposed. Who could pretend now that the electors of Great Britain voted with a full knowledge of what was proposed? Ever since the Bill of 1886 was defeated, it was announced that that measure was dead; and that the Prime Minister and his Irish colleagues and advisers were perfectly free to recast their scheme in every detail, but no one outside the inner circle knew anything about it. It was certain that the English electorate were kept purposely in ignorance of it. It was only charitable to suppose that what had been called "the conspiracy of silence" on the part of many supporters of the measure in that House, at all events, was due to absolute ignorance. Every appeal for details of the policy of noble Lords opposite had been met with an absolute refusal; and it was hard to believe they really knew what was proposed. The noble Marquess, in a speech he lately delivered outside the walls of Parliament, called attention to the critical state of political affairs, and expressed his opinion that it might be necessary if measures of such a far-reaching and revolutionary character were proposed to discuss some system of *referendum*. The noble Marquess did

not apparently expressly advocate a system of *referendum*, but only intended to convey a warning. Our present means of taking the opinion of the electorate were sufficient, provided always that the electors voted untrammelled by official interference or the intimidation of political agencies. One aspect of the 11th clause had not yet been touched upon. By that clause the Government had withdrawn the question of Irish representation from the consideration of Parliament. It was now proposed that on all questions of Imperial policy—on all questions, English, Scotch, and Welsh—the 80 Members should vote in the Imperial Parliament. The Schedule of the Bill had already been dealt with by noble Lords who had preceded him. An almost scandalous attempt had been made to manipulate the constituencies in Ireland; but as long as one portion of the United Kingdom was extravagantly over-represented and another equally under-represented, it was impossible to say that any measure of this kind which came before their Lordships was really backed by a majority of the electors of the United Kingdom. He wished that the question of redistribution were seriously taken up, and a Bill on the subject carried through Parliament; if that were done the result would be to remove all idea of competition between the different parts of the United Kingdom. It was proposed to pass this Bill irrespective of the opinions and feelings of that large minority which represented one-third of the population and two-thirds of the intelligence, industry, and commerce of Ireland. It was said that there was no demand for County Government in Ireland, but he believed that there was; and he was confident from his own experience that if rural Municipalities were once created in Ireland their administration would be conducted with the same regard to economy and efficiency as prevailed in English and Scotch counties. They would not be managed by the same class of men as would be sent to the Irish Legislature. Would it not be better, with the co-operation of all sides, to pass a measure of that kind, and to watch its operation before they attempted to pass a Home Rule Bill? His noble Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs alluded to the question of the possible invasion of Ireland. The

South-Western Coasts offered the same attractions to the foreign invader as they had done before. What would be the consequence if at such a time the Irish Legislature passed Resolutions professing neutrality, or even condemning the Imperial policy, and the Irish Executive set recruiting on foot to afford assistance to an invader who had once landed on Irish soil. The answer had been hitherto—"Oh, this is contrary to human nature," and people talked of the Union of Hearts; but there was no security that the Irish Legislature would give even a moderate support to Imperial policy. Then he wished to ask by what moral right the services of the Imperial Civil servants were to be transferred to another Executive? He would ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether he gave his cordial assent to the 34th clause, which included the moratorium of three years during which the Irish Parliament might not deal with the question. In conclusion, he contended that those who lived in Ulster and in other Provinces had a right to speak for all classes of the Irish people, and in their behalf he claimed justice. He was not speaking in the interests of one class solely, and certainly not in the interests of the Irish landlords alone. The noble Earl said there were 113 Irish Peers in that House who had little or no right to speak on behalf of any interest out of Ulster. Many of their Lordships did not live in that Province, but were connected with people of the other three Provinces whose interests were bound up with theirs, notwithstanding this miserable political struggle. He maintained that they had a right to speak for all classes. There were thousands in the West and South of Ireland who were anxious to perform their honest obligations. Who did not know what the life of those men had been? They were constantly exposed to insult and danger to themselves and families in the House of God and on the public roads. Who would be in the position of such a man sitting in his cabin at night when every sound—the wind in the chimney, or the rattle of a latch—might be the harbinger of death? The existence of these men was one long agony. They were *adscripti glebæ* in the fullest sense of the term. Others whose horizon of life was wider could leave the country, and they did leave it for ever. They

were the kind of men who were the Pilgrim Fathers of the *Mayflower*. They left Ireland with a burning sentiment of passionate resentment in their breast, and that sentiment would go far to alienate the minds of men in our Colonies and in the United States against the Empire of Great Britain. On behalf of those men who were anxious to perform their honest obligations he claimed everything that was embraced under the name of justice.

LORD SWANSEA said, that, although he addressed their Lordships practically for the first time, he was an old Parliamentary hand, having had a seat in the other House for 41 years. Approaching this question in a judicial and unimpassioned manner, he had arrived at the conclusion that the time had come when this momentous question must be dealt with, in order that they might remove the chronic discontent from which Ireland suffered. Everybody, he thought, would admit that something must be done. What did the terrible condition of things in Ireland arise from? They had only to look to the history of that unhappy country. In 1800 the population of Ireland was 33 per cent. of the whole United Kingdom; the population of England being 9,000,000, of Ireland over 5,000,000, and of Scotland 1,600,000. Now, Ireland's proportion was only 12½ per cent. There were some 25,000 troops in Ireland, besides an armed police, to control the population; while, in contrast, Scotland had but 5,000 troops. Many measures had been introduced in times past for the pacification of Ireland, but they had been absolutely useless. What was the alternative to this policy? None had yet been proposed. The only proposal was another 20 years of resolute government and coercion. But that policy had recently been tried for seven years, and was Ireland any nearer to pacification and contentment at the end of those seven years than at the beginning? The people, no doubt, were kept down with a strong hand, and there was less agrarian crime. But that was not enough. What a Government should aim at was the contentment of the people, and that Ireland was not contented with the present state of things was proved by the fact that at the last General Election four-fifths of the Irish Members returned to

Parliament were Home Rulers. The Duke of Devonshire the other night had hinted feebly at some extension of the County Council system as an alternative. The noble Duke appeared to think that County Councils possessed extensive executive powers, but, as the Chairman of a very large County Council, he could inform the noble Duke that they possessed no executive powers. They could not even originate a Bill in Parliament. The smallest borough in the country had more extensive powers than they. To attempt to satisfy Ireland by the creation of a glorified County Council would be foolish and puerile, for Ireland would never be contented until she had a National Council. The Irish claimed to be a nation. ["Hear, hear!"] They were a nation, and he hardly knew how to interpret those cheers. Were they, or were they not, a nation? [The Marquess of SALISBURY: No.] Then what were they? Would the noble marques define what the Irish people were, if they were not a nation. [The Marquess of SALISBURY: Two nations.] For his part, he thought it must be admitted that they were a nation, and certainly until they were accorded the rights of a nation they would not be contented. This measure, he believed, would content them. It was the 80 Nationalist Representatives in the House of Commons who had a right to express the views of Ireland, and not noble Lords in that House who represented their own interests, but not those of the Irish people. He had had a long experience of the Irish Members in the House of Commons, and he declared that a more able body of men did not exist. At first he felt strong prejudice against them, because they interfered so largely with the business of the House. He felt intense resentment, hardly realising that it was the beginning of a civil war, as it were, in the House of Commons. But gradually the enormous power of the Irish Representatives forced itself upon him. They were men of great intellect and determination and were true patriots. No doubt the course they took in the House of Commons was most disagreeable to English, Scotch, and Welsh Members, but it was the only course they could take to bring home to the House and the country the strong National desire for self-government. It was very easy to discredit and disbelieve the Irish

Members, but he had faith in them, and believed that when they had accepted this measure they had accepted it loyally and honestly. [*Laughter.*] It was easy for noble Lords to laugh, but they did not know these men as he did. [A noble LORD: We know Mr. Redmond.] Let them take the lowest view. These men would hold high Office, and the Opposition imputed to them the folly of lightly throwing away that position for which they had struggled for so many years. Their Lordships might depend upon it that they knew too well where their interests lay, and when responsibility was thrown upon them they would be found as able to conduct the affairs of their country as any men who ever sat in the House of Commons. They knew they were weak and that Great Britain was strong, and they were aware that if they abused their power they would have the power of this country against them. Was it not unworthy that a nation of 33,000,000 people should fear a nation of, deducting 1,500,000 "Loyalists," 3,000,000? Did not this Bill enact the absolute supremacy of the Imperial Parliament? ["No, no!"] It did so distinctly, not only in the Preamble, but in distinct words. But no such enactment was really wanted, because the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament was not touched. If the Irish Parliament enacted any unjust law their Lordships might be sure that the Imperial Parliament would immediately override it. He, for one, would never assent to any Act of the Irish Parliament which caused spoliation. The Irish leaders knew full well how far they could go. They knew that the English people were essentially a just people, and that any action of theirs which might be unjust to the landlords or anyone else would not pass muster in this country. He had never supported the Bills which had been introduced for the purchase of land, but so far as defending the property of the Irish landlords was concerned there was no man in the House who would go further than he. He believed that the veto of the Lord Lieutenant would be actively employed should occasion arise; but he would strongly deprecate any peddling interference with the affairs of Ireland. He had always favoured the retention of the Irish Members as a sign and symbol of the unity of

the Empire; but he rather regretted that the Government had departed from the in-and-out method. One of the strongest reasons for the Bill was that it would remove Irish questions from the House of Commons, where they had been a curse and an impediment to the effective discharge of the duties of that Assembly. He recognised that there must ultimately be an appeal to the country. He did not, however, admit that the Liberal Party had no mandate. Home Rule was the primary, though not the only, question at the last Election. At the next Election the details of the Bill would be before the country, and he believed they would be accepted by the electors, and that all the visionary Unionist bugbears would be blown to the four winds of heaven by the knowledge which the country would have of the exact provisions of the scheme. The country would see that the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament was guarded in the strictest manner, and that none of the evils prophesied could possibly arise. His firm conviction was that when another appeal was made to the country an enormous majority would declare in favour of Home Rule. That Members of the House of Commons had voted for the Bill because they knew it would be rejected by the House of Lords, he did not believe, and the suggestion contained a grave imputation. The Liberal Party had created our Constitution, and desired by every means in their power to uphold it; but the course taken lately in the House of Commons had shaken our Constitution more, perhaps, than anything that had taken place for many long years. If the Closure were not applied a Bill of this kind would never be passed. Their Lordships were going on very dangerous lines. It would be very much wiser to deal with this great question in a different manner from that which their Lordships had adopted. His prophecy in regard to the result of any future appeal to the country would undoubtedly come true, and then their Lordships would not be able to deal with the Bill so calmly, or be so able to modify its conditions as they might now if they chose.

*THE MARQUESS OF WATERFORD said, that none of the noble Lords who had supported the measure had said a single word about the Bill. As far as he could understand, Lord Swansea had been

brought over to Home Rule because he discovered that Ireland was declining in population, and therefore in prosperity. But the noble Lord compared the time before the famine with the time after the famine. Ireland, as a matter of fact, had increased in prosperity by leaps and bounds since the Union, and, as the country had been over-populated, the decline in the population had been one of the reasons of the increased prosperity. Lord Rosebery had made a very witty and clever speech. The early part of it was full of jokes and chaff; but this Bill was not a matter to joke about. The noble Earl joked about a policy which, if it were made effective, would indubitably produce a terrible tragedy in Ireland. It would bring ruin, despair, and possible death to hundreds of thousands of strong men, weak women, and little children in Ireland, and yet the noble Earl thought it was a good thing to joke about. He, on the contrary, did not think it was a subject for joking; neither did the Loyalists of Ireland. It was most unseemly of the noble Earl to make a joke out of the prospective misery of thousands of his fellow-subjects. The noble Earl refused to answer the criticisms of the noble and learned Earl who opened the Debate that evening. Why? Because they were unanswerable. The noble Earl made an uncalled-for and wholly unjustifiable attack on his noble Friend (Lord Muskerry), who was asked by the noble Earl whom he represented in Ireland. He would tell the noble Earl whom his noble Friend represented. His noble Friend was one of those who represented the loyal minority in the South and West of Ireland, a constituency which was increasing in volume in opposition to this measure in a different manner from another constituency with which the noble Earl was acquainted, and which was not far from his own doors in Scotland. He maintained that the noble Earl gave a very lukewarm support to Home Rule in the speech which he delivered earlier in the evening. Up to the present time the Foreign Secretary had been very reticent on the subject of Home Rule; he had never thoroughly explained himself, and he was sure that their Lordships were very anxious to hear the explanation of his attitude that evening; but, strange to say, he was again equally reticent. The noble Earl had every

reason not to commit himself in favour of this policy, because there were certain remarks of his which needed elucidation, which showed that the noble Earl must have found great difficulty in changing his opinions. In 1885, referring to a supposed alliance between Mr. Parnell and the Conservatives—an alliance which only existed in Gladstonian brains—the noble Earl described identically the present position of affairs, and described the consequences, the only difference being that it was a different company that was on the stage. He said on October 15, 1885—

“Now if the Tory Government remains able, with the 80 or 90 followers of Mr. Parnell, to hold its own, the future of the next House of Commons will rest, not with Lord Salisbury or Lord Randolph Churchill, but with Mr. Parnell. He, and not Lord Salisbury, will be the master of the situation; he, and not Sir M. Hicks-Beach, will be the Leader of the House of Commons. He will sit enthroned with Lord Randolph Churchill on his right and Sir Michael Hicks-Beach on his left, like Chiefs in Israel, with 80 Parnellite Members behind them who have signed the blind pledge of his followers.”

That was a pretty strong statement, but he had even a stronger one. The noble Earl went on to say—

“Though it has its comic side, I think this prospect is a tragic one.”

Possibly the noble Earl little thought that he would be turned himself into an actor of tragedy and comedy combined. Again, he said—

“But I go further, and I say that this alliance of the Tory and the Irish vote is a new and very dangerous feature in our politics”;

and again—

“because it is an alliance which has not merely struck a mortal stab at political principles, but it involves a danger to the Empire itself.”

The noble Earl had never explained one word of that speech. He was for a long time entirely silent, but in 1892 he did make a speech adopting Home Rule. He would ask the noble Lord whether a mortal stab had now been given to the political principles of himself and the Party he belonged to; and whether his prophecy had proved correct, and the Empire was involved in serious danger?

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: It was explained at some length in my speech at Leeds, and I shall be happy to send a copy of it to the noble Marquess to-morrow morning.

The Marquess of Waterford

*THE MARQUESS OF WATERFORD proceeded to say that the noble Earl (Earl Spencer) who moved the Second Reading of the Bill had enumerated all the Land Acts passed since the famine, though he failed to understand how they applied to this Bill except as an argument against it, and he did not explain one of the safeguards of the measure. All the explanation vouchsafed was an expression of belief on the part of the noble Earl as to what those safeguards would effect, and that he believed they would have the effect of protecting the minority. Their Lordships remembered, however, when the noble Earl was Viceroy of Ireland, and that at that time he acted as if he believed the reverse of what he told their Lordships the other evening. Was it possible the noble Earl's views had changed in consequence of the necessity for obtaining votes? In his able speech Lord Ribblesdale explained how he had come to change his opinions in consequence of an Irish majority having been returned twice or thrice in support of Home Rule. The same argument would apply to a Separatist majority returned for Yorkshire or Northumberland. But the noble Lord did not stop to ascertain how that majority was obtained or what it represented. Would the noble Lord be astonished if he heard that a very large number of people who voted for Home Rule in Ireland did so for the same reason that a number of the majority voted for this Bill in the House of Commons—namely, that they knew it would not pass? But in the South and West of Ireland he heard that farmers were terribly frightened at the prospect of the Bill passing, and many of them earnestly hoped this House would throw it out. A Roman Catholic tenant farmer had said to him that he did not believe there were many men in Ireland who had £20 to lose who were in favour of the Bill. The Earl of Rosebery stated his views of what Home Rule should be at Glasgow, on June 17, 1886, and he laid down certain conditions, but were they carried out by this Bill? He said, first, that Home Rule should be based on Imperial unity; second, political equality of the three nations; third, there should be an equal distri-

bution of burdens; fourth, that there should be safeguards for the minority; and, fifth, that it should be in the nature of a settlement, not a mere provocation for fresh demands. He would like to know whether the noble Earl thought those conditions had been carried out in this Bill? It was said that it did not destroy Imperial unity, but it certainly threatened the unity of the United Kingdom by involving the risk of separation or civil war. There could not be equality or equal distribution of burdens when Ireland governed herself and England as well, and Ireland gained £500,000 a year, which was offered on the Second Reading of the Bill by Mr. Gladstone, and which was certain to be a very great deal more. Then Lord Selborne had shown there was no machinery to enable this Parliament to exercise its supremacy. The only machinery that had been named were the armed forces of the Crown, and the employment of those meant nothing short of civil war. All safeguards for the minority would be evaded by men who, as Mr. Gladstone said, were wading through rapine to the dismemberment of the Empire. They had evaded the law under the British Government, and would do so very much more easily with the Executive power in their own hands. The Irish Members might well have accepted many of the Amendments that had been proposed to the Bill, because they well understood how to evade every safeguard intended to have been provided by those Amendments. What were the safeguards in the Bill? He could only make out nine, and some of them were an insult in their absurdity to the loyal minority, and, more than that, they were an insult to the understanding of the British people, and he hoped that the British people would appreciate the insult. They consisted—two of the supremacy of Parliament, two to prevent the endowment of Religious Bodies and interference with education, two for the protection of the property of Religious Bodies and Corporations, the Lord Lieutenant's veto, the Legislative Council, and the Land Question not to be legislated on for three years. With regard to the veto, Earl Spencer rather took credit for this being a great safeguard. It had, however, been shown that if the Lord Lieutenant attempted to veto Bills they had only to be tacked on to the Appro-

priation Bill, and Mr. Gladstone had himself admitted that the Lord Lieutenant would not then be able to exercise his veto. What, then, was the value of this veto? Suppose the Irish Government was to pass some Bill which confiscated the property of the landlords or of some other unpopular class, which Bill was supported in the country, and the Lord Lieutenant was able to exercise the veto. The Government, of course, would resign; a Dissolution would follow, and a larger majority would be returned in favour of the measure. What could the Lord Lieutenant do? He must either withdraw his veto or allow the whole Government of Ireland to remain in abeyance. The noble Lord had alluded to the safeguards of the Upper House. That House was to be elected on a franchise of £20, a franchise the noble Lord who spoke last night had shown that it was impossible to get a respectable jury in Ireland under. He wished to know what safeguard there would be if the Upper House consisted of identically the same class as the Lower House—almost all of the same religion—and with the same deadly antagonism to the loyal minority, and the same intense desire to plunder them, and drive them naked and penniless from the country? and yet this House was put forward as a protection of the minority. With that he need not deal further. The Opposition were told they showed a want of trust in the Irish people. He should like to know why the whole nature of the Irish was to be changed? They had declared what they were going to do with landlords, land-grabbers, and the police. Even if these declarations were mere vapourings, every temptation was held out under this Bill to the Irish people to prove their patriotism by fighting the safeguards of what would virtually be a Foreign State. Her Majesty's Government had shown that they did not trust the Irish Parliament a bit more than the Opposition, because they had deprived them of many rights that every civilised nation in the world possesses. Why should the Government do this if the whole nature of the Irish is changed? The noble Lord the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs had laid down as necessary that this measure should be permanent. The Prime Minister concurred in that. Mr. Gladstone

said that this Bill was to be a permanent and continuous settlement; but Mr. Gladstone, whenever he came to a difficulty, either declared it was not vital to the Bill or left it to posterity to settle, and the settlement might come at a time when England was least capable of dealing with the difficulty. Mr. Gladstone owed nothing to posterity, at present; but was it possible that he looked forward and already owed a grudge to posterity for what they would think and say of his outrageous attempt to produce anarchy in Ireland, to destroy the British Parliament, and endanger the British Empire, and was prepared to throw every difficulty on its shoulders in consequence? There was one question upon which the whole of this proposed legislation depended, and that was the agrarian question. He did not know whether their Lordships had heard of a very clever man—Finton Lalor—who in 1848 wrote very able articles in *The Irish Felon* newspaper. He said that it was impossible to carry Repeal unless they linked it to the question of the land, as you would a railway carriage to an engine. Mr. Davitt, Mr. Parnell, and the Nationalists generally had acted on that advice, and if it were not for that advice their Lordships would never have seen the disgraceful surrender of 1886, nor would this outrageous and absurd Bill have been ever brought before their Lordships' House. The noble Duke quoted a passage from a speech of Mr. Gladstone's in which he said that it was an obligation of honour, duty, and prudence not to leave the Irish Land Question to the Irish Legislature. But was that obligation satisfied by putting off its solution for three years? Another quotation had been made from a speech of Lord Spencer's, in which he spoke of a certain action as "mean and treacherous." That was referred to by the noble Duke, and again by Lord Ashbourne. The point of the remark was that it was made by the noble Earl about himself and the Government of which he was a Member. But if it were mean and treacherous in 1886 to leave the Irish landlords to the mercies of the Irish Parliament, what had rendered it less mean and treacherous now? For the first time he agreed with the noble Earl it was the height of meanness and treachery to leave the landlords to the mercy of an

Irish Parliament, knowing with certainty that they would be ruined. Their Lordships had heard the noble Lord explaining his reasons for changing his mind — namely, that the Land Purchase Acts had already settled the Land Question. Could a more miserable excuse be made? He did not believe that Lord Spencer could convince his own conscience any more than their Lordships' House that this was a sufficient excuse for such conduct. The noble Earl knew that the Act of 1891 was not a success; very few sales had taken place under it, and those few would be stopped at once if this Bill passed, because the tenants would not buy their land if they thought they could get it for nothing. Between the Acts of 1891 and the Bill of 1886 there was a marked difference. Under the Bill of 1886 it was compulsory on the State to buy, while under the Act of 1891 it was rightly left between the parties whether they would do so or not. Many Members of the Government, from their intense ignorance of Ireland and everything Irish, had no idea of the enormity they were supporting; but Lord Spencer knew Ireland as well as, or better than, himself. The noble Earl knew the cruelty, misery, and destruction this Bill would produce. Now, could he be prepared to hand over the many friends he had made in Ireland—men who supported and assisted him in the government of the country, and from whom he had accepted hospitality—to ruin and despair? It was impossible to understand how the noble Earl could introduce such a Bill—a Bill in which the Land Question had been entirely shirked. Their Lordships had seen the "No Rent" Manifesto and the Plan of Campaign. They had read the Report of the Special Commission, in which it was pointed out that the very men who would form the Executive Government in Ireland were those who

"Had combined together to carry out a system of intimidation to promote an agrarian agitation against the payment of agricultural rents, for the purpose of impoverishing and expelling from the country Irish landlords."

Mr. Gladstone stated on the Report stage that the Irish people could not confiscate the landlords' property without the fact being noticed by the House of Commons; but what could the House of Commons

do — what power had it left itself under this Bill? Absolutely none, except the power of re-conquest. The noble Lord predicted the difficulties which the Irish landlords would have to face at the hands of the new Irish Legislature when they sought to enforce the payment of rent, and said, suppose the bulk of the tenants refused to pay rent and the landlords issued ejectments, the Judges had power under the Act of 1887 to stay execution as long as the Court thought reasonable. How long would a Judge appointed, and removable by both Houses of the Irish Legislature, think it reasonable to stay execution? But supposing the landlord was able to get possession of the farm, what was to prevent the ex-tenant re-taking possession? It had been done often under the British Government. What would the Irish Government do? Would it be prepared to punish a man who could prove, as every evicted tenant has been able to prove to the satisfaction of the National League, that he had been unjustly evicted? If the landlord got a new tenant he would be what is called a land-grabber. Would the parents of the Evicted Tenants Bill grant much protection to the life and property of a land-grabber? He declared that not one farmer in the world would be mad enough to take a position which would certainly lead to a cruel death. And it would be absolutely impossible that the landlord could work the land himself. There was another great danger he wished to refer to, and that was the Sub-Commissioners. They had seen tenants' valuers giving evidence as to the value they placed on the land, often less than a third of the judicial rent afterwards fixed. Well, he believed these valuations would be enormously high compared to the rents which would be fixed by the Sub-Commissioners appointed by the Irish Executive. Then after three years there would be nothing to prevent the Irish Executive from passing an Act reducing the judicial rents which were in existence. What was the use of the clause in the Bill which said that no one was to be deprived of life and property except by due process of law when no process of law was required to take away every particle of property in Ireland from its present possessors if the Executive Government were handed over to

their deadliest enemies? What had the landlords of Ireland done? Their only crime appeared to be that they had been loyal and true to England, and had assisted, as the English garrison, in preserving Ireland to the British Crown. What would be the position of the landlords who sold under the Ashbourne Acts and had left large sums amounting to £2,000,000 out as guarantee deposits, trusting to the honour of the Imperial Government? As far as he could understand, the Irish Executive were to pay to the English Exchequer the interest and principal by a Sinking Fund of 4 per cent. upon the £10,000,000 advanced under the Ashbourne Acts. But only £8,000,000 had been actually paid: £2,000,000 were still retained by the National Debt Commissioners for the guarantee deposits. What was to happen to these £2,000,000? The Irish Government were to pay the principal and interest on the whole £10,000,000, and, therefore, he supposed that these £2,000,000, which belonged of right to the vendors, would be paid over to the Irish Government, who would be responsible for collecting the instalments. He feared that if the Irish Government obtained control over these £2,000,000 the money would probably be made use of to pay the first debts that would be due by the Irish to the English Exchequer. It was an outrageous thing, money having been lent, as this had been, on certain conditions upon Imperial security, that the security should be transferred to what would be a bankrupt State, and one which would have every inducement to withhold both interest and principal from its owners. Was it likely that the purchasers would continue to pay those instalments to the very men who had all along been telling them that they were paying too much for the purchase of their land? He had only dealt with one point in this awful Bill, and had limited his remarks to the effect of it upon holders of land in Ireland. He had not dealt with the expressed intention to tax absentees, of which Mr. Gladstone approved, because he thought it a perfectly immaterial matter, as there would be no property to tax. He thought he had shown their Lordships that it was an absolute certainty that every particle of property in land might be confiscated in four or five different ways, and he had

The Marquess of Waterford

only taken the most prominent ones; but there were many other provisions in the Bill which might be almost as effective for the purpose. He had not dealt with the thousand and one other terrible effects which this Bill would have if it became law. He had not mentioned its effects upon England and the British Empire. He had not mentioned its effect upon Ulster or upon various other classes in Ireland who would be almost equally betrayed and destroyed. He had not dealt with the Exchequer Judges, who were to enforce their decrees against a hostile State without any machinery whatever, nor with the other untold absurdities with which the Bill teemed. Not one argument had been brought forward in favour of such a frightful measure, and not one argument had been produced to prove the necessity of it. It would cause the ruin of thousands upon thousands of almost every class in Ireland. It would steep the country from end to end in ruin, bloodshed, anarchy, and despair, and would undoubtedly cause the most terrible civil war. The Irish Question had always been a difficulty to England, but if this Bill passed it would become ten times the difficulty that it ever was before. But, what was a thousand-fold worse than that, Ireland would for the first time become a terrible danger to the Empire. He did not believe for a moment that the right-thinking British people would ever consent to such a frightful iniquity being perpetrated, and he hoped and believed that their Lordships would throw this Bill out by the largest majority that had ever voted against a measure in their Lordships' House.

THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN said, that the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs asked their Lordships—he was not quite sure whether he asked it seriously, or as a riddle or conundrum to amuse their Lordships—whether the Irish Peers represented in any way that part of the United Kingdom. If the question were asked as a riddle he would give it up at once; but if it were asked seriously, he confessed that it was difficult to give a distinct answer. It was the first time that Irish Peers had been asked to prove that Irish Peers represented Ireland any more than the noble Earl the Leader of the House represented

noble Marquess the Leader of the Opposition, or even Lord Rosebery himself, represented that portion of the United Kingdom in which they lived. If, however, he was asked his opinion, he should say distinctly that the Irish Peers did represent a considerable portion of opinion in Ireland. Lord Rosebery, remarking that Lord Muskerry had said that he knew Ireland, asked whether Ireland knew Lord Muskerry. He could not see that the question had any relevance to the subject, but it seemed to him that if Lord Muskerry knew Ireland he was perfectly entitled to give an opinion of a proposal affecting the government of Ireland. He thought that if the noble Earl had reflected a little more he would not have spoken as he did. He was inclined to think that the Duke of Abercorn and the Marquess of Waterford represented a large body of people in Ireland, and his own views coincided with those of the Protestant farmers and labourers, the great bulk of the well-to-do Catholics, and the entire gentry in that part of Ireland in which he lived. The noble Earl said the Debate was useless, because the result was a foregone conclusion. Their Lordships would remember that, so far as the Irish Peers were concerned, the question had been before them for many years. He had not considered this question for 8, 18, or 28 years, but as long as he had been able to consider anything. It was a great mistake to suppose that the owners of landed property in Ireland objected to Home Rule from interested motives or because of racial or religious prejudices. So far as he was concerned, his sympathies were entirely with the people of Ireland. He was inclined, if anything, to be too much attached to the romantic side of the past of Ireland, and he could assure their Lordships that, if with a clear conscience he could identify himself with anything that was a popular movement in Ireland, he should be only too glad to do so. But he objected to Home Rule from conscientious motives, because they knew and understood the country, and knew the ruin it would bring about. Lord Rosebery made a most instructive speech, but it was rather disappointing, for in it he said not a single word about the Bill. He had looked forward to that speech to explain the Bill, and possibly to convert

him to the noble Earl's views. The noble Earl said the Bill was of no importance; and what was of importance was the policy, but he forgot to explain the policy. He knew what was the noble Earl's policy with respect to Ireland in 1885, for he then said—

“We ought to govern Ireland and to legislate for Ireland without reference to the Irish vote. To my mind, there is only one policy to be pursued towards Ireland, and it is to treat her exactly, as far as may be, as you would treat any other portion of the United Kingdom.”

He gathered nothing from the speech of the noble Earl, except that he told them it was the duty of a statesman to shift the weight and responsibility from his Chief, and to sift the wheat from the chaff. He gave up all hopes of being a statesman if that were so, because it was absolutely impossible to sift the wheat from the chaff in Lord Rosebery's speech. That was an excellent policy, but it was not the policy of the Bill. He dared say the rejection of the Bill in that House was as much a foregone conclusion for certain reasons as the passing of the Bill by the other House was a foregone conclusion for certain other and totally different reasons. But if the House of Lords did reject the Bill that decision would be the collective result of the well-thought-out and perfectly matured, totally independent, and individual opinion of the Members of the House. With regard to the provisions of the Bill, he did not propose to go into that, but he wished to address himself in trying to discover what were the reasonable grounds for the rosy view of the situation taken by Lord Spencer in introducing the Bill. It was difficult to consider the Bill for this reason, in his opinion: Because they had postponed the Financial Clauses, the Land Question, and the right of Ireland over their own taxes, but he would take the Bill as well as he could. There was one thing that they had all agreed on, and that was the transient nature of the measure. No Representative of the Government had yet answered the very pertinent question put by the Duke of Devonshire—whether, in speaking of supremacy and unity, the Government used the words in the sense in which they were applied to the Empire, or in the sense in which they were applied to the United Kingdom. But, at any rate, the Bill contained pro-

visions by which Ireland would soon make the terms applicable only as they were applicable to the self-governing Colonies. When it was proposed to set up a practically independent State the first thing should be to form an estimate of the feelings of the population towards the measure. Of course, the Bill would be received with acclamation by the professional agitator, who would see a long vista of place and emolument before him. It would also please the mistaken enthusiasts, who believed in the reality of what was only a dream—the prosperity of an independent Ireland. The Bill would also raise immense expectations and hopes doomed to bitter disappointment in the minds of the great bulk of the people, chiefly the more uneducated and ignorant part of the population, who knew nothing of Home Rule or repeal, but who only knew what they were told—that Home Rule would by some mysterious process of political alchemy change the whole condition of Ireland, and with that view they would be temporarily satisfied. And he admitted that the Bill would be popular with those classes—the agitator, the enthusiast, and the ignorant people. On the other side, the Bill broke faith with the highly educated and intelligent classes—the Imperial Civil servants, to whom it would mean ruin, and it also broke faith with that highly educated and highly trained body of men, the Irish Constabulary. Then the class of landowners, though not large and important, must be counted in. For many years the landlords had been subjected to a process of vivisection, and before each operation they had been assured that they were compensated by the additional security given to their body. In 1886 Land Purchase was declared an essential condition of Home Rule, and £115,000,000 was allocated for the purchase of land. Every Party in the State had admitted that the Land Question should be fairly settled; but now, after a respite of three years, the Irish landlords were to be handed over to the tender mercies of the Irish Legislature, to men who had waged war against them, to politicians who over and over again had declared that the value of the landlords' interest in the land in Ireland was the value before a tree was felled, a swamp drained,

or before a sod was turned. The landlord was to be taxed to death if he remained in Ireland, and out of existence if he remained out of the country. He did not suppose that this treatment was one likely to cause this class in Ireland to look with favour on the Bill. The noble Earl (Lord Spencer) said that they were secured by the veto; but he did not think it was a very valuable security. Again, the whole of the population in the North of Ireland had demonstrated in the clearest way their utter abhorrence of the measure; so had the great bulk of the more educated Roman Catholics. Nearly the whole of the wealth and practically the whole of the manufacturing industry of the country had all opposed the Bill. In all seriousness he asked noble Lords opposite whether it was wise, politic, or safe, whether it was not an act almost of insanity to start a community on practically a separate and independent career with all the wealth, nearly all the manufacturing industry, and the greater part of the intelligence of the country all bitterly opposed to the new order of things? It might be difficult for their Lordships to realise the state of things in the same way as he understood them; he thought they would change their opinions if they did. He supposed it was no use trying to change the opinion of any noble Lord; but he would appeal to their Lordships, for the sake of the country he was born in and loved, not to inflict this cruel blow upon it. Under just and impartial laws and Executive Ireland was perfectly free. There was no privilege; there was no ascendancy of any person, class, or creed; but, if you removed the balance that was kept by a just and impartial Imperial Parliament, there were forces of disorder—old race animosities, old religious jealousies in the process of becoming extinct—that were still ready to be fanned into flame. If you withdrew the protection enjoyed for nearly 100 years the country must become a prey to social disorder of the worst kind, the battlefield of the rivalry between socialists and priests. It did not matter who was to blame—Catholic or Protestant, Celts or English—we had to look at things as they were. Earl Spencer did not apprehend anything like religious intolerance, and said that it did not initiate popular movements, but glided on

the stream ; but the earthen vessel suffered if it came in contact with the iron pot ; and the small farmers of the North would get the worst of it if they came into collision with Archbishop Walsh. He objected to the whole position assumed by the Roman Catholic hierarchy. It was shown in connection with the Meath Election Petitions that it was allowable and even the duty of the priesthood to influence by spiritual means the electors of the country in the way they should vote. On principle he objected to the ministers of any religion interfering in that way in a purely secular duty of the people. He ridiculed the angelic theory in relation to the Irish Nationalist Representatives, whose sudden conversion, by a curious coincidence, occurred, like that of the present Government, precisely at the moment when conversion was necessary in order to attain their ends. Even if the theory were true, it would be impossible for the Irish Legislature, even with the best intentions, to evolve order out of the chaos that must inevitably ensue in Ireland on the withdrawal of the even balance maintained by the active supremacy of the Imperial Parliament. What had been the value of the Union to Ireland ? The Union had converted the Northern Protestant population from being the most disloyal in the two Islands to being probably the most loyal. If the Union had done nothing but that, it would have done a great and useful work. What had it not done for the South and West of Ireland ? If Ireland had been in the position in which she would be placed by this Bill she would have been absolutely ruined in times of famine and agricultural depression, and it was only by the great assistance and the active co-partnership with the United Kingdom and her liberality that she was. There were portions of the country still who looked in bad times to the richer country for support, and they would get it so long as they formed part of the United Kingdom, but what would become of those portions of the country when they were no longer a part of it. Nothing could compensate Ireland for the loss of the Union. There was not an industry in the country which would not suffer from the withdrawal of English capital and credit. Ireland herself had got no capital and no credit ; she had not

natural resources to enable her to obtain a loan, unless it was, as it was said in another place, under the altered circumstances she would have a plethora of wealth. They would do the greatest injury that mortal man could devise to Ireland if they passed this Bill, and Ireland had done nothing to deserve it. It had been said that the other House had received a mandate to pass this Bill. He utterly and entirely denied that this Bill was before the country at the last General Election. They had been told that the Labour Members had voted for Home Rule, but they had not been told that the Prime Minister had received a deputation of the Labour Members, and they had pressed him for an answer to certain categorical questions and had got an answer from him. They asked him, if they could show him that the Eight Hours Bill was more important than Home Rule, whether he could modify his views upon it. And Mr. Gladstone for some time said that he could not change his opinion, and he could not do anything to help them until Home Rule was satisfied. Of course, under the circumstances, Labour was content to put Home Rule on its programme. If they looked at the speeches and addresses of many of the Gladstonian candidates at the last General Election, a considerable number contained no allusion whatever to Home Rule, others mentioned it vaguely, and some supported it on three grounds—that it would relieve taxation, that it would be a final and permanent settlement of the Irish Question, and that it would enable Parliament to attend to legislation for England and Scotland. Not one of those conditions were fulfilled in this Bill. The noble Earl (Earl Spencer) had admitted it himself in his speech that the only way that the provisions of a Bill like this could be forced was by military force superseding the statutory government by Martial Law.

EARL SPENCER : I did not say Martial Law ; I said military force.

THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN asked how he was going to draw a distinction between military force and Martial Law ? It should not be forgotten that England's weakness was Ireland's opportunity, and he would be a bold man who should prophesy that this country would never be at war again. But if she were to, what would be the position of Ireland

then. They would not have a friend in Ireland. In five years they would have estranged all the educated people in the country, and have made enemies of those classes who had been disappointed and found their hopes blighted. They would have found an Executive Government hostile to them, Parliament hostile to them, and a people hostile to them. If this nation surrendered a great strategical position like Ireland, it must safeguard itself against the possible consequences of making a large increase to the Army and Navy, and this would necessitate a great pecuniary sacrifice. What possible chance or sign was there that this measure would be a permanent settlement of the Irish Question? The Land Question was still unsettled, and the financial arrangement was unsettled. It was perfectly true that the other day Mr. J. M'Carthy was put up in the House of Commons to say grace for the Bill, and very nicely he said it; but little, if any, importance could be attached to that, for up to the present hour no recognised Leader of the Nationalist Party had declared that that Party would be satisfied with this measure. The postponed subjects must give rise to endless Debates in Parliament before they were settled, and did they think that there would be no more active obstruction on behalf of the Irish Members who were retained, and who were not satisfied with the Bill? Moreover, Ireland would be obliged in her own self-interest to obtain help from Great Britain in a variety of ways, and the obstruction of the Irish Members in Parliament must become more extensive. The Bill sacrificed British interests in every way. Nothing could be done to protect British labour against the dire effect of the influx of Irish labourers that must follow upon the destruction of Irish industries by the withdrawal of British capital. Differences of opinion on questions of war and neutrality, on questions of actual legislation in matters of divorce, the hours of work, and factory legislation generally, must create immense frictions between the two countries. It was proposed by this Bill to set up within sight of Britain a practically independent community—a State absolutely honeycombed with the germs of civil disorder; a State that must be bankrupt from the commencement of its

The Earl of Dunraven

being, and which would be bound to look to some extraordinary source for the means of conducting its industries and commerce; and you would endow this State with innumerable means of harassing the trade and commerce of Great Britain and jeopardising her neutrality in case of war, and endangering her position in time of war. Not content to impose a measure fraught with such dangers to Great Britain, the Government had the effrontery to ask Great Britain to pay for it. From the very conduct of the Bill by the Government the absurdity of it was demonstrated. Let them look at the question of finance. First of all, the contribution of Ireland to Imperial taxation was to be 1-15th. Then that was changed to 1-26th, and that was changed to 1-40th, and then it was given up in despair, and the whole question was relegated to a distant future. So with the Irish representation. The Government first proposed exclusion, then the in-and-out plan, and now they sought to perpetrate the greatest absurdity that ever emanated from the mind of man. The truth was the principle of Home Rule collapsed the moment they tried to put it into practice. It was well enough to take it as an ideal, and as in the main perfect, but they could not put it into practice. What was this change to do for them? They had heard that it was to give satisfaction to Ireland, but they must not forget that Ireland was not going to be satisfied as they wished it to be. It had been said that the Irish were contented in the United States and the Colonies. What difference was there between the Common Law of those countries and the Common Law of the United Kingdom? What greater share had Irishmen in America in the making of the laws than Irishmen in the United Kingdom? Not one word of proof had been given that the Bill would do any good to Ireland. The Bill would not satisfy the aspirations of the Nationalist Party, and it would dissatisfy everyone else. The only thing the Irish people cared for was to get their land cheaply, and for nothing if possible. The Bill was not an advance. It was not the result of any natural growth or demand. It was not a matter of federation. It was not the relaxation of tutelage, the granting of the rights of manhood to

growing and expanding communities, as in the case of self-governing colonies. It was not the result of a natural, national demand in Ireland constitutionally expressed for local self-government as could be given with real and effective security for the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament and the unity of the Kingdoms. The Government were acting in compliance with the demand of men whose real objects, they must know, were the absolute independence of Ireland and the encompassing of the ruin of Great Britain. They had told the electors that the Union had been accomplished by fraud and force, and that it had been detrimental to Ireland. That was a delusion. They had been told also that a measure of this kind would satisfy to the full the aspirations and the demands of the Nationalist Party. That was a gross delusion. For the civil and religious liberties of Her Majesty's subjects in Ireland, for the effective supremacy of the British Parliament, for the maintenance of the unity of the Kingdom and of the Empire, the Government relied entirely on the most precarious security—the power and the goodwill and intention of men whose public career was perfectly well known to all. This House would only be doing its Constitutional duty in rejecting the Bill, while it was also its duty to stand up in such a case for free speech, and to stand between the people and tyranny. He had given as shortly as possible the reasons why he should go into the Lobby and vote for the Amendment of the Duke of Devonshire, acting under his sense of duty, and believing the course which he adopted was the true course towards his beloved country.

LORD SANDHURST said, that he would put before their Lordships the reasons which induced him to support this Bill. He must crave their indulgence for the few remarks he was about to make. The Bill had been debated by a large number of speakers—noble Lords who had held high administrative Offices in the service of the Crown. Now, the noble Marquess of Londonderry had wondered what the effect would be in the Colonies if this Bill were passed. Well, he was in the Australian Colonies after the rejection of the Bill of 1886, and on all sides he was met with this question—Why on earth

has Home Rule been refused? The supporters of the Government were taunted with following their Leader. Well, they had a Leader they were proud to follow; and the noble Marquess had a Leader, or, perhaps, two, for he spoke about the noble Duke as one to whom he owed allegiance. In Ulster did they have leaders, or was every man his own leader, on the principle of every man his own lawyer, with the same distinction as the clients? It was said there were thousands of Protestants and tens of thousands of Catholics opposed to Home Rule; but the assertion could not be accepted whilst four-fifths of the Irish people were represented by Home Rulers in the House of Commons. The noble Marquess uttered a threat last night in describing the action of his Ulster friends in view of Home Rule.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: I uttered no threat whatever.

LORD SANDHURST retorted that of course the noble Marquess could put his own construction on his own words, but his opponents were at liberty to place their own construction upon them, and in his opinion the words conveyed a threat of a most distinct character. In regard to threats, and in regard to some of those itinerant orators who had been to the North of Ireland using language which certainly would not have the effect of quelling but rather of promoting disturbance, he would quote a passage from a speech delivered by a learned lawyer in this country after a statement had been made by Lord R. Churchill—

“We ought all of us to condemn these foolish, these wicked rumours that are made about Ulster—that the minority in Ireland will find resort to arms, and that they will be right in doing so. Unreservedly I declare that any man who by word or act encourages such an idea is at heart a traitor.”

These were the words of Sir H. James, a close colleague of the noble Duke. For noble Lords to say that there was no mandate from the country and that the question of Home Rule was not before it at the General Election was playing with words. Had there been a single meeting of the Conservative Party where it had not been put before the labourers that if Home Rule were passed England would be flooded with Irish, who would take away their work? The first and foremost

part of every speech had been this question of Home Rule. It had been said by the noble Duke that this Bill had been forced through the House of Commons, and that if it had not been for the knowledge that it would be thrown out in their Lordships' House a great many Members would not have voted for it. He would like to know whether in the ranks of the Liberal Party or the Nationalist Party the noble Duke had a confidant? But if he had not it was unworthy of the noble Duke to speak thus of a Party of which he was once a Member. It had been said that capital was leaving Ireland in consequence of the introduction of this Bill, but the Stock of the Bank of Ireland stood to-day very nearly as high as it did last year, and there was hardly an Irish Railway Company whose dividend had fallen, while in some cases their dividends had increased, and he had been told there were large operations on the Stock Exchange and speculations. Had the old system of coercion and occasional conciliatory measures promoted harmony between the British Government and the Irish people? Everyone, he thought, must agree that it had not. The impoverished condition of the people in many parts of Ireland surely proved that something was amiss with the system of administration. For 93 years the plan of governing Ireland from England had been tried, and there were clear indications that it had failed. The Government had endeavoured to put before Parliament a Home Rule Bill which satisfied the aspirations of the Nationalists, by whom it had been accepted. It was said that there had been no discussion of the Bill in the House of Commons, but he maintained that its main points had been discussed in another place, and the retention of the Irish Members had been fully discussed. With regard to safeguards he would suggest that they should all be considered together. He looked at them, not only from an Imperial point of view, but from the point of view of common sense, and he could not believe that the Irish Council would engage at once in an internecine struggle to gain a separation which they had affirmed that they did not require, and which they knew perfectly well it would be impossible for them to get. Nor did he believe that on the morrow of their emancipation they would prove them-

Lord Sandhurst

selves so unpractical, intolerant, and unjust as to stamp their proceedings with the verdict that they were incapable and ought not to be trusted of themselves and their country. He thought it would be found to be the ambition of the Irish Leaders to prove themselves capable men, and that their policy would be actuated, not by greed or religious oppression, but by a singleness of purpose and a love of their country. Lord Cadogan had put a question to him with regard to the troops in Ireland, and had expressed the opinion that it would be extremely undesirable that the troops should be under the new Irish Cabinet. The Home Rule Cabinet would have no control over the Military Forces for the purpose of obtaining their aid to repress disturbances. If for that purpose they required the assistance of the troops they must apply to the Lord Lieutenant, who would either apply to the Secretary for War or, as an officer of the Crown, himself request the commander of the troops to send the necessary force. The local Magistrates would have the same power to call upon the troops to aid in suppressing, neither more nor less than they possessed now. This power was dependent on the obligation of every citizen to aid the Magistrate in suppressing riot. It was, therefore, quite independent of the Irish Cabinet. The demand for Home Rule arose from a deeply-rooted national sentiment. Those who had doubts as to the Home Rule policy need only study Mr. Lecky's history—second only to Mr. Chamberlain's speeches of seven years ago—to be at once converted. He quite agreed there were two Irelands. Reference had been made to America, and he quite agreed there was the Ireland that was beyond the sphere of that House in the various Colonies; but he believed this measure would turn every Irishman in America and the Colonies from hostile critics into active agents for Great Britain. Of course, the Bill would be rejected; but he should follow his noble Leader into the Lobby with the most sincere and absolute conviction that the Bill was not only politic, but right and just.

*THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK said, that he shared the regret which the Foreign Secretary had expressed on account of being separated from his

former Colleagues. But he admired the noble Earl's adroitness. Though he held the attention of the House for an hour and a half, in no part of his speech did he endeavour to meet the objections urged against the Bill. Nor did he in any part of his speech express his own approval of any portion of the Bill. The noble Earl attacked the Opposition because they were not prepared to read the Bill a second time, and go into Committee for the purpose of discussing the details of the Bill, and, indeed, of framing some new plan for settling the Irish Question. The responsibility of framing such a measure as this must rest with Her Majesty's Government, and not with the Opposition, however strong they might be. The speech of the noble Earl was obviously too late. It was a speech which might have been made with perfect propriety in support of an abstract Resolution in favour of Home Rule; but it was different in the present position of affairs, when the noble Earl was bound to give his reasons for supporting a measure which, after seven years' consideration, was introduced by a Government of which he was a Member, and, as far as could be seen, of which he did not express approval. The noble Earl said he was in favour of some measure of Home Rule, and it appeared to him that both the noble Earl and Lord Brassey would be glad to see this Bill defeated, or at least pulled to pieces if they saw the opportunity to do so. The last speaker referred to the measure of Local Government for Ireland introduced by the Opposition, but that reminded him of a remark made by the noble Earl which struck him as a very remarkable one. The noble Earl praised the London County Council Bill as one of the most revolutionary measures he recollected. The Unionist Government introduced a Bill for Ireland founded on precisely the same principles and dealing with similar affairs. But why was that measure denounced by the noble Earl and his friends? If the House of Lords considered it their duty to reject a Bill on the Second Reading it was their duty to give their reasons for doing so, particularly when, as in this case, the Bill had not been adequately discussed in the other House. Even if Home Rule were right, did the financial clauses meet the essential provisions of such a Bill as laid down by the Prime

Minister? These were equitable distribution of Imperial charges, some reasonable prospect of finality, and the assent of Ireland. Only one of the Financial Clauses had been discussed in the other House, and yet these clauses affected the interest of the taxpayers of the United Kingdom. Their Lordships were unable to amend these clauses, but they had the right to discuss them. The Irish contribution to Imperial charges in 1892-93 was estimated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer to be £2,300,000, and under the Bill the contribution to be paid was £2,276,000, from which certain deductions had to be made, and the net result of the financial arrangement was that Great Britain would have to pay more than £500,000 a year during six years in order to carry Home Rule. The Prime Minister had said that the taxpayers of England and Scotland must contribute something towards the Irish surplus. His noble Friend, Lord Spencer, said that if England desired to carry this measure she would not wish to treat Ireland "in a niggardly manner." Now, generosity was a feeling congenial to Englishmen, but in a matter of business those representing the taxpayers of England must look ahead. Home Rule for Scotland loomed in the future; the English taxpayer would be asked to give a contribution "in no niggardly manner" to provide a surplus for Scotland. The English and Welsh taxpayers would then suffer. Something had been heard about Home Rule for Wales. If that should come, and nothing was improbable after what they had seen with respect to the Irish Question, the English taxpayer would have to contribute "in no niggardly manner" a surplus to support the new Welsh Government. And then they came to Home Rule for poor England, and who was to make a contribution "in no niggardly manner" to England? It was necessary for the English taxpayer to take care he did not allow the first beginning of a principle of that kind to separate the finance of the United Kingdom, and at once to place this matter not upon generosity alone, but upon a fair and equitable distribution of the Imperial charges of the United Kingdom.

EARL SPENCER (interposing) explained that, while he spoke of dealing with Ireland in no niggardly spirit, he added arguments to show that the

arrangement would be a very good bargain for England.

*THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK said, that his noble Friend stated that it was not a bad bargain for England, because we had from time to time to assist Ireland in public works, light railways, and so on. But in the calculation of £2,300,000 was included a large sum for those light railways and public works, and therefore the consideration which his noble Friend had brought forward had been discounted. The financial plan of the Government in this Bill was based upon the Estimates of one year, and what reliance could be placed on such a calculation? Notwithstanding the great ability and care of the officers of the Inland Revenue a mistake of some £350,000 had been made this very year, and that mistake had invalidated altogether the first calculations laid before Parliament by Mr. Gladstone. How did they know that as large a mistake might not have been made in the present calculations? Their Lordships were asked to pass this Bill before they had the least idea upon what basis this arrangement stood. Whether they looked at the plan with reference to the Chancellor of the Exchequer of Ireland or the Chancellor of the Exchequer of the United Kingdom, it was open to the most serious objection. The Chancellor of the Exchequer of the United Kingdom would never be able to consider his Budget without at the same time considering what would be its effect upon the Revenue of the Irish Government. The proposed arrangement would remove all inducement to economy on the part of the new Irish Legislature, and the main part of the Irish Revenue would depend on the duties from alcoholic liquor. Mr. Parnell said the first action of an Irish Government would be to restrict the consumption of alcoholic liquor, but it would be impossible for them to do so, because if they did their Revenue would diminish and their finances would be disturbed. The proposal was, therefore, inequitable to Great Britain and embarrassing to both Exchequers. Mr. Gladstone told a deputation from the Belfast Chamber of Commerce that after the Bill passed there would be a plethora of wealth in Ireland; but the deputation had supplied information to the right hon. Gentleman which entirely

Earl Spencer

demolished his statistics, and no reply had since been given to the Chamber, although it seemed to have influenced some of the colleagues of the Prime Minister, for Mr. Fowler said that it would be impossible for the Irish Government to make any large reduction in expenditure. The Provost of Trinity College had said with truth that the proposed contribution was "a great deal too much for England to give and not half enough for Ireland to get." To establish a new Government must cost a considerable amount of money, and thus this new Legislature would find itself in great straits, even with the surplus, inequitable to England, which it was proposed to supply. The plan of the Government was on the face of it merely temporary. That was especially true now of the financial scheme, and thus one of the essential conditions laid down by Mr. Gladstone—namely, that the arrangement ought not to be "in the nature of a mere provocation to the revival of fresh demands," had been abandoned at the bidding of the Irish Party, by whom the Bill was viewed as a mere instalment. In conclusion, he hoped that he had proved to their Lordships, although he could have done it at greater length, that the Bill did not give "an equitable distribution for Imperial charges;" that it did not "promise to be a real settlement;" that it had not received the assent of Ireland; and that it must produce embarrassment in the future to both countries. He declared his belief that the country would support their Lordships in their rejection of this measure.

Further Debate adjourned till Tomorrow.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (SCHOOL ATTENDANCE) BILL.

Read 3^a (according to Order), with the Amendment, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

PUBLIC HEALTH (LONDON) ACT, 1891, AMENDMENT BILL.

House in Committee (according to Order): Bill reported without Amendment: Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3^a To-morrow.

House adjourned at Two o'clock a.m.
till Eleven o'clock a.m.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 7th September 1893.

QUESTIONS.

SHEFFIELD UNION.

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he has any objection to communicating to the *Guardians*, or the *Sheffield Press*, the Report of the Inspector as to the division of the township into wards for the election of *Guardians of the Poor*, for the satisfaction of the ratepayers concerned?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. H. H. FOWLER, Wolverhampton, E.): The Reports made to the Local Government Board by their Inspectors in cases such as that referred to are confidential, and I cannot furnish copies to the *Guardians* or the Press. The responsibility for the decision in cases like the present one rests exclusively with the Local Government Board.

CUSTOMS BOATMEN.

MR. HOPWOOD (Lancashire, S.E., Middleton): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury what is the cause of the delay in announcing to the Customs boatmen the promised information of the decision of the Treasury as to their improved pay; whether he will cause inquiry to be made as to the employment of some of their number for over 100 hours a week, taking into account the time necessary for clearing, leaving for the night, or being relieved; and is it the fact that a man entering the service at 20 years of age cannot attain 30s. a-week until he is 45 years of age?

***THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY** (Sir J. T. HIBBERT, Oldham): The delay is due to some necessary correspondence between the Treasury and the Board of Customs as to minor details; but the delay will not affect the men prejudicially, as the improvements now sanctioned will take effect retrospectively

from 1st April, 1891. The second paragraph is assumed to refer to boatmen in London assigned to boarding duty. I am informed that no such officer has been employed for over 100 hours per week; the average attendance per week is from 80 to 90 hours, but for 20 to 25 hours of this time the men are only kept within call, and may devote the time to reading, sleeping, or recreation, as they please. The statement in the last paragraph is not correct even at the old rate of increment, and under the new rate of increment a boatman will reach 30s. a week still earlier than at present.

VACCINATION PROSECUTIONS.

MR. LOGAN (Leicester, Harborough): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he is aware that, despite the unanimous recommendation of the Royal Commission on Vaccination, the vaccination officer of the Uppingham Union is again instituting proceedings against persons who have already been convicted and punished for not having their children vaccinated; and if he will direct such officers in the Uppingham and other Unions to discontinue prosecuting persons who have previously suffered the penalties for the same offence in regard to the same children?

MR. H. H. FOWLER: The Local Government Board have no information as to the case referred to. The opinion which the Board have held as to repeated prosecutions was expressed in what is known as the Evesham letter, and they still hold the same view. I am not empowered to give the directions which my hon. Friend suggests.

MR. LOGAN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he is aware that Ernest Ambrose Adams, residing at Bingham, in the Harborough Division of Leicestershire, was in October last proceeded against for not having his three children vaccinated, and then paid fines and costs amounting to 30s. or thereabouts; and was on Tuesday the 5th instant again prosecuted before the Uppingham Justices on account of the same offence in regard to the same children, and, although not fined, was again ordered to pay costs amounting to 10s. 6d.; and if, having regard to the unanimous recommendation of the Royal Commission on Vaccination,

he will order the costs in this case to be remitted?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. ASQUITH, Fife, E.): As I have frequently been obliged to say in answer to similar questions, I cannot give effect to the recommendation of the Royal Commission until Parliament sees fit to alter the law.

THE GWYLWYR SETT QUARRY.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon, &c.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the Crown Quarry, called the Gwylwyr Sett Quarry, Carnarvonshire, is being worked by the lessee; and, if not, will he explain why; whether there is any, and, if so, what provision in the lease to compel the lessee to work it; and why that provision is not enforced?

***SIR J. T. HIBBERT**: The Gwylwyr Sett Quarry is being worked, and there are five men at present employed there. The provisions in the lease for compelling the lessees to work are a certain or dead rent of £50 per annum, and a covenant requiring the lessees to work continuously with at least two able-bodied quarrymen. These provisions are being complied with.

THE WATERFORD AND LIMERICK RAILWAY.

MR. O'KEEFFE (Limerick): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if his attention has been drawn to the resolutions passed at the last half-yearly meeting of the shareholders of the Waterford and Limerick Railway Company on 31st ultimo, stating that they considered the action of the Board of Trade, in limiting the number of mixed trains on their service, as interfering with the interests of the company, the convenience of the public, and the progress of local business; and whether he can advise that this resolution will be favourably considered?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. MUNDELLA, Brightside): The Board of Trade have not received the resolution referred to; but while I can promise that such a Memorial would have careful consideration, I must remind the hon. Member that the Legislature has imposed statutory duties on the Board of Trade, in the interest of public safety, which it is not possible for me to disregard.

Mr. Logan

TORY ISLAND.

MR. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether any communication has been made to him by the Committee of Lloyds with regard to the maintenance of cable communication between Tory Island and the mainland?

MR. MUNDELLA: Yes; my attention has been called to this matter by the Committee of Lloyds, whose letters on the subject have been referred for the consideration of the Royal Commission on Electrical Communication.

MR. MACARTNEY: I beg to give notice that I will call attention to this matter on Supply.

EXAMINATION IN SEAMANSHIP.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether, during the examinations in seamanship on the *Britannia*, the instructors in seamanship are allowed to be present; and whether he will consider the advisability of excluding the instructors from these examinations, and leaving the cadets alone with the examining officers?

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Sir U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH, Lancashire, Clitheroe): The answer to the first paragraph is that it is under orders of the examiners that the instructors attend during the examination; and to the second paragraph, that no reason is known for their exclusion.

LIGHT VESSELS AND LIGHTHOUSES.

MR. LODER (Brighton): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade what light vessels have been or are being connected with the land by telegraph or telephone; whether all the shore, island, and pile lighthouses recommended by the Royal Commission on Electrical Communication have been so connected; and whether the experiment of connecting the Fastnet lighthouse with Crookhaven by a non-continuous cable has yet been carried out?

MR. MUNDELLA: The work of connecting the Kentish Knock light vessel with the shore by telephone is now in progress. Lundy Island has been connected. Either the Tuskar or Gunfleet lighthouse will be put in hand at once, and my right hon. Friend the

Chancellor of the Exchequer has also authorised the connection of the Goodwin (North Sand Head) light vessel; all the shore lighthouses recommended except that at the Needles, which is now in hand, have been already telephonically connected with the land. The experiment of connecting the Fastnet lighthouse with Crookhaven by a non-continuous cable has not yet been carried out.

POSTMEN'S VACANCIES.

SIR J. FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General if he can state approximately the number of vacancies for established postmen which occurred in the Metropolitan district and in the Provinces respectively in the years 1892-3, and the number of telegraph messengers who were eligible for such vacancies; and whether the preference of soldiers over telegraph messengers and outsiders had come into operation within the Metropolitan District in the said year?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. A. MORLEY, Nottingham, E.): I have the figures for the year ended August, 1892, and perhaps my right hon. Friend will be satisfied with those. They are as follows:—Number of postmen's vacancies filled in London during the year, 522; in the rest of the United Kingdom, 1,478. For these vacancies, there were in London 245 telegraph messengers eligible, and in the rest of the Kingdom 543. The policy of giving preference to soldiers over telegraph messengers has never come into operation, because the list of those with claims was not exhausted when the rule was altered. The preference to soldiers over outsiders in those cases in which there are no telegraph messengers with claims was made effective in November, 1891, and is still in force.

ABERDARE JUNCTION STATION.

MR. A. THOMAS (Glamorgan, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, in view of the fact that General Hutchinson, in a Report dated 17th June, 1893, to the Board of Trade, stated that to enter the Aberdare Junction Station by the existing approach is a most dangerous proceeding and one that ought to be put a stop to without unnecessary loss of time, will he

explain why no steps have been taken to render the approach to the station such as could be used with safety?

MR. MUNDELLA: The Railway Company have constructed a footbridge over the main line, and they contend that an improved access to the station should be constructed by the property owners or the inhabitants at large. General Hutchinson reported that it was reasonable that a fair share of the expense of improving the means of access should be borne by the property owners and the Local Authority, and the Board of Trade will be glad to use their best endeavours to arrange a settlement. The hon. Member will, however, understand that the Board have no power to use compulsion in the matter.

WALNEY LIGHTHOUSE.

MR. CAYZER (Barrow-in-Furness): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, having regard to the charges now made on all shipping entering the Port of Barrow for the Walney Lighthouse dues, a light which is reported by shipmasters entering that port as useless and not required, he will take steps to enforce the powers the Board of Trade possess, and call upon the proper authorities to inspect this light and report if the light is required, and whether it should not be abolished; and whether he will obtain a Return of the receipts and expenditure of the Walney Light, and the application of the surplus revenue reported to amount to several thousand pounds yearly, which, contrary to the Local Lighthouse Act, is applied by the Lancaster Harbour Commissioners and Furness Railway Company to other purposes than maintenance of the light?

MR. MUNDELLA: Walney Island Light was not established merely as a harbour light leading vessels to the Port of Barrow, but for the benefit of all vessels navigating Morecambe Bay. Light dues in connection with it are chargeable under Statute on all vessels trading to the several ports in the district. No complaint has reached the Board of Trade as to its inefficiency for the purpose for which it was instituted. As regards the latter part of the hon. Member's question, the Board are already engaged in collecting the information asked for from the different authorities concerned.

PAYMENTS FOR MAIL SERVICES.

MR. PARKER SMITH (Lanark, Partick): I beg to ask the Postmaster General what sums were paid in the last financial year for mail services or otherwise by the Post Office to each of the following Companies:—Cunard Company, Royal Mail Company, Shaw, Savill, and Albion Company, New Zealand Shipping Company, Union Company (African), Castle Packets Company, Orient Steam Navigation Company, and Pacific Mail Steam Ship Company; and whether any subsidies or payments for mail services were received by the same companies from any Colonial or Foreign Governments; and, if so, how much?

MR. A. MORLEY: The amounts paid by the Post Office in the last financial year to the Companies named were as follows:—Cunard Company, £49,399; Royal Mail Company, £92,855; Shaw, Savill, and Albion Company, £49; New Zealand Shipping Company, £99; Union Company, £424; Castle Packets Company, £528; Orient Steam Navigation Company, £85,738; Pacific Steam Navigation Company, £20,114. I am not in a position to say what subsidies or payments for mail services were made to these Companies by Colonial or Foreign Governments.

MONEY LENDING IN THE DOCKYARDS.

MR. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough): I beg to ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty whether his attention has been called to the remarks of the County Court Judge at Sheerness as to money-lending in the dockyards; and whether he will put a stop to such practices, in the interest of the men and officers in the employment of the Government?

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. E. ROBERTSON, Dundee): My hon. Friend has not supplied me with a report of the learned Judge's observations, and I have not been able to obtain one. I am informed that the money-lending transaction in question took place outside the yard, and, therefore, beyond the jurisdiction of the superintendent. In such a case, I do not see how the authorities could interfere without unduly trenching upon the personal freedom of the men.

NAVAL OFFICERS' LEAVE.

MR. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN (Kent, Faversham): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether there has been any exceptional advantage, as regards leave granted to the men, as compared with the officers engaged in the past Naval Manœuvres; and, if so, why?

SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: No such comparison as the question suggests can fairly be made. I informed the hon. Gentleman on Friday last what leave had, in the usual course, been granted to officers who served in the Naval Manœuvres. To the men seven days' leave has been given.

LARNE AND STRANRAER MAIL SERVICE.

MR. YOUNG (Cavan, E.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General if he is aware that there is no mail boat service on Sundays between Larne and Stranraer, although the line is subsidised by Government; and will he take steps to remedy this state of things in the interest of the public?

MR. A. MORLEY: I am aware that the mail boats between Stranraer and Larne do not run on Sundays. The improved service on weekdays not long since afforded involved a very large additional expenditure, and further outlay for the purpose of establishing a Sunday service would not be warranted.

VOLUNTEER EQUIPMENT.

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if, having regard to the heavy expense entailed upon Volunteer corps, and especially upon the officers, to provide the equipment necessary to earn the capitation grant, if by their exertions the strength of a battalion largely increases, it is possible to make a grant per head in respect of such equipment as was done two years ago for the Volunteers then serving?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling, &c.): The special issue of 1890-1 was made under exceptional circumstances, and it is not proposed to further supplement the regulated allowances of Volunteer corps. For an explanation of the practice in this matter, I

would refer the hon. and gallant Member to my answers to him on February 27, 1893, and to the hon. Member for Preston on May 1, 1893.

VOLUNTEER DECORATIONS.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the Volunteer Decoration is still conferred by Parcel Post; and whether he will consider the advisability of conferring this decoration in some more formal manner?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Volunteer Officers' Decoration is usually presented at a parade or other suitable assembly of Volunteers; but in cases where officers, owing to ill-health or on account of distance, are unable to attend such parade, the post is obviously the best means of transmitting the decoration. I may add that officers of the Regular Army, under similar circumstances, receive their "orders" and medals in the same way.

THE QUEEN'S BUCKHOUNDS.

MR. A. C. MORTON: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the Government intend to do away with the Royal Buckhounds?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EX-CHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby): My hon. Friend has asked me a very difficult question indeed; but, of course, I do not know whether he is aware of the difficulties of it. The Government have had the matter in view; but they found so many difficulties surrounding it that they have not been able to arrive at a conclusion with regard to it. I hope that on more mature deliberation I shall be able to give my hon. Friend a more satisfactory answer.

MR. A. C. MORTON: In the Autumn Session?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I am afraid that this can scarcely be regarded as a "non-controversial subject."

MR. DARLING (Deptford): I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the Government will in this case adopt the process which has been followed with regard to the Welsh Suspensory Bill?

SIR W. HARCOURT: That is a matter that will require consideration.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether,

instead of doing away with the Royal Buckhounds by a suspensory process, the right hon. Gentleman will consider the propriety of poisoning them?

SIR. W. HARCOURT: No.

THE IMPORTATION OF RAGS.

MR. MACDONA (Southwark, Rotherhithe): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether cholera is now prevalent in Smyrna; and whether he is aware that one of the largest importers of rags in England has received a telegram, dated September 2, offering 800 bales of cotton rags to be delivered forthwith in Liverpool; and, if this be so, what steps the Government propose to take to prevent so serious a risk and danger to the lives of so largely a populated place as Liverpool?

MR. H. H. FOWLER: I am aware that cholera is prevalent in Smyrna. The Medical Officer of Health of Liverpool has informed the Medical Department of the Local Government Board that no difficulty has arisen there in connection with the regulations as to the importation of rags packed in bales and imported as merchandise, and no difficulty is anticipated by him. The hon. Member, on September 1, asked me whether I was aware that there were lying in the wharves at London Bridge over 300 tons of rags imported from cholera-stricken places in Europe which the rag merchants in London refused to touch or take from the fear of introducing cholera. As I was unable to obtain any information which supported this statement in the question, the hon. Member subsequently informed me that the 300 tons of rags were then lying at Cotton's Wharf, London Bridge. An Inspector of the Local Government Board immediately visited that wharf; he found no rags there, and he was assured by the superintendent that there had not been any rags at the wharf which the merchants had refused to take.

MR. MACDONA asked whether it was true, as stated in *The Globe* of yesterday, that 400 bales of rags, weighing 200 tons, were despatched from St. Katherine's Dock, the destination of the greater part being Yorkshire, and thousands of tons of rags, which had been imported from Turkey and the Eastern ports of Europe were stored in the different docks and warehouses on the

Thames, and that these rags were in a foul and filthy condition?

MR. H. H. FOWLER: I cannot answer for the accuracy of a newspaper paragraph. I have already explained that the importation of filthy and infected rags is absolutely prohibited. What were described at the recent Congress at Dresden as "rags of merchandise" which have been collected over a long series of years, packed by hydraulic pressure, bound round by iron bands, and having the name of the place of origin marked upon them, are held by medical authorities at home and abroad to be rags that ought not to be prohibited. Under these circumstances, acting upon the advice of the Medical Department of the Local Government Board, and with the full knowledge that by prohibiting the importation of these rags I should be putting a stop to many important industries and putting a large number of people out of employment, I have not felt justified in prohibiting the importation of these rags, and in acting in direct violation of the Resolutions that were passed by the Dresden Congress, and which were signed on behalf of Her Majesty's Government. It is the opinion of the Government that no risk or danger will be incurred through the importation of these rags of merchandise.

PRECAUTIONS AGAINST CHOLERA IN IRELAND.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if the Local Government Board has lately issued any instructions to rural Boards of Guardians with respect to the course to be adopted in case cholera should break out; if the Local Government Board possesses any temporary hospitals or huts which can be at once furnished on an outburst of cholera to any locality; and has it made any provisions for an immediate supply of nurses for first cases?

MR. ASQUITH (who replied) said: The Local Government Board have issued full instructions to all Sanitary Authorities, including Boards of Guardians, as to the course to be adopted in case cholera should break out in Ireland; and during the present year the Board have been in frequent communication with Sanitary Authorities on the subject, both by correspondence and by personal

Mr. Macdona

conference between the Authorities and the Board's Inspectors. It is believed the Authorities are now fully alive to their duties and responsibilities in the matter. The Board have no hospitals or huts which could be furnished for the use of Local Authorities, but they have prepared plans and specifications for an inexpensive form of temporary hospital, particulars of which have been communicated to the Authorities, and will be found in the Board's last Annual Report lately presented to Parliament. I may also observe that an Act has been passed this Session enabling Sanitary Authorities to take possession of land for the erection of cholera hospitals. With regard to the last paragraph of the question, it is the duty of the Local Authorities to provide nurses; and the Board, through their Medical Inspectors, as well as by a recent Circular Letter, have impressed upon the Local Authorities the importance of this matter, and pointed out how the object in view can be attained.

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY BILL.

SIR C. W. DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has succeeded in drafting a clause to deal with sub-contracting; and, if so, whether he will place it upon the Paper in the course of the present Sittings, in order that there may be time for the consideration of it in the country by those interested before the Employers' Liability Bill is brought forward on Report?

MR. ASQUITH: No, Sir; I have not been able, up to the present moment, to devise a satisfactory solution of this difficult problem. If I am able to do so, there will be no delay in putting down the clause.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam): Will the right hon. Gentleman do the same in regard to any Amendments which he may have to propose to the new clause standing in the name of the hon. Member for Crewe in reference to insurance?

MR. ASQUITH: The Government have no intention of proposing any Amendments to that clause.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether his attention has

been called to the unanimous Resolution passed by the Trades Congress calling upon him and the Government to stand by the clause of the Bill preventing contracting out of the Act?

MR. ASQUITH: My attention has been called to the proceedings at the Trades Union Congress; but the Government never had any intention of making any alteration in the clause as to "contracting out."

CAMPS OF EXERCISE.

MR. MACARTNEY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether any arrangement has yet been arrived at with regard to the acquisition of the deer park in Antrim Castle demesne as a camp of exercise?

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No, Sir; no arrangement has been arrived between the General Officer commanding in Ireland and Lord Massereene as to the use of the deer park of Antrim Castle.

THE IRISH EVICTED TENANTS.

COLONEL NOLAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can now state, with any degree of definition, when he intends to introduce his promised Bill with regard to the evicted tenants?

MR. ASQUITH: The Government will not be in a position to make any statement on this subject before the Adjournment, nor until they have viewed the legislative business of next Session as a whole.

THE CONVICT DALY.

COLONEL NOLAN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether Daly, a convict, is being punished for statements alleged to have been made without his knowledge at a distance of some hundred miles from his prison; and whether Daly is now prevented from receiving visits?

MR. ASQUITH: The answer to both questions is in the negative. Daly will, in the course of a few days, be visited by a relative.

FOLKESTONE CASUALS.

MR. HOGAN (Tipperary, Mid): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been drawn to the decision of the

Elham Guardians to increase the existing accommodation for casuals at the Union workhouse, instead of providing a casual ward at Folkestone, from which a large number of casuals have to walk; and whether, in view of the fact that Elham Union is over five miles distant from Folkestone, it is intended, during the coming winter, to subject applicants for relief in Folkestone, men, women, and children, to the necessity of walking over five miles before they obtain that relief?

MR. H. H. FOWLER: I understand that the Guardians of the Elham Union have had under consideration the provision of additional casual wards, and that they resolved that these wards should be erected at Elham, and not at Folkestone. I have not, however, as yet received any application from the Guardians on the subject. When that is received it will be my duty to give the proposals of the Guardians my most careful consideration. Since the previous question of the hon. Member as to the casual ward arrangements of the Union was put to me, the Local Government Board directed the Inspector of the district to visit the wards and report fully on the subject. The facts are these:—The casual wards of the Union were erected in 1886, and are about the best wards in the County of Kent. They are built on the cellular system, and accommodate 20 men and 10 women. Each cell is warmed by a hot-water pipe and fitted with a bell. The beds are straw mattresses and rugs on a wooden platform. There are day rooms, and a disinfecting and drying room. This is the only building which has been certified by the Local Government Board as the casual wards for the Union. There have, however, during the present year frequently been a larger number of male casuals than could be accommodated in the certified wards. Temporary accommodation has in these cases been provided in a building containing two rooms, which, prior to the erection of the new wards, was used as the casual ward. This building is used once a fortnight as a temporary stable. To provide sleeping berths on the occasions when there has been an overflow wooden platforms raised from the ground have been fixed, the bedding being a straw mattress with two rugs. The provision for women and children in the certified casual ward is

four single and six double cells. When the number of women has exceeded the accommodation in the certified wards it is the practice to provide for the surplus in the receiving ward. On three occasions during the year when there was a small excess in the number of women the receiving wards happened to be occupied by cases which had not been examined by the Medical Officer, and then the overflow was provided for in one of the two rooms of the old building, but, of course, not in one which was occupied by men. As to the situation of the proposed new wards, I may observe that casual wards are not intended for residents in Folkestone, but for vagrants moving across the county, and that as regards several workhouses a casual ward at Elham is on a more direct route than wards at Folkestone would be. As I have already stated, the Guardians have informed me that the relieving officer has instructions to make provision for the conveyance by train of persons who, in consequence of age or infirmity, should not be subjected to a journey on foot to Elham, and in cases of illness he is also instructed to find the applicant a home at one of the common lodging-houses at Folkestone. With reference to a statement which I believe has been made that tramps of both sexes have been put into one room, I can only say that if any workhouse master is guilty of such a course he will be instantly dismissed.

EXTRA CUSTOMS OFFICIALS.

MR. DARLING (Deptford): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether it is in contemplation by the Government to improve in any way the pay or position of extra outdoor officers of Customs in the Port of London?

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: The pay and conditions of employment of extra outdoor officers of Customs in the Port of London have been recently improved under Treasury authority dated June 16 last.

MR. DARLING: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether there is any intention to further improve the conditions under which those men are employed?

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: The conditions under which these men were employed were very fully considered, and it was felt that a great improvement in their

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behalf was effected by placing a large number on weekly instead of daily employment and wages.

OUTDOOR DEPARTMENT OF CUSTOMS.

MR. VICARY GIBBS (Herts, St. Albans): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in view of the fact that the Treasury Minute of 24th March, 1891, relative to an inquiry into the administration of the Outdoor Department of Customs, states that the attention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer has been directed to the success which elsewhere in the Public Service has attended Departmental examinations held to gauge the qualifications of officers at certain stages of their career, whether he can say if this statement refers to the Excise Department; and, if not, to which Department of the Public Service it does refer; and whether he can say what is intended to be conveyed by the words certain stages in their career?

*SIR W. HARCOURT: The Minute was issued before I went to the Exchequer, and I am unable to give a more exact interpretation of the meaning of the passage referred to than that which appears from its wording. If the hon. Member desires more detailed information he should apply to my predecessor.

THE AMERICAN MAIL SERVICE.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether his attention has been drawn to a letter from a firm of merchants in the City, stating that their American correspondence, *ex Etruria*, was not delivered at their office until after 1 p.m. on Saturday, the 2nd instant; whether these letters reached London ready sorted shortly after 10 a.m. on that day; and whether steps will be taken to insure a speedy delivery of the American mail *viâ* Queenstown, upon arrival in London?

SIR A. ROLLIT (Islington, S.): I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he is aware that on Saturday last the American mails, *ex Etruria*, which left South Kingstown by the 12.57 train, and which reached Holyhead at 4.31 and London 10.17 a.m. with the mails fully sorted and ready for immediate delivery, did not reach leading firms in the City until after 1 o'clock that day; and whether this period of three hours between arrival and delivery

is within or beyond the average time considered necessary for such delivery ?

MR. A. MORLEY : I have seen the letter referred to. The first van conveying from Euston Station the American mails brought by the *Etruria* reached the General Post Office at 10.41 a.m. on the 2nd instant. The letters, although sorted in the usual manner for the various London districts, had to undergo some further preparation before they could be sent out for delivery by postmen. They just missed the delivery in the City commencing soon after 11, and could not be sent out until noon. Every endeavour will be made to insure a speedy delivery of the letters as far as possible.

MR. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.) : I beg to ask the Postmaster General at what hour the *Teutonic*, which left New York on Wednesday, 30th August, at 10 o'clock a.m., reached Queenstown on Tuesday last, and at what hour the *New York*, which left at 8.45 a.m. on the same date, arrived at Southampton; and when were the mails conveyed per *Teutonic* and per *New York* delivered in London ?

*MR. A. MORLEY : The *Teutonic* arrived off Queenstown at 3.10 p.m. on the 5th instant, and the *New York* arrived at Southampton at 7.20 a.m. on the 6th. The correspondence for the City brought by the *Teutonic* was sent out by the delivery commencing at 2.5 p.m. p.m. on the 6th. That brought by the *New York* had already been delivered, having been received in time to be included in the delivery commencing at 11.5 a.m.

MR. MACARTNEY : Were the mails which arrived by the *New York* taken on by ordinary or special train ?

MR. A. MORLEY : Not by special train. It was not a case in which a special train was required.

MR. SEXTON (Kerry, N.) : Was there a special service from Queenstown for the *Teutonic* ?

MR. A. MORLEY : No ; there was not—the full mail came by Southampton.

MR. SEXTON : If there had been a full mail, would there have been a special service from Queenstown ?

MR. A. MORLEY : I cannot answer that, but I will make inquiry.

MR. SEXTON : I understand that this was one of the cases where, the mails

arriving on Tuesday, a special service would be given to insure that merchants in London and other large towns would be enabled to forward their replies by the mails going out to-day.

MR. A. MORLEY : I believe that is the case, but I will inquire about the matter.

MR. MACARTNEY : Can the right hon. Gentleman explain how it was that the mails which arrived by the *New York* at Southampton at 7.20 a.m. were delivered before the specially addressed letters by the *Teutonic*, these letters having arrived in London between 6 and 7 a.m. ?

MR. A. MORLEY : They arrived off Queenstown at 3.10 p.m. on the 5th, and in time to be sent out by the delivery commencing at 2.5 p.m. on the 6th.

TRALEE AND DINGLE RAILWAY.

SIR T. ESMONDE (Kerry, W.) : I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he will inform the House what steps have been taken with reference to the promised inquiry into the circumstances of the Tralee and Dingle Railway, the nature and scope of the proposed inquiry, and the name of the official who has been appointed to conduct it ?

SIR J. T. HIBBERT : The Treasury has written to the Board of Public Works expressing the opinion that an inquiry should be held by an expert as to the actual condition of the Tralee and Dingle Line, and the outlay on alterations and rolling stock necessary for safe working, and asking the Board to suggest an engineer to whom the inquiry might be entrusted. I have not yet received the Board's reply.

MR. SEXTON : I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he will agree to lay upon the Table of the House a copy of any Correspondence, or of any facts that may be ascertained by the inquiry ?

SIR J. T. HIBBERT : I will consider the matter.

SIR T. ESMONDE : Will the right hon. Gentleman hurry up the Board of Works ?

SIR J. T. HIBBERT : I have already done so.

DRUMCONDRA TRAINING COLLEGE.

MR. MACARTNEY : I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieu-

tenant of Ireland whether the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland communicate the results of the examination held in July of candidates for the Training Colleges to them or any other persons; and, if not, whether he can state why not; and whether there is any objection to publishing a Return of the names of the candidates admitted to Drumcondra and the other Training Colleges, with the percentage of their answering as well as that of the rejected candidates?

MR. ASQUITH (who replied) said: The Chief Secretary is in communication with the Commissioners of National Education with reference to this question, and will be glad if the hon. Member will repeat the question next week.

KILDYSART PETTY SESSIONS CLERK.

MR. MAGUIRE (Clare, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been drawn to the appointment of Head Constable Crosby as Petty Sessions Clerk at Kildysart; whether Constable Crosby has yet served his time for a pension; and whether, as he was not retired, he is eligible for the appointment?

MR. ASQUITH (who replied) said: The name of the Head Constable is Cromley, not Crosby. He received the permission of the Inspector General to become a candidate for the post, and was appointed by the Magistrate. He was entitled to a pension on his retirement from the force. The matter is now under the consideration of the Irish Government.

THE COAL CRISIS.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has any information as to the serious rioting in various colliery districts?

MR. ASQUITH: I have telegraphed to the Chief Constable of the West Riding for a full Report. I regret to say that very serious disturbances are reported to have taken place at Knottingley; but I am not able to give the House any information.

SUSPICIOUS DEATH.

MR. LEES KNOWLES (Salford, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether it is

true that one of the female cleaners on the establishment of the House of Commons was taken ill on Tuesday last and died this morning of Asiatic cholera?

MR. H. H. FOWLER: The hon. Member has not given me notice of the question. I am aware that a fatal case of a very suspicious character has taken place this morning of one of the cleaners of this House. The question is receiving the most complete examination by the Medical Department of the Local Government Board; and, although I am sorry to say that all the indications are very suspicious, I am not prepared to say that it is a case of Asiatic cholera.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby): A promise was given recently that a statement should be made on behalf of the Government with regard to the future progress of business. I think it would be for the convenience of hon. Members if I were to mention, in the first instance, that the Army Estimates will be taken on Monday next.

MR. HANBURY (Preston): The War Office Votes first?

SIR W. HARCOURT: Yes. With regard to the Bills the Government desire to keep on the Paper, I prefer to mention the names of those which we hope may live rather than those which we fear may die. I would divide those Bills into several sections. The first section I would call Bills that we must pass, I think. These necessary Bills are three—the Expiring Laws Continuance Bill, the Statute Law Revision Bill, and I must also reserve power to bring in occasioned Financial Bills that may arise out of the circumstances of the time. Then I come to the second class, which are Bills of an extremely useful and non-contentious character, mostly Consolidation Bills, which are of immense convenience to all classes of the community. They have been prepared with great care, and, as they merely re-enact the present law, I hope the House will allow them to be taken in the interstices of business. They are the Sale of Goods Bill, the Trustee Consolidation Bill, the Merchant Shipping Bill, and one that does not belong entirely to this category

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—namely, the Public Authorities Protection Bill. Then I come to the third and last class of what class of what the Government hope may be regarded and accepted by both sides of the House as non-controversial. The first is the Naval Defence Amendment Bill, which is necessary in consequence of certain difficulties that have arisen in the winding up of the Naval Defence Act. Then there is a Bill mentioned the other day by the right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean, the Madras and Bombay Army Bill, and there is the Light Railways (Ireland) Bill. Then I come to another Bill, which I hope will be accepted as non-controversial, the Sea Fisheries (Scotland) Bill. That has been agreed to in all its main particulars by the Scotch Members, and is identical in principle and similar in its provisions to the Bill introduced by the late Government. Its provisions have been recommended by a unanimous Report on Sea Fisheries this Session. Then there is the Bill of my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary, the Pistols Bill. I hope that Bill may be accepted as non-controversial. [Mr. HOPWOOD: No.] I understand that my hon. Friend is the only opponent of the measure, and I hope that he will withdraw his opposition, in order that the very general sense of the House may be carried out. Though it is difficult to call a Pistols Bill a non-controversial Bill, I hope it may so be treated. Then there is a Bill which comes down from the Lords, called the Law of Commons Amendment Bill. I hope that may be put in the same category. Another Bill of great importance is the Savings Bank Bill; and although the banking interest is offering considerable opposition to it, I understand from my right hon. Friend the Postmaster General that negotiations are taking place with a view to a compromise. I should, therefore, hope that the Bill would be kept on the Paper. Coming to the last Bill upon which a good deal was said the other day—I mean the Equalisation of Rates (London) Bill—I would make a very earnest appeal to gentlemen on both sides of the House to allow this measure to be placed in the non-controversial category. The opinion of London is very strong in favour of this measure, the London Members are almost unanimous upon the

subject, and there is no opposition to the principle involved. I hope the late Chancellor of the Exchequer will allow the Bill to be kept upon the Paper, and to be treated as a non-controversial one. If great conflict of opinion should be found with regard to it, it could then be dropped. It is a great disappointment to the Government that the circumstances will not permit of these Bills being more numerous. I hardly think it necessary to state that the Employers' Liability Bill and the Local Government (England and Wales) Bill will be kept upon the Paper as the principal Bills to be dealt with during the Autumn Sittings; and I should hope, if the right hon. Gentleman is able to state that he agrees with the list I have mentioned, that the proceedings may be shortened, and we may have an early holiday.

MR. GOSCHEN (St. George's, Hanover Square): I think the House will agree that while the Chancellor of the Exchequer has made a most conciliatory speech, the list of Bills which are still to be retained on the Order Paper, and which he hopes will be discussed, is rather a long one. There are 14, which the right hon. Gentleman has divided into three categories—the necessary Bills, the Consolidation Bills, and other Bills. With regard to the necessary Bills—the Expiring Laws Continuance Bill, the Statute Law Revision Bill, and the Occasional Finance Bill—I have only two remarks to make. Of course they are necessary Bills, but I am under the impression that there are matters in connection with the Expiring Laws Continuance Bill which will lead to some discussion. That has to be taken into consideration when we are discussing the distribution of the time of the House. About the Statute Law Revision Bill I presume there will be no difficulty. As to the Consolidation Bills, I have no authority to say how they will be dealt with by the House; and I think the Chancellor of the Exchequer will feel that it would be impossible for me to give a definite answer without consultation with the Leader of the Opposition and Members interested. I see no objection to the Naval Defence Act Amendment Bill passing; but I can give no answer to the right hon. Gentleman with regard to the Sea Fisheries (Scotland) Bill, the Pistols Bill, or the

Law of Commons Amendment Bill. I believe the Savings Bank Bill is the same measure as was introduced by the predecessor of the present Postmaster General, with this difference—that the limit of the amount of deposits is raised from £50 to £100. I understand that there is a possibility of a compromise with the bankers, and if the latter are contented we shall be prepared to see the Bill pass. Of course, I cannot speak for the bankers without consultation, but I can undertake that there will be no Party objection to the Bill. Then I come to the last Bill mentioned by the Chancellor of the Exchequer—the London Equalisation of Rates Bill. I must say I was rather astonished at the manner in which it was dealt with by the right hon. Gentleman; and I think it is scarcely fair, after the previous declarations which the right hon. Gentleman himself has made, to re-introduce this question. The right hon. Gentleman has been, no, doubt, under considerable pressure, but with that the House really has nothing to do. The right hon. Gentleman said that if it was treated as controversial it would be dropped. Certainly, there are large questions of controversy in the Bill; it is not, however, a question of the Members of this House only, but of the Local Authorities in London, and it would be unfair to the Local Authorities to call upon them at this period of the Session to present their case before the House. The Bill involves considerable difference of opinion, and I hope the Chancellor of the Exchequer will adhere to the declaration with regard to it that he made upon a previous occasion. It is highly probable that Members may have left London under the distinct impression that the right hon. Gentleman's decision was final. I do not feel that I am in a position to give any answer as to other Bills, though personally I think the Bombay Army Bill is a good one, and should not be treated as a matter of controversy, and that the Light Railways (Ireland) Bill might be passed.

***SIR C. W. DILKE** (Gloucester, Forest of Dean), on a point of Order, asked whether it would be in Order for anyone to make observations going beyond those of the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Leader of the Oppo-

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sition, or whether questions only could be put?

***MR. SPEAKER** ruled that questions only could be put.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) asked whether the Government intended to do anything in the way of legislation on behalf of the Highland Crofters?

MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE (Hereford) asked whether, as the Law of Commons Amendment Bill and the Sale of Goods Bill were likely to give rise to protracted discussion, it would not be better to withdraw both Bills?

***MR. ANSTRUTHER** (St. Andrews, &c.) asked whether the discussion on the Sea Fisheries (Scotland) Bill could be taken at a reasonable hour; and whether the Government, in order to facilitate the passing of the measure, would accept, without debate, all the numerous Amendments which stood on the Paper?

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) asked whether, in view of the notes on the Bill made by the draftsman, the Merchant Shipping Bill was not more than a consolidation measure?

MR. T. H. BOLTON (St. Pancras, N.) asked whether Progress would be reported that night at a reasonable hour, to allow the London Equalisation of Rates Bill to be discussed?

MR. STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) asked that, under the peculiar circumstances of the case, the Equalisation of Rates Bill might be read a second time?

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping) inquired whether "the interstices of Public Business" meant Saturday Sitzings?

MR. DARLING (Deptford) asked that sufficient notice of the Equalisation of Rates Bill coming on might be given, so that Members might be present at the discussion.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) asked whether a Parish Councils Bill for Scotland would be brought in during the Autumn Session?

MR. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough) asked whether the promised Bill would be introduced for the repeal of the property qualification of Magistrates in England and Wales?

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston) asked whether the Government intended to

move Amendments on the Madras and Bombay Armies Bill or not?

*SIR A. ROLLIT (Islington, S.) asked that, in view of the urgent need of such a measure, the Savings Banks Bill might be passed this Session? He intended to support the Equalisation of Rates Bill in favour of which he had presented a Petition from his Vestry, and thought opposition to it might be removed by bringing on any discussion at an earlier hour than 2 in the morning.

MR. HENEAGE (Great Grimsby) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman proposed to take these Bills after 12 o'clock, or whether he proposed to carry them over to the Autumn Session?

SIR H. ROSCOE (Manchester, S.), considering the recurrence of cholera, asked for facilities for passing the Isolation Hospitals Bill.

MR. NAOROJI asked when the Indian Budget would be taken?

MR. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) asked that the Equalisation of Rates (London) Bill should be pressed forward this Session.

*SIR R. TEMPLE (Surrey, Kingston) asked whether the Madras and Bombay Army Bill would be taken at some hour when it could be fairly discussed?

MR. MORE (Shropshire, Ludlow) asked what arrangements the Government had in contemplation to enable them to send those Bills which they expected to pass shortly before Christmas to another place?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): My right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer has divided the Bills which he proposes to take into three classes. As to the first of these, I do not think there can be any objection on any side of the House. As to the second class of Bills, relating to consolidation, I should, for my own part, have no objection to them if the Government give their pledge, which I understand them to do, that they would involve no alteration of the law [*cries of "Order!"*] Nor can I believe there would be any objection to the third class, provided—[*cries of "Order!"*] I shall move the adjournment of the House if hon. Members persist in their interruptions.

MR. SEXTON (Kerry, N.) rose to Order, and asked the Speaker whether there was one rule for the right hon. Gentleman and another for other Mem-

bers of the House, who would like, not simply to put questions, which the right hon. Gentleman was not doing, but to speak?

*MR. SPEAKER said, as the right hon. Gentleman was intimating that there was no objection to certain Bills, he thought the progress of Business might be facilitated if he were allowed to proceed.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Certainly, Sir. I cannot understand what the objection was. As regards the third class, there can be no objection to taking them if the Government would undertake to deal with them before 12 o'clock; but if they intend to take advantage of the new Rules I can only say there is the very greatest objection to all these Bills.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I thoroughly admit that no Bill ought to be taken as a Consolidation Bill which is not really of that character, and if the hon. Member for King's Lynn (Mr. Gibson Bowles) is at all right in what he said respecting the Merchant Shipping Bill—namely, that there are serious alterations in it—we shall not attempt to proceed with a measure of that volume and magnitude. I will take notice of what the hon. Member has said, and inquiry shall be made into the matter. All we are doing now is keeping these Bills on the Paper. I was surprised to hear my hon. Friend the Member for St. Andrews Burghs (Mr. Anstruther), as I understand those Burghs are on the East coast of Scotland, coming forward as the principal opponent of the Sea Fisheries (Scotland) Bill.

*MR. ANSTRUTHER (St. Andrews, &c.) said, the right hon. Gentleman was, he thought, treating him unfairly, and endeavouring to misrepresent what he had said. All he had done was to put certain questions to the right hon. Gentleman respecting the Bill. He had said no word against the Bill.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I understand that most of the Scotch Members, except the hon. Member, have withdrawn their Amendments; but if there is any serious opposition to the Bill, and it appears that the measure will require considerable time to dispose of it, it will not be taken. As to the question of the hon. Member for King's Lynn (Mr. Gibson Bowles), I forgot to mention that what we propose is that the Merchant Shipping Bill

should be read a second time for the purpose of referring it to a Committee.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES pointed out that he objected to the Second Reading of the Bill, on the ground that it was not a Consolidation Bill.

SIR W. HARCOURT: Something was said about the interstices of business. I did not mean by that phrase a fugitive half-hour. It may occur that we may have a spare day, and in that case we shall endeavour to proceed with the least controversial of the Bills, and get them forward. I also meant that these Bills would be taken at any time during the Session. I have always endeavoured to make that clear as well as I could.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I beg my right hon. Friend's pardon. I do not know that he has said anything inconsistent with what he says now; but what he says now is distinctly inconsistent with the pledge the Prime Minister gave.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I think the right hon. Gentleman is mistaken in that. These matters have been discussed between the Prime Minister and myself from the commencement, and I am sure if he had said anything of that kind I must have known. My recollection of what he said is that it related to the main business of the Session. It is not our intention to proceed with the Magistrates' Qualification Bill during the present Session.

MR. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough): The Government gave notice of the Bill early in the Session.

SIR W. HARCOURT: At all events, it would be regarded as a new Bill, and we cannot ask the House to go on with it now. Objection was taken by an hon. Member to the Commons Amendment Act. I think that may be regarded as not a very dangerous or revolutionary measure. I am not acquainted with the Isolation Hospitals Bill, but I will inquire concerning it. If it is a useful and urgent Bill, and no objection be taken to it, it may be disposed of. I am very sorry I cannot mention the date of the Indian Budget, because we have already stated that it is to be taken with the Appropriation Bill. I wish I knew when the Appropriation Bill would be taken. As to the Madras and Bombay Army Bill, I hope to take it in reasonable time.

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MR. TOMLINSON (Preston) asked whether the Government proposed to support the Bill, or to move Amendments to it?

SIR W. HARCOURT: Generally the Government support the Bill in its present form, but, of course, they do not preclude themselves from introducing Amendments. As to the Scotch Accidents Bill, we are obliged to exclude it from the list of those to be dealt with in this part of the Session, because I understand one of its provisions is very much disputed.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) asked whether the Crofters Act Amendment Bill was to be taken?

SIR W. HARCOURT: That would be a new Bill, and we cannot undertake to ask the House to consider new Bills now.

MR. POWELL WILLIAMS (Birmingham, S.) asked what was to be done in relation to the Bills of Sales Bill? He understood that the Attorney General was willing to re-consider the point when he (Mr. Williams) opposed the Bill. As he believed the Bill as a whole was a very useful one, he hoped that it might by arrangement be placed in the category of unopposed measures.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I have inquired of the Solicitor General (Sir J. Rigby), and he thinks there is so much opposition to the Bills of Sale Bill that it cannot be included in the list of unopposed Bills.

MR. GOSCHEN (St. George's, Hanover Square): What is to be done respecting the Equalisation of Rates (London) Bill? I presume that, a protest having been made against it, it will not be pressed forward this Session?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: There was just now a like controversy between my right hon. Friend and myself, which I think I am now able to clear up—

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The right hon. Gentleman is displaying a newspaper. It is usual when a newspaper is used in the House to reduce it to the smallest possible compass.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I am sorry to say, Sir, I have no other report of the Debate to which to refer; but it appears that on a previous occasion I asked the Prime Minister whether, supposing that, with the assistance of the Opposition, the Second Reading of the

two important Bills which had been referred to were got through in a month, the Government were going to introduce other Bills. The Prime Minister replied that he thought I was going a little beyond what he had said, and referred me to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir W. Harcourt) said—

“We are asked if we intend to take any other measures. Our object certainly is to promote these two measures, and, although we cannot bind ourselves before the House, it is not our intention to promote other measures than these two in the Autumn Session.”

SIR W. HARCOURT: The right hon. Gentleman will see that I stated on another occasion, in reply to the Member for Preston (Mr. Hanbury), who asked me what I meant by “other small Bills”—I am speaking from recollection, and cannot say that those were the exact words—that I meant non-controversial measures. I am very sorry that a misunderstanding has arisen between the right hon. Gentleman and myself, but the intention of the statement I made was certainly what I have described.

MR. HANBURY (Preston) asked whether the question alluded to did not refer entirely to Bills to be dealt with during the present Sitting?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I do not think so, or I should certainly never have bound myself at all. I have always intended to ask for these non-controversial measures. Surely if we have spare time we are not to sacrifice all these Bills. I think our proposal is perfectly reasonable, and it is one which has certainly always been in our minds. With reference to the Equalisation of Rates Bill, I have said, and I am bound by the statement, that, if the responsible Leaders of the Opposition regard it as a controversial measure, we shall not feel at liberty to proceed with it. I understand that my right hon. Friend opposite (Mr. Goschen) does think it a controversial measure, this opinion is in some degree reinforced by what was said by the hon. Member for St. Pancras (Mr. T. H. Bolton).

MR. T. H. BOLTON (St. Pancras, N.) said, that was not the case.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I do not think the hon. Member for Deptford (Mr. Darling) spoke hostile to the Bill, but he asked very fairly whether notice would be given, so that Members would

be able to discuss the Bill if it came on. If that were the only condition I should be able to comply with it, as it is a very fair one. That, however, I do not understand now to be the present state of the case. I understand that the hon member for South Islington (Sir A. Rollit) considers that the Bill could not proceed without a good deal of discussion.

*SIR A. ROLLIT (Islington, S.): I said I was in favour of the Bill and intended to support it, but I thought that early to-morrow morning was not quite the proper time for discussing it.

MR. T. H. BOLTON said, he had expressed no opinion that the Bill was controversial. He was in favour of the Bill. He had asked merely whether the Government would report Progress at such a time as to afford an opportunity of having some discussion on the Second Reading of the Bill.

SIR W. HARCOURT: Well, Sir, we cannot in the present state of business stop Supply in order to proceed with this, that, or the other Bill. I had hoped that as far as the Second Reading of the Equalisation of Rates Bill was concerned it would have been agreed to without further discussion. I understand that the hon. Member for North St. Pancras (Mr. T. H. Bolton) desires a discussion on the Second Reading. Well, that, of course, prevents the progress of the Bill. There is, however, very little use in considering whether there should be a discussion because I understand the Bill is not accepted as non-controversial.

MR. R. JASPER MORE (Shropshire, Ludlow) asked what arrangements the Government had in contemplation for sending these measures to “another place.” Would the House of Lords sit between Christmas Day and New Year’s Day?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I cannot undertake to answer for what is done in another place. We can only pass our measures here.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: My hon. Friend opposite has asked me, as to the Expiring Laws Continuance Bill, whether I propose to consider it on Monday as the Army Estimates are down for that day? Unless the Army Estimates are continued until a late hour I propose to take the Bill on Monday. It is necessary that the measure should pass either during the present Sittings or the Autumn Session.

I know that some hon. Friends of mine opposite take objection to certain Acts which are included in the Bill, but I do not think their opposition can be serious, because it will be impossible for them to take any portions out of the Bill. The Bill continues 52 Acts of Parliament, all of them, with the exception of two, having been continued from 20 to 40 years. As nearly all of those Acts expire on the 31st December, I think I can show a good case why the Bill should be allowed to proceed on every opportunity.

SIR M. HICKS-BEACH (Bristol, W.): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it is proposed to take to-night any of the Bills mentioned, and, if so, at what time he proposes to report Progress?

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) asked the Secretary for Scotland whether it was the intention of the Government to introduce a Parish Councils Bill for Scotland during the Autumn Session?

***MR. ANSTRUTHER** inquired whether it was not the case that, on the Second Reading of the Sea Fisheries (Scotland) Bill to which he (Mr. Anstruther) had an Amendment extending the operation of the measure, the Secretary for Scotland had stated that he would accept the Amendment, whether the Debate was not very much restricted in consequence, and whether the right hon. Gentleman now considered it was fair to ask Members to forego all discussion of the very important branch of the subject to which the Amendment related?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Sir G. TREVELYAN, Glasgow, Bridgeton): I may say that the Government have prepared not a Parish Councils Bill, but a Local Government Bill for Scotland. This measure would give to Scotland everything that will be given by the Local Government Bill for England, but of course it would be adapted to Scotland and drawn on Scotch lines. Whether or not it would be in accordance with the engagements made by the Government that this Bill should be introduced during the Autumn Session I will not discuss, because I do not think there will be any need to introduce it and have it before this House. The Bill is prepared, and I have no doubt that the

Sir J. T. Hibbert

English Bill will be a pledge and a prelude to the introduction of the Scotch Bill. In reply to my hon. Friend the Member for St. Andrews (Mr. Anstruther), the Government would have been extremely glad to introduce the Amendment relating to the salmon fisheries which he proposed, and no doubt it is true that if the Government had not expressed that willingness my hon. Friend would have occupied, and would have been justified in occupying, for a longer period the time of the House. But, as the matter now stands, the only chance of passing the Bill is to pass it without the salmon Amendments. The Government believe that the Bill in its present shape is unanimously approved by Scottish Members, except with regard to some omissions from the financial clauses which the Government are prepared to make. I am afraid if my hon. Friend insists on salmon Amendments being inserted there will be no chance of passing the Bill this Session.

MR. ANSTRUTHER asked whether the Government had any intention of proceeding with the Committee stage of the Bill before Monday? He wished to have an opportunity of considering whether it was possible to adopt the plan suggested by the right hon. Gentleman.

***MR. HOZIER** (Lanarkshire, S.) inquired whether there were not certain Amendments with regard to the payment of fishermen's expenses, and so on, which were important?

SIR G. TREVELYAN: The Government propose, in deference to what I believe to be the pretty general opinion of the Scottish Members, to leave out Clause 20—the financial clause. There are also some small Amendments which the Government are prepared to accept, and I believe we shall be able to meet all the objections taken to the Bill by Scottish Members, though I cannot say we shall be able to introduce all the Amendments they wish to make. I earnestly hope that between this and Monday my hon. Friend (Mr. Anstruther) will consider the position, and that he will agree to the course I suggest.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): May I ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether we are to definitely understand that he feels himself unable to proceed with the Equalisation of

Rates Bill for London in consequence of the hostile attitude of the Opposition?

SIR W. HARCOURT: No, Sir; that is not right. I stated some time ago that with the exception of the two Bills mentioned, we did not intend to take controversial measures, and therefore I endeavoured to ascertain as far as I could what the opinion of the House was as to what was controversial business. I am satisfied that a considerable portion of the House regard this as a controversial Bill. We therefore have decided not to go on with it.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES asked whether it was intended to go on with the Second Reading of the Merchant Shipping Bill that evening, or whether the Chancellor of the Exchequer would undertake not to proceed with the Second Reading until his (Mr. Bowles's) objection had been fully considered?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I think the hon. Member must be satisfied with the declaration that we will not take it to-night.

MR. R. G. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.) inquired whether the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Sir J. T. Hibbert) was aware that the Expiring Laws Continuance Bill contained the Ballot Act, and that as that Act was a controversial measure, as shown by the discussion which took place last Session, he would allow it to be discussed separately?

SIR W. HARCOURT: The hon. Member, as well as other hon. Members, does not seem to understand that no Amendment could be made in any Act included in the Expiring Laws Continuance Bill. An Act can be omitted, but not amended. Hon. Members should bear this simple fact in mind in connection with my statement that the Expiring Laws Continuance Bill is a measure of a non-controversial character.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—COMMITTEE.

SUPPLY—considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS, 1893-4.

CLASS II.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £45,471, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum

necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Department of Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs."

*SIR R. TEMPLE (Surrey, Kingston) said, he rose to continue the statement which he was making on the previous evening in regard to Siam. He was at a little disadvantage in beginning afresh, but he hoped the Under Secretary would have the points before the House—the delimitation of the country within the bend of the river; the fate of Luang Prabang; the neutral zone effective if it were broad, ineffective if it were narrow; and most of all the true definition of integrity and independence of Siam not only according to French ideas, but according to English ideas. He would remark, in the first place, that, as the friend and ally of that country, it might be well if some assistance could be afforded, perhaps indirectly, to Siam in raising the amount of the indemnity which had been imposed by France, so that no excuse could be given for prolonged occupation. At all events, he wished to know how the matter was progressing. The river which ran through the district in which Chantaboon was situated came from the hills, in which were situated mines of precious stones and possibly minerals; and in those mines British capital and British mining engineers were employed. The Great Lake was also a very important point, as also were the islands in the Gulf of Siam. He wished to be informed as to the position on the western shore of the Great Lake, as to whether the islands in the gulf were still occupied by the French, and, if so, were they going to be evacuated, and when? Were the Government without reliable and definite information as to the French works round Chantaboon? A still more menacing matter was the nature of the proceedings of the French Special Envoy, who was now at Bangkok, and as to whom he had addressed several questions to the Government. Possibly the answers given to those questions merely indicated that the Foreign Office did not know of any arrangements between France and Siam which would have the effect of excluding British interests in the latter country. He further wished to ask the Government whether any commercial arrangements were being

negotiated at Bangkok which would have an unfavourable effect upon England as compared with France. He should also like to know whether the British Government would object if Siam showed any tendency in the negotiations with the French Envoy to infringe the existing Treaties which secured to England the most-favoured-nation clause. The answers previously given on these points could not be regarded as satisfactory, and there was undoubtedly considerable apprehension existing that something of this kind was now going on between the French Envoy at Bangkok and the Siamese authorities—that some concessions were being made, and that commercial conditions were being entered into which would have a tendency to exclude British commerce. He had had a letter from one who was well informed, part of which he would read to the House, as it showed how, by making separate arrangements, France might drive a coach and four through the Most-Favoured Nation Clauses. So he could say that he thought there was reason for his demand for information. He believed that unless the British Government exercised considerable watchfulness and firmness it would be perfectly possible, despite all influences to the contrary, for negotiations to be entered into at Bangkok which would prove to the disadvantage of British commerce, and which would be discovered when it was too late to effectively safeguard British interests. That some secret negotiations were going on seemed to be very probable, for what else was the French Envoy doing at Bangkok? He could not be there to settle the details of the ultimatum, for they had already been unreservedly accepted. There was reason to believe that France was engaged in negotiations with some ulterior object, and it was of great importance to England to provide against those negotiations affecting the integrity and independence of Siam. He would simply say that, notwithstanding any promises or assurances that had been made on the point, the Government should not hesitate to question the French Government on the matter—not with reference to old matters which had already been practically settled, but with regard to the future integrity and independence of Siam. On the one hand they should

warn Siam that they should object to any arrangement with France which might prejudicially affect their treaty and commercial rights; and, on the other, should intimate to France in a friendly manner, though with a proper degree of firmness, that they should strongly object to any arrangement which affected the independence of Siam. Considering the great interests which England possessed in Siam, and the great importance to her of the integrity and independence of that country being maintained, he wished to urge these points on the attention of the Government as strongly as possible. It might be said that it was too late to take any such steps; but he admitted that many precious interests had been already sacrificed, and he denied that it was too late for the British Government to take steps to prevent Siam from being absorbed into the French Empire, and to insure that she should become a real and solid buffer State between the English and French possessions. He did not wish to say one word hostile to the French. He did not desire to show any unbecoming jealousy of them. On the contrary, he heartily wished them success in the consolidation of the dominions they had acquired in that part of the world. But there must be a limit to French ambition, and that limit should be drawn somewhere in Siam, so as to keep an inviolable zone between our Indian Empire and the French possessions in Eastern Asia. Certain articles had appeared lately in the Press and in the London magazines, in which it was stated that our Indian Empire was coming more and more between the two fires of Russia and France, and, although he was sorry to say he had not written those articles, he could say that the statements in them were perfectly true, and would be confirmed by any Englishman who had resided in the East. In conclusion, he trusted that in his speeches on this subject he had not pressed too hard upon the Government in point of argument, because he had frequently admired the firm, resolute, and forward attitude they had taken up with regard to Egypt and Canada, and other places, and he heartily concurred in the able speeches made by the hon. Baronet the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs; but the present state of things in Siam was so serious that it

Sir R. Temple

was necessary to call the Government to account as strictly as the Rules of the House might allow, in the hope that they would be able to give a good account of their stewardship in this matter. He was looking forward to the Blue Book which would inevitably have to be presented, and he hoped that would justify the nation in reposing confidence in the Government as English Ministers acting on behalf of England.

*MR. CURZON (Lancashire, Southport): No one in the House, I am sure, will be disposed to blame the hon. Baronet for raising this important question, which he has discussed in so interesting and authoritative a manner. Not even the most ardent supporter of the Government will say we are doing wrong in taking up a small amount of the time allotted to Supply in calling the attention of the House to so grave a question as British interests in the far East. Throughout this Session of Parliament I venture to say that the Opposition have shown more than ordinary forbearance towards the Government in respect of their foreign policy, mainly, no doubt, due to the confidence which has been hitherto reposed in the administration of Lord Rosebery. Before proceeding further, I would say that the importance of this subject must not be gauged for a moment by the depleted state of the Benches I see around me. It is unfortunately, but undoubtedly the case, that there are considerable sources of attraction in a sometimes much derided place elsewhere, where the Foreign Secretary is speaking on a subject on which his views to most of us are at least of as much interest as his views upon matters connected with his own Department. But though those of us who speak on this question here have but a scant audience, much greater importance is attached to our words elsewhere than is perhaps apparent to the minds of our colleagues. That which is said in this House is not only printed and circulated in the newspapers at home, but is telegraphed and published in every country in the far East. I do not desire on this occasion to repeat what I said last time this matter came before the House, but I would venture to say, that there is not a single criticism in which I then indulged or a single anticipation I then made that has not been

justified by what has since transpired. I adhere to the opinion previously expressed that if in March last the noble Earl had found it compatible with his duty to address a perfectly friendly letter to the French Government pointing out that, while we had no desire to interfere in the frontier dispute between Siam and themselves, we should regard any further encroachment upon the integrity and independence of Siam with disfavour and as unfriendly on their part, recent occurrences would never have been seen or heard of. In my travels in Tonkin and Cochin China last November and December I discussed this matter with French officials, and gathered from them that it had never entered into their heads that Great Britain would acquiesce in the French demands, which will result in the virtual dismemberment and extinction of the independence of the Kingdom of Siam. But at an early stage of these proceedings Lord Rosebery, carrying to an extreme limit diplomatic courtesy, assured the French that we had no concern in their quarrel in that part of the world, and the French Government forthwith, interpreting these assurances in the most liberal and most agreeable sense to themselves, proceeded step by step at a rate of progression which can only be described as geometrical, and presented first one ultimatum, then a second, and now, we understand, a third to Siam, expecting at each moment to be pulled up, and as much astonished at our forbearance—I might almost say our weakness—as they were gratified at their own success. Meanwhile, we have been assured by the representatives of the Foreign Office that the French Government is still respecting the pledges it gave. But one of the terms is that the Siamese are not to keep any troops within 16 miles of the right bank of the River Mekong, although they are to be allowed to retain a police force there. The only police, however, in Siam are the military—and I doubt very much whether they would be called military in any other country in the world. To say that Siam is not to maintain military in this district, but is yet to be allowed to keep police there for the maintenance of order, is, therefore, to perpetrate a joke at the expense of that country. It may be suggested that it is from fear of future collision that this precaution has

been insisted upon. But have the French themselves withdrawn, or consented to withdraw, their troops from a space of 16 miles on their side of the river? Not a bit. The French are at present concentrating their forces there, and have sent two gunboats up the river. There can be no doubt that this particular condition has been introduced into the ultimatum, and is being enforced by France: firstly, to cut off communication with the territory which will still be left to Siam on the left bank of the Mekong, and, secondly, to facilitate that to which we must look forward in the future as certainly as I am now addressing the House of Commons—namely, the carrying out of further French ambition and aspirations on the right bank of the river. With regard to Chantaboon, the hon. Baronet seems to think we have no interest in it, and says he had no official information about it because we have no Diplomatic Agent there; but he is nevertheless able to state that the 300 or 400 French troops in Chantaboon are in a state of alarm because of the contiguity of 3,000 or 4,000 Siamese troops. In my opinion the hon. Baronet entirely underrates the importance of Chantaboon in connection with the recovery by the French of the two provinces which a hundred years ago belonged to Cambodia. The French have occupied the river, and have advanced eight miles inland, have seized the town of Chantaboon, have thrown up earthworks, and have telegraphed for additional forces. I do not share in the matter of Chantaboon the sanguine anticipations expressed by the hon. Baronet (Sir E. Grey), and I respectfully invite him to keep an eye on Chantaboon during the course of the next few weeks, and to pause until it has been evacuated before he congratulates the Government and the House upon having saved those provinces for the Siamese Government, and upon the fact that the French and Siamese question has been satisfactorily settled. I will leave that point, and turn to what is the most important question to us—the question of British interests in Siam. What are British interests in Siam? They have been more than once stated and restated in the course of our discussions, and in reply to a question from myself they were defined by the hon. Baronet (Sir E. Grey) himself in terms

on which no one can improve. He defined British interests in Siam as being four in number. The first, he said, was the protection of the life and property of British subjects residing there; the second is the continued preservation of a neutral zone between the British and French territories; the third, the protection of British trade; and the fourth, the continued independence and integrity of the Siamese Kingdom itself. I will venture to say a few words on each of these interests. As regards the protection of the life and property of British subjects in Siam, I think Her Majesty's Government are to be congratulated on the alacrity with which, the moment there was any fear of those interests at Bangkok being jeopardised, they despatched British war vessels to the scene of operations, although it is a pity that they did not inform the French Government of the object with which those ships were sent, since the French Government made the despatch of the ships an excuse for forcing the passage of the river, and menacing the capital itself. As regards the second British interest—the continued preservation of a neutral zone between ourselves and the French—we understand that negotiations are proceeding at Paris with the view of carving out from the body of the unhappy victim a more or less narrow slice of territory—possibly some hundred miles in width—the object being to prevent the frontiers of Great Britain and France from coming into perilous contact in the far East. I presume that this neutral zone, about which I do not desire for a moment to press for information prematurely, will be constructed out of territory which lies to the West of the trans-Mekong part of Luang Prabang, and that it will consist partly of the former Burmese State of Chieng Kheng, which we ceded to Siam. Whether my anticipations be correct or not, I should like to know to whom is this neutral zone, when constructed, to belong, and by whom is it to be administered? If it is to belong to and to be administered by Siam, are the Siamese to be allowed to keep their soldiers there, or are we once more to have raised this farcical plea of a police that has never existed. Again, what guarantees are you going to obtain for the preservation of its integrity? Supposing that its integrity

in the future violated by French troops, or supposing that the wild tribes who inhabit it appeal to the French to come over the border, how are you going to carry out any guarantee you may have previously given or exacted? There is another point. The hon. Baronet (Sir E. Grey) has more than once talked about this neutral zone as if it were identical with a "buffer State." There is the greatest possible difference between the two things. A neutral zone is the merest apology, the palest *simulacrum*, of a buffer State that can possibly be conceived. A buffer State implies the creation or existence of a third or intervening State between two Powers whose territories would otherwise come in contact with each other. It implies the exercise by the third State of the rights of sovereignty and the possession by it of a certain stability, and it implies the respect of its territories by the two important neighbours who are situated on either side of it. Of such a character is the buffer State of Afghanistan, and of such a character, though perhaps in a modified degree, was, until recently, the Kingdom of Siam itself. As long as the independence and integrity of Siam were something more than a mere name, so long did it preserve the character of a buffer State. But both that integrity and independence have now been fatally impaired, and unless the Government are able to procure guarantees from the French that they will respect the integrity of the Siam that is left, and will give similar guarantees themselves, the buffer State, in so far as relates to Siam, will have totally disappeared. In any case it is certain that the neutral zone you are going to construct in the north-west will in no respect take its place. Your neutral zone, as I understand, is to be a mere strip of territory, you are going to mark out with white paint, much as you might mark a crease upon a cricket pitch, and within which I do not suppose the French position will be more effective than would be the position of a somewhat weak batsman standing at the wickets exposed to the attack of a formidable bowler at the other end. The tendency to argue that if this neutral zone is constructed we may hold our peace and thank God that we have got a Government that has done so much for us shows the existence of a mere

vain delusion. If we are to come out of this lamentable affair with no better result than that, it will be regarded, if not by ourselves, by everyone else, as a painful exhibition of weakness. I come next to the protection of British trade and British traders in Siam. That interest is not one that is capable of being satisfied by the mere protection of British property or British subjects at Bangkok, or by the mere defence of British shipping in the river. The Committee must remember that, if Siam is considered as a commercial factor, far and away above any other interest is that of the trade of Great Britain. Of the whole export and import trade of Siam 93 per cent. is British, and the French portion is less than 1 per cent. Only one French steamer has plied between Saigon and Bangkok, and that was sunk the other day. At Bangkok itself, where you read in the papers of the passing of resolutions at enthusiastic meetings of French tradesmen, there are only two French tradesmen, one being a barber and the other a keeper of a knick-knack store. The entire export of the main products of Siam—its rice, its teak, and its pepper—is in British hands. The great commercial emporium of Singapore is to a large extent sustained by Bangkok, and the 200,000 Chinamen who live at Singapore in contented subjection to British rule depend for their sustenance on the rice which is floated down the Menam and shipped at Bangkok. The mines of Siam are for the most part in course of British exploitation, whilst the one considerable railway enterprise in which the Siamese Government have been led to embark—from Bangkok in a north-easterly direction to Korat—has been given to a firm of British engineers. These are no doubt somewhat tedious details, but it is necessary to give them in order to convey to the Committee the character of not merely the important but the overwhelming interest, nay, the monopoly of British trade which exists in Siam. When we hear that this interest is to be jeopardised and thrown away out of consideration for a French trade which has never existed and the establishment of which in the future the French national temperament renders impossible, emotions are aroused which cannot be regarded as satisfactory. What is the

attitude of the French towards the trade of which I am speaking? Wherever you get French and British competition you find that it is French policy, by whatever means in their power, to cripple and crush British trade. The absence of commercial attributes on their own part does not deter them for one moment from endeavouring to injure, and, if possible, to destroy, British trade in those parts of the world with which they are concerned, even if the process of destruction involves injury to themselves. Take the case of Saigon, the capital of French Cochin China. It was for some time a free port, and became a very flourishing and wealthy place; but as soon as the French realised that the bulk of the trade profits were going into the pockets of the British merchants they revolutionised their policy; Free Trade was abandoned, and the normal French barrier of a prohibitive tariff was raised, even though Saigon was drained of its life-blood in carrying out that policy. This will be the policy that will be pursued if the French have a free hand in commercial and fiscal matters in Siam. I hope Her Majesty's Government are already, or, if not, that they will become, fully alive to their responsibility in this matter; that where French Consuls are appointed in the interior of Siam to foster or protect French trade, which does not exist, they will be employed to protect British trade, which does already exist; that the Government will take very good care to maintain on our behalf the Most Favoured Nation Clause in accordance with the Treaty of 1855; that they will allow no tampering whatever within the Malay Peninsula, which distinctly falls within the sphere of British influence, and that they will require the fulfilment by the Siamese of the contract they entered into for the completion of the Korat Railway and other undertakings in which the commercial community is so largely interested. The fourth and last interest is far and away the most important—namely, the independence and integrity of Siam itself. It was in July last that Lord Rosebery said in the House of Lords—and it was repeated by the hon. Baronet—that the integrity and independence of Siam were matters of great importance to the British, and more especially to the British-Indian Empire,

Mr. Curzon

and that Her Majesty's Government were fully alive to their responsibility in the matter; and similar declarations of respect for the integrity and independence of Siam emanated from the French Foreign Minister. Whilst we have been disposed to give full credit to these assurances coming from both quarters, we have been confronted with the very remarkable facts that the French Government and the French Foreign Minister appear to have been engaged, step by step, in violating the very conditions which we believed they undertook to respect, and the British Foreign Minister, almost in the same breath that he declares that the independence and integrity of Siam are British interests, invites us to witness their progressive disappearance with almost Spartan composure on the ground that the minor British interests of which I have been speaking are not at stake. Surely, after all, the main British interest in Siam is the political stability of Siam itself. If you allow the power of Siam and of its King to be crippled, and the country to be under French protection, there will not be the slightest good in going out with your paint-pot to demarcate a neutral zone, or in insisting upon commercial equality for your merchants. I would point out that a Siam under French protection, either actual or nominal, must be an anti-British, anti-English Siam, and the only Siam that can possibly stand on its legs between France and Great Britain is a Siam whose borders are defined and respected, whose Monarch's authority within its borders is not challenged, and which possesses not merely the symbols, but the realities of independence. I hope, therefore, that in conducting negotiations Her Majesty's Government will not lose sight of this far larger question in the background, compared with which the question of a neutral zone is comparatively of very small importance. If we are to attach the credit which we desire both to the declarations of Lord Rosebery and the French Government; if Great Britain desires to maintain the autonomy of Siam, and if the French have no further designs on the independence of that Kingdom, there can be no reason why both countries should not join in a formal guarantee of the integrity and independence of the Siam that is left, which shall be equally

binding on both Powers, and shall enable Siam, even at this late hour of the day, once again to raise her head and take her place amongst the Kingdoms of the East. I await with interest what the hon. Baronet will say on the matter; and although, I am sure, I do not desire for one moment to demand from him any relaxation of the diplomatic reserve he has so skilfully maintained up to the present, I hope that he will at once give us some assurance that this larger and Imperial aspect of the question to which I have alluded has not been lost sight of by the Government, and that in addition to counting up the gains and losses of the moment itself the Government will keep an eye upon a matter which intimately and deeply affects the future peace of the Indo-Chinese Peninsula.

*SIR C. W. DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) reminded the Committee that negotiations were still pending in Paris, but, seeing the scant opportunity they would have in the Autumn Sitzings of dealing with the question, he thought that the Government was taking a great responsibility. He was completely in accord with what had been said by the hon. Baronet the Member for the Kingston Division of Surrey and by the late Under Secretary of State for India, as to either a buffer State or a neutral zone in Northern Siam. It was a mockery; but, on the other hand, its creation could hardly be said to be needed in the same way in which it was needed against Russia. France could only get to Siam by the high seas, and on the high seas she was at the mercy of England. She was in this respect in a completely different position from Russia, who was all but our Continental neighbour. The Government could make no statement with regard to Siam, inasmuch as negotiations were pending; neither could they make any statement with regard to a matter which was of high interest to many—Uganda—because they had not yet received Sir Gerald Portal's Report. With regard to Uganda, it was impossible the Government could take any final step until they had consulted the House of Commons. He wished to refer to another case of relations with France, in which, as in the case of Siam, it was possible that the French were trying to make themselves disagreeable to us. He meant the case

of Madagascar. He had never been able to understand why the late Government had gone so far out of their way in surrendering the independence of Madagascar. It was a country in which our trade was as predominant as in Siam; and it was a country in which British missionary enterprise had been more successful than in any other portion of the world. Fortunately for Madagascar, its capital was not on the coast like the capital of Siam. It was, therefore, difficult to march on the capital, and the French, when they invaded the island, had failed to reach it. A Treaty was signed by which the French recognised the sovereignty of the Hova Government over the whole island. This was a great concession on the part of the French, to gain which the Hovas agreed to entrust their foreign relations, but their foreign relations only, to France. The late Government having come to an agreement with Germany as to Zanzibar, which it was necessary to force on France, with whom we had a self-denying arrangement as to Zanzibar, recognised a French Protectorate over Madagascar. The present Government could not put them back where they stood before the late Government took this step. What he wanted to know was, how far the present Government was going in the same direction? He would ask what they were doing?—nothing, as he hoped. He would not go into the question of the revival of the Slave Trade on the coast of Madagascar in consequence of the Convention recognising a sham Protectorate, because that would arise upon the Slave Trade Vote. But he would point out that they had gained nothing by the concessions they had made. He could not help thinking that their pledges with regard to Egypt had something to do with bringing about bad relations between the French and ourselves, and that the policy pursued in Siam and Madagascar and with regard to Newfoundland was the answer of the French. In regard to our relations with Newfoundland, a matter which would be referred to on the next Vote, he knew nothing to the discredit of the Foreign Office, but thought that it would be an unfortunate thing if from any idea of proceeding with the arbitration to which the Foreign Office were committed by the late Government we should put further pressure on the colonists.

*SIR A. ROLLIT (Islington, S.) said, he had great pleasure in bearing his testimony to the admirable and efficient way in which the commercial work in connection with the Foreign Office was carried out, and he acknowledged in very handsome terms the services of Mr. Kennedy, Chief of the Commercial Department, who was about to retire. The Commercial Reports published by the Foreign Office were full of information. Their high value was recognised by the Chambers of Commerce of the country, and the more widely they were read the more they would be appreciated, and the greater would be the service they rendered. The extension and prosperity of commerce now largely depended on the policy and the action of the Foreign Office through the Consular Service; so much so that it had been stated by a high authority that commercial considerations had now become one of the most important features of the duty of a diplomatist. Several foreign countries had recognised this fact, and acted upon it by extending their Consular Service, and he hoped this country would adopt a similar policy. The point applied with special force at the present time to Siam, where their Consular representation might be wisely strengthened. Most of the import and export trade with that country was British and carried in British bottoms, and he desired to impress on the Foreign Office the fact that the Chambers of Commerce in the country were very anxious not only as to the protection of their present commerce in Siam, but also as to the action to be taken with a view to develop British trade in that part of the world. In these days of hostile tariffs and competition they must always look out for new markets, and when Siam was developed it would become a most important commercial centre for the trade of this country. Siam must, however, have a real independence, and there must be no interference with the advantage they derived from the Favoured Nation Clause, for without that clause their commercial position would be seriously embarrassed. He hoped the commercial interests at stake would be kept in view by the Foreign Office.

Sir C. W. Dilke

MR. HANBURY (Preston) rose—
*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir E. GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): I do not wish, Sir, to exclude discussion on other subjects, but I think I am justified in asking the Committee to allow me to state at once the somewhat narrow limits to which I can go in dealing with this matter. In the course of the Debate some time ago on the Vote on Account I stated that the position of affairs was such that my language had necessarily to be guarded and restrained within narrow limits. I regret that that is still the case, and, while I have to acknowledge the forbearance of the hon. Member for Southport, I regret that it has not been further extended. As to the assurances given by the Secretary for Foreign Affairs to the French Government, it is true that the British Government took no part in the disputes between the French and Siamese while those disputes were confined to the territorial question South of the 18th parallel and on the far side of the Mekong; but directly the dispute covered a wider area, it was perfectly obvious to the whole world that the Government considered British interests were involved, for they entered upon negotiations with the French Government for the delimitation of a neutral zone. Hon. Members seemed to think that we went too far in relying on the assurances that were given by the French Government as to what the limits of their action would be, but the French Government contended that they were not breaking their pledges by their operations on the left bank of the Mekong.

COMMANDER BETHELL (York, E.R., Holderness): Which bank is that?

*SIR E. GREY: The Eastern bank. There is no difference, so far as I am aware, between the two Governments in holding that similar operations on the West bank would break the assurances given. The hon. Member for Southport admits that the Government have been prompt to take measures for the protection of British life and property at Bangkok, so I need say nothing more on that point. As to the question of the neutral zone, that is a matter which now forms the subject of negotiations, and it is consequently impossible for me to enter into details. Then there is the question of British trade at Bangkok. It is said that we

have a monopoly of the trade of Bangkok, but that is not the only place where Great Britain monopolises a large share of trade. I will only say, in reply to this question, that I read out to the House the other day the provisions of the Treaty between ourselves and Siam. I cannot conceive that more than one interpretation can be placed on the Treaty, and by reading it I did not intend to convey the impression that it was not meant to put it in force. With regard to the independence and integrity of Siam, I will undertake to say that no one can maintain that that independence and integrity have been violated in a way that affects British interests. No one can seriously contend that British interests or trade in Siam have been injured as yet by the action of France. Our trade is untouched, and the negotiations for a neutral territory are proceeding satisfactorily. But hon. Members opposite have been induced to bring forward this subject not so much because of what has happened in the past as because of their apprehensions of what may happen in the future. With regard to the future, I am sorry to say that, inasmuch as negotiations are still proceeding in Paris, I am precluded from saying more upon the subject than that Lord Dufferin has the fullest and most definite instructions for the protection of our rights in Siam, and to express a hope that the Committee will continue to place confidence in the Government. With regard to Madagascar, I have very little to say further than that the relations between the French Government, Madagascar, and the British Government have remained unchanged since the present Government came into Office. We have conceded no point in reference to that country. The question is left absolutely as it was when the present Government came into Office. I have only, in conclusion, to express the great pleasure with which I heard the hon. Member who preceded me in this Debate refer, in words of the highest praise, to the way in which the Foreign Office is served by all those in its service, especially as to the commercial side of its policy. I endorse every word the hon. Gentleman said. I desire to express my gratitude, which is great in proportion as I am conscious of my own experience, to those gentlemen at the Foreign Office who by their energy, their

ability, and their industry have given me such invaluable assistance in performing the duties of the position which I hold. We do not in this country, under our present system, follow the example of some other countries in opening up markets by Reciprocity Treaties for our trade and commerce. We rely entirely on the great energy and ability of our commercial classes. We recognise at the Foreign Office that our duty is to clear the channels of communication and keep them open, relying upon the enterprise and energy of our commercial classes. That is the system which has brought to us so enormous a share of the trade and prosperity of the world.

MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) said, he thought the Committee would agree with the hon. Baronet that it was impossible for him to make public the instructions given to Lord Dufferin in regard to the negotiations which at the present moment were being carried on in Paris in reference to Siam. They on the Opposition side of the House were anxious to make certain that the Government fully recognised the extent to which British interests were involved in the maintenance of the independence and integrity of Siam. He did not think there was much in what had been said by the hon. Baronet in reference to Siam to quarrel with. But he felt bound to draw attention to one observation of the hon. Baronet, and that was that up to this time nothing had been done to impair either the independence or the integrity of Siam. That was an observation that he could not allow to pass without notice.

*SIR E. GREY: The hon. Gentleman has not quite caught my expression. What I said was that up to the present time the independence and integrity of Siam have not been violated in a way that has permanently injured British interests.

MR. J. W. LOWTHER said, that he quite admitted the force of the hon. Baronet's qualification. It put the matter in a different light. He did not think they could fairly admit that the independence and integrity of Siam had been fully maintained, leaving British interests out of the question altogether, when they found that at present this so-called independent State

was not permitted to have a military force within its frontiers. When they found that some three or four of her islands had been actually seized by a foreign Power, and when they found that her ports were in the occupation of a foreign Power, he admitted at once the great difficulty the hon. Baronet had in making any further statement in the matter, and he would simply say, before passing from the question, that they desired specially to call the attention of the Government to the great extent of British interests in Siam, and to the manner in which these interests might be affected by agreements which might be entered into between France and Siam without our knowledge. He next came to the question raised by the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean with regard to Madagascar. The right hon. Baronet had taken the line that the late Government had recognised a Protectorate which had no existence either in fact or in paper. What were the actual facts in regard to the matter? The facts were that after the war between the French and the Hovas in the year 1884 a Treaty was concluded, the first Article of which provided—

“The Government of the French Republic will represent Madagascar in all its foreign relations. Madagascar abroad will be placed under the protection of France.”

He could conceive nothing wider than those words in the direction of giving a Protectorate to France in the foreign affairs of Madagascar. That Treaty was laid on the Table of the House by Lord Salisbury in March, 1886, and it lay on the Table of the House during the whole of that short Parliament, but no exception was taken to it. Then, in the year 1890, Lord Salisbury's Government simply recognised the existing state of affairs. They entered into an arrangement with the French Government by which they recognised the Protectorate of France over the Island of Madagascar. His contention then and now was that the Treaty of 1890 did not go one step beyond the Treaty of 1886 between the French and the Hova Governments, and he hoped that the present Government would not go one step beyond the position in which they at present found themselves in relation to Madagascar. So far as his recollection went of the negotiations which had

taken place in the short time he had had the honour of being at the Foreign Office, he did not think there was anything in the Papers, which could not properly be laid on the Table of the House. The last Papers were laid nearly nine years ago, and as a great deal had happened since then, he thought another instalment of Papers on Malagasy affairs should be furnished by the Government. He was sorry to say he differed from the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean with reference to the arbitration between the Colonies and France in regard to the Newfoundland fishery disputes. The right hon. Baronet had implored the Government not to go on with the arbitration; but he should be inclined to implore the Government to go on, for it seemed to him that until they got that one point settled it would be impossible to arrive at a solution, satisfactory or otherwise, of this difficult question, which had been pending now for so many years. It was true that the Colonial Government had protested against our going into arbitration on this point. The Colonial Government really desired that the Treaty of Utrecht should be ripped up, and that the whole question as to the right of France on the east and north-east shores of Newfoundland should be re-opened. The Government made such a representation to France, and it was not surprising that the French rejected it. France had its rights upon that particular coast, and whether Newfoundland was a British Colony or whether she was in a position of independence or whether she was joined to the United States, the rights of France would still attach to the particular coast. He said again that until they got this question as to whether lobsters were fish or not settled they could not make any progress in dealing satisfactorily with the cod fisheries, and other points of dispute between the two Governments. In the agreement for arbitration it was provided that it should be in the power of either the British or the French Government to submit further questions for consideration to the arbitrators. He desired to join with the hon. Member for South Islington and the Under Secretary in the tribute which they had paid to the gentleman who had served the Foreign Office with exceptional ability during a great number of years, and whose loss, if

Mr. J. W. Lowther

he ever had to leave the Foreign Office, it would be extremely difficult to replace. During the short time he had been in the Foreign Office he owed a great deal to the assistance which he derived from that distinguished public servant, Mr. Kennedy. A Return might, he thought, be issued as to our position in relation to tariffs of foreign nations. He had received many inquiries from Chambers of Commerce as to the issue of such a Return. The last Return had been issued five or six years ago, many changes had since been made in the foreign tariffs against our goods. The work of preparing the Return would be heavy; but the materials for it must, he believed, be in daily use at the Board of Trade. He trusted that before long they might have the promised Paper in regard to Vitu. He thought that before deciding anything definite in regard to Uganda we should ascertain the position occupied by the British Company in the sphere of influence. The position of affairs in Samoa had gone from bad to worse, and he would like to be informed as to what had been decided in regard to Mataafa, and whether there was any prospect of a settled Government being carried on in Samoa?

*MR. PROVAND (Glasgow, Blackfriars) said, it was only becoming that someone on his side of the House should acknowledge the work which was being done by the Foreign Office, and which had been referred to by the Member for Islington (Sir A. Rollit). He remembered that in 1885 and 1886, when Lord Rosebery became Foreign Minister, the delays in obtaining Consular Reports sometimes extended over two or three years, but a change came about during Lord Rosebery's administration, and since then these Reports, or extracts which were likely to be of benefit to the commercial community, had been furnished with commendable rapidity. For the last three or four years the Foreign Office had given them commercial information of a fuller character and with greater promptitude than was furnished by any other Government, and he thought that a Parliamentary Vote of Thanks should be accorded Mr. Kennedy and Lord Rosebery for the good work they had accomplished in this direction, and which, it was to be hoped, would continue and, if possible, be even

improved in the future. He should like to say a few words in reference to what had been said as to Saigon and the other French possessions. He had been for many years, and was still, connected with the trade of Eastern Asia, and therefore perhaps he might speak with the authority of one who had not only lived there, but had been actually engaged in the trade of that part of the world. France had done enormous work, and at very great cost, in trying to develop trade in Eastern Asia. Between 20 and 30 years ago the French established a line of steamers there to which the French Government gave an enormous subsidy, but these vessels were chiefly employed now in carrying British merchandise. The French trade, with the exception of the silk trade which they had with Shanghai, was a very small and trifling trade indeed. He had been astonished sometimes at the language of French diplomatists, journalists, and politicians. One would think, to read their statements, that the French had an enormous trade out in the far East, but as a matter of fact the most of what was said and written upon the subject was largely mythical, and French trade in the far East, as we understood the word, had practically little existence at all. There could not be any French trade in any ports in the East if trade was free, because it would pass into our hands or into those of the Germans, or would be taken by the Chinese, who were no doubt the dominating trading race of the East, and unless the French prevented us or the Germans or the Chinese from doing trade then it was certain they would get no trade for themselves. This was true of every place the French had in the East. When they obtained possession of any place they immediately sat down and concocted fixed regulations aimed expressly against ourselves, and if the first series of enactments or regulations were insufficient, they concocted a few more, and finally arrived at this state of things: that, whatever little trade could be done or was done, must filter through their hands. They must take a toll for everything done in the place, and unless they made the regulations he spoke of, they might as well leave the place, so far as doing any trade themselves was concerned. He desired to call attention to the position of two places

in the East which did a large trade with Siam—namely, Hong Kong and Singapore. They were absolute commercial mysteries to all Frenchmen who had never lived there. These places, 40 years ago, had no existence as trading places at all. What were they to-day? Singapore was an enormous trading *entrepôt* for Java, Borneo, Siam, and the whole of the places in the Straits, and Hong Kong was an enormous trading port for the whole trade of the seaboard of China. Any person and any country might trade there. But that was not the French idea of trade at all. If the French were to obtain possession of these two places they would immediately concoct fiscal enactments with a view to direct the whole trade into their own pockets. If France were allowed to impose such fiscal regulations as these on Siam the trade of Singapore and Hong Kong would suffer materially. It was not that the trade would be done by France, but it would cease to be done at all; the little that remained passing into French hands, and the trade that we had, at the present time, connected with these places would be very seriously affected. Something like 83 per cent., or about four vessels out of every five coming to the ports of Siam were under the British flag. He hoped the hon. Baronet the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs would be able to give us an assurance that our interests would be amply protected in any arrangements that were come to. There was not the smallest doubt we should be able to retain the large trading business he had spoken of unless we were interfered with by France in the regulations which were now being made. He hoped the Foreign Office would see that whatever settlement was come to there should be nothing in it to prevent our continuing our trade relations, both by sea and land, between this country and Siam, and Singapore and Hong Kong.

MR. HANBURY (Preston) desired to support the views which had been stated, more particularly by the Member for South Islington. Looking at this question of Siam almost entirely from a commercial point of view, representing, as he did, a manufacturing constituency very keenly interested in finding new markets for its trade, he should like to say he listened with great pleasure to what the hon. Baronet said as to the deeper

interest the Foreign Office was now taking in commercial matters. He could assure the hon. Baronet that if the Foreign Office acted firmly and vigorously where the trade of this country was concerned, they would have behind them such a force of popular support—from the industrial population—as perhaps no Foreign Office had ever had before. Referring to the subject of Madagascar, it struck him as a most peculiar fact that there should be this difference of opinion between France and England as to the proper interpretation of the Treaty relative to Madagascar. It seemed to him to be a loosely worded document, and it was quite clear that France, at any rate, did not quite take the view of that rather ambiguous phrase, “the Protectorate of the Island of Madagascar,” which our Foreign Office then took, and which he hoped was taken at present. It was really a pity that the language of the Treaty was not less ambiguous, and it would also have been better if the Foreign Office had not lent itself to the French interpretation by withdrawing two Consuls from Madagascar somewhat, it appeared, at the dictation of the French, thereby implying that the French interpretation of that Treaty was the more correct one. As to the question of Siam, he wanted to press the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs for an answer on two points, which he did not think were necessarily confidential, and on which the hon. Member for Kingston (Sir R. Temple) asked for information. They were questions as to matters of fact. The hon. Member for Kingston asked for information as to how the indemnity was being paid by Siam, and whether it was believed that Siam would be able to meet the obligation that France was imposing upon her, and he also asked as to what information had been received with reference to the French entrenchments around Chantaboon. These were two plain questions, which could be answered without any disadvantage to the Public Service. The hon. Member for Kingston told them on the authority of a statesman well known and versed in Eastern affairs that the Most Favoured Nation Clause was really no protection for our interests in Siam against the kind of concessions that it was to be feared the French would be able to wring out of the Siamese. This statesman contended

that in the face of that Most Favoured Nation Clause the French would be able to treat with the Siamese in this fashion. They would say to the latter—"We shall not require the whole indemnity we are asking for if, in return for our not doing that, you will give us certain monopolies and certain concessions in your own country." It was maintained that it was perfectly within the obligations under which Siam rested towards us and the Most Favoured Nation Clause that she should come to some terms of that kind with France. It would be well to know from the Foreign Office whether, according to the interpretation they put upon the most favoured nation clause it was possible for the Siamese to treat with the French on such terms. In view of the fact that it was possible these concessions and monopolies might be granted to French subjects under French pressure it was important to show how vast were our interests in Siam, and how small was the French interest at the present moment. No less than 87 per cent. of the whole shipping in the trade to Siam was English shipping and of the remainder 8 per cent. was German. The value of the English imports was 93 per cent., German 2 per cent. In value the English exports were 85 per cent., German 8 per cent. But there was something further, and that was that the greater number of the vessels carrying foreign flags were chartered by Englishmen, and the whole of the cargoes carried were English cargoes representing English trade. In contrast with all this, according to the last Foreign Office Report the French cargoes, both imports and exports, only amounted to .03 per cent., which was a perfectly trifling and ludicrous state of trade in comparison with that carried on by England with Siam. The mines in Siam, he understood, were in English hands. Taking the special exports from Siam, rice, which was the principal, was almost wholly in English hands; the tea trade was almost entirely carried on by English firms, and the paper and spice trade was in the hands of two English firms. Coming to the trade of cotton manufacturing, he was told that one-fourth of the whole import trade of Siam consisted of cotton manufactures, and the latest Report stated that the goods now sold were almost entirely of English

manufacture. This showed the enormous extent to which England was interested in this country, and although it was quite fair for the Under Secretary to say that hitherto English trade had not been much affected by what had been going on, still it was possible that if care was not taken as to concessions to France being outside the Most Favoured Nation Clause it might happen that a great danger would be done to English trade which represented three-fourths of the whole export and import trade of the country. He came to another matter connected with the trade in Siam which, prospectively at any rate, affected Lancashire considerably. He had been speaking hitherto of internal trade, but he wanted to say a word or two about external trade which might be opened up through Siam or Burmah with the South West of China. There was a teeming population there, and great openings for trade. It had been the object and desire of English merchants for a considerable time to get into this corner of China through the Burmese State. He fancied the road for a railway had been surveyed three times—namely, in 1866, 1869, and 1873. Of course, the annexation of Burmah made this route a great deal more possible. Whatever might happen to France in Siam, we could no doubt go a long way in the direction of the south-west corner of China through our own territories; but whether we were able actually to reach that south west corner of China through our own territories would depend a great deal upon what was done in Paris, and in the negotiation as to the Burmese Shan States. It was a question how far portions of these Shan States could be dealt with by Siam, or how far we could claim to have complete control over them. Unless we retained the power to go through certain of the Shan States, about which there was this doubt, the railroad could only be carried to a certain point, because it would then have to pass through a very mountainous district not under our control, and the whole of the trade then have to be carried on by mules. This would have the effect of increasing the carriage about £30 a ton, which was a prohibitory rate. So far as the carrying of goods to Siam—an almost impossible task—he was able to do was this: The French were trying to run up the east bank of the Mekong,

and if they were able to run through the neutral zone they would be able to reach North West China by their own railway, and no doubt a good deal of the present difficulty had been caused in Siam by their desire to obtain this railway. He expressed the strong hope that the Foreign Office, in the negotiations that were taking place, would lose no opportunity of seeing that, even if the French did get this communication to the South West of China, that important district, teeming with population and presenting large openings for English trade, should not be shut out from us, and that we should be able to get this communication through the Burmese State which at the present moment there seemed some likelihood of our losing. He wanted to ask one or two other questions as to the closing of the trade in the Soudan, and also as to Nyassaland. With reference to the Soudan, he approached the subject entirely from the point of view of his constituents interested in the trade there. Until 1877 we acted on the idea that the only way of taming the Mahdi and his successor, Osman Digna, was to try and starve out that country. But in 1887 a better system was adopted, and General Grenfell and Sir Charles Hollis Smith, as representing the English Government out there, encouraged trade in every possible way. They had advanced to a station there in the west side of the mountains called, he thought, Boshee. The result was that the tribes were able to pasture on the mountains during the summer; they were bound to us very much by the fact that they received this protection from us, and they also acted as an advance post against raids from the Arabs from Khartoum and that side. But General Grenfell and Sir Charles Hollis Smith had been succeeded by other representatives, a new system was adopted and trade was closed under the somewhat mistaken idea that we should be able to starve out the people of that country, and so, if necessary, be able to clear the Soudan and go back as far as Khartoum; but that, he was told, was a wholly mistaken notion. What occurred was this: We had not been able to starve them out, it was clear, and two things had happened, one of which was very detrimental to the honour of this country. Undoubtedly we did give a pledge to the Arabs, and during the time of Sir

Mr. Hanbury

Charles Hollis Smith we practically contracted that we should protect them in future. Under his successor he believed they were disarmed; Osman Digna came down upon them, raided them, destroyed their crops, carried away their women, and we gave no protection whatever to these disarmed men. If that was true, it was dishonouring to this country. Speaking from the trade point of view, these raids tended to destroy what little civilisation there was in that country; it destroyed the people there, or, at any rate, it destroyed their crops, and consequently the opportunity of purchasing our goods by a people who might be very useful customers. Again, the policy of trying to starve out Osman Digna in the Soudan had entirely failed, for he was able to get supplies from the Masai; and the only result was that the Arabs whom we had disarmed and had pledged ourselves to defend had been raided, and the whole trade with the Soudan had fallen into the hands of Italian merchants. With regard to Nyassaland, he would point out the anomalous position which Mr. Johnston occupied there, being at the same time Portuguese Consul, British Commissioner, and agent for the British South Africa Company within the sphere of influence. He believed Mr. Cecil Rhodes, when he was last in England, spoke very plainly to the shareholders of the British South Africa Company to the effect that he had the reversion of Nyassaland, and that he was actually subsidising it at the present moment by paying for a large force of police there. This matter ought to be cleared up. He had received many complaints that so much power should be put in the hands of a British Commissioner who was at the same time the servant of a Chartered Company; and he would like to know how far Mr. Johnston, in acting in this double capacity, was paving the way for Nyassaland to fall into the hands of the Chartered Company? He was no great believer in these Chartered Companies, and he was not sure they should find that this one was destined to be somewhat of a failure, as he was sorry to say the British East Africa Company had been. Before they gave extended powers to the British South Africa Company and allowed it to extend its territory so much, they ought to be more careful that it was

really a company with sufficient means to carry out the work confided to it. The Chartered Company claimed a large jurisdiction over Matabeleland and Mashonaland; but he was told the deeds and documents transferring to the Chartered Company the rights over these territories had not been handed over to the Chartered Company by the United Concessions Company from whom they acquired them; the Directors of the one Company being to a large extent Directors of the other Company. There were many things that required looking into in connection with the British South Africa Company, and he should like to know from the Under Secretary for the Colonies whether Mr. Rhodes was justified in telling the shareholders of the Company when he was last in London that he had the reversion of Nyassaland, and that he was actually subsidising it by finding a large force of police.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; Committee counted, and 40 Members being found present,

*SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall) said, he wished to refer to the statement that the Member for the Forest of Dean (Sir C. Dilke) made with regard to our policy towards Madagascar. The right hon. Baronet appeared in a new capacity. He (Sir Ashmead-Bartlett) remembered him well in the old days, when he represented the Foreign Office, and when he was always the defender and the advocate of France. The right hon. Baronet, according to the belief of the Opposition at that time, was the principal cause of the unfortunate policy of the Government of the day, which was based on the overthrow of the understanding with the great German Monarchies, and upon an alliance with France and Russia. There was no doubt that the Government of 1880 to 1885 was led into that disastrous Egyptian policy more or less by the influence of the right hon. Baronet. The right hon. Baronet attributed the Protectorate of France over Madagascar to Lord Salisbury's short Administration of 1885-6.

*SIR C. W. DILKE said, he did not attribute any French Protectorate over Madagascar to Lord Salisbury's Government. What he complained of was the terms of the recognition of the Protectorate. General want of confidence.

*SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, the right hon. Baronet was referring to the Treaty of 1890, which recognised the Protectorate of France over Madagascar; but he (Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett) was referring to the Treaty of 1885, which was the result of the policy of the present Prime Minister's then Government. The Treaty of 1890 was practically but the recognition of the Treaty of 1885. What had happened since 1885 was simply the consequence of the ignorance and weakness displayed by the Government of the day. That Government made a great surrender in regard to British interests in Madagascar in allowing the French to do as they pleased. He would say that there was generally a want of confidence felt in a Government which had the present Prime Minister at its head. That want of confidence was nowhere more conspicuous than in the results which had followed upon the administration of foreign affairs by the present Government during the past twelve months. They had at the Foreign Office a man of great ability and patriotism; but, all the same, there was a fatal gloom overshadowing the present Government in their foreign relations. He did not say they were responsible for all the attacks that had been made on British interests in different quarters of the globe; but there was a general feeling abroad that when a Government, of which the present Prime Minister was the head, was in Office, British interests could be attacked with impunity. That feeling had been illustrated in Egypt. The pronouncement of the Leader of the House in 1891 with regard to the embarrassment and injurious character of the British occupation of Egypt led the French to attack that occupation, and to intrigue and manœuvre against us there, and so had necessitated the recent increase of our garrison in that country. The Prime Minister was the cause of all their troubles. Siam was another instance of the same disastrous influence. As the hon. Member for Southport had said, if the Government had before June informed the French Government that a moderate rectification of the frontier on the Mekong would not be objected to, but that anything which would cripple Siam, or would deal a blow at British prestige in the East, would not be permitted, the whole diffi-

culty with Siam would have at once subsided. What would the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs have said had he (Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett), or any hon. Member, got up in the House 10 weeks ago and said that the French would filch 75,000 square miles of territory from Siam; that the Siamese troops would be driven away from both banks of the Mekong; that the revenues of the richest Southern Provinces would be seized by France, and important strategic positions on the Gulf of Siam would be occupied by the French forces; that France would inflict a great blow on British trade, and that they would injure British prestige throughout the East? The Under Secretary and his Colleagues would have poured out the vials of scorn on him, and he would have been laughed out of the House. Yet every one of these things had happened. Questions were repeatedly put to the Government, and assurances were as often given that no danger was threatened to Siamese or British interests; but all these assurances had been falsified. The Secretary of State and the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs assured the country that the independence and integrity of Siam were objects of first-class importance to Her Majesty's Government. He did not know about the independence of Siam, but he thought, unless the present policy was reversed, that independence would exist only in name. With regard to the integrity of the country, there was not the slightest doubt that that integrity had been destroyed by the forcible transfer of the 75,000 square miles of Siamese territory of which he had spoken. Four-fifths of the export trade of Siam was in British hands, and any disturbance with our foreign Imperial trade inflicted an injury on this country, and especially on the working classes of the country. On this subject he should like to read a quotation from *The Times*' correspondent at Bangkok. He wrote in Tuesday's issue—

"I must emphasise everything that I have hitherto telegraphed to the effect that it is England that is really attacked through Siam. Great Britain must harbour no illusions, as she has lost prestige in the East up to the present in this Franco-Siamese conflict. The letters which I have received from China and Japan clearly show this, and, as regards Siam itself, so far from British interests being considered as fully protected, I am in a position to state that

important British enterprises which were contemplated here, and which would have given employment to labour and capital, have been abandoned owing to fears for Siam's future."

That, he thought, was worthy of the attention of Her Majesty's Government. With regard to our Indian Empire, he looked upon the influence which the weak and unsuccessful policy of the Government with regard to Siam would have on India as being probably the most serious phase of the whole matter. There was no use in our affecting an ostrich-like security while Russia was advancing on one side of India and France on the other. There was little doubt that France and Russia were combining their aims and their policy in Europe, and it was more than likely that they would also co-operate in Asia. He feared that unless the policy which the Government had pursued in the past was soon and completely reversed with regard to Siam, they would find ere long that the injury which had already been done to Siam, and the blow which had been struck at British prestige, would be very largely increased, and to an extent that might even menace our power in the East. He had desired to say a word with reference to the Pamirs, but at this late period of the evening he would refrain. He would only say that he hoped the Government were correct in the statement they made that the Russian force in occupation had not been increased, and that the promise of the Russian Government not to increase their force, or to fortify important Passes on the road to India, would be carried out.

*MR. LAWRENCE (Liverpool, Abercromby) said that, interrupting the Debate on Siam, he would invite the attention of the Committee for a short time to the subject of the West Coast of Africa. They had heard many eulogiums on the efforts and services of officials of the Foreign Office, both at home and abroad, and nothing he intended to say would detract from the value of those services. The action of the permanent officials had, no doubt, been dictated by the general policy that had animated the various Cabinets that had ruled over this country for the last few years. He desired to call attention to the monopoly which the Royal Niger Company had set up against the express words of their Charter granted in 1885.

Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett

This monopoly was exercised in a country comprising something like 500,000 square miles, and said to contain a population of 30,000,000. The district was not an entirely new one, so far as British trade was concerned, like other districts in regard to which Charters had been granted. It had been known to British trade for 50 years, and the British Government itself had been spending money there to the tune of £500,000. It was stated, when the Charter came before the Cabinet of the day, that the interests of all the British traders had been bought up, but that statement was incorrect, because within the last few months they had purchased the business of the African Association, which had all along protested against the Charter, and besides this Association there were about 12 other firms engaged in the trade. The petty native traders who for a large number of years had been trading up and down the river had according to Bishop Crowther, entirely disappeared, and the potash trade, which was at one time entirely in the hands of those native traders, who were agents for British firms, had been monopolised by the Company. Thus a trader writes—

"We were not permitted by the Agent to leave Lokoja. From February to July, 1885, we were detained there, unable to obtain a passage for us and our potash, while the Company poured into Lagos some hundred tons to take advantage of the 'boom' then existing in that market."

This was not a Party question, both Parties in the State having been responsible for what had occurred. The fact was that five or six years ago the colonising enterprise of recent years was not so distinctly manifest. Imperial federation was not so much talked about. Cabinet after Cabinet came into power, and while they could not deny the great British interests that existed up the Niger they had not the courage, as they should have had, to send out a representative of their own to organise and civilise the district, but through lack of courage they handed over to this company the duty that they themselves ought to have discharged. The Charter was granted, practically, without public inquiry and behind the backs of the Glasgow, Liverpool, and native traders, who, until it was established, had no knowledge that it was going to be granted. The Charter

stated that no monopoly should be set up, but the ink of the Charter was hardly dry when, in July, 1886, Lord Aberdare, at the annual meeting, had stated that the Company had set out with the full intention of trying to get a monopoly of the trade in the district. When a monopoly of this kind was set up enormous injustice was done to other traders. He distrusted the policy of handing over a great territory to a limited body of traders, believing that competition was far more civilising. Lord Iddesleigh, in November, 1886, through the Foreign Office, had stated that he considered the terms of the Charter were a sufficient guarantee against any monopoly and differential duty; but the Committee would see how little was the effect of those words. It was clear to everyone that when a person was Governor as well as a trader, he was at a great advantage over other traders. He could collect revenue from the outside trader; he could, and he (Mr. Lawrence) believed he did, in this case, pay backsheesh to some of the black potentates inland in order to induce them to bring down trade to the offices of the Company. It was clear that a monopoly, though protested against on paper, was certain to be set up in practice. A duty of £50 and £60 and up to £100 had to be paid for stations on the Niger. It had, too, to be paid in gold, and if the Committee remembered that at present barter was the sole method of exchange in the district it would be understood what a hardship it was to make these traders bring gold out from England. The Company had imposed very high Import and Export Duties, and a tax upon salt of 20s. per ton, while in the other African States in the neighbourhood it was 5s. a ton, and in the adjoining Niger Protectorate 4s. per ton. The duty on palm oil was 20 per cent. *ad valorem*, and on palm kernels 30 per cent. *ad valorem*. These Export Duties, which did not exist in other British territories, had been put on owing to suggestions thrown out at the Berlin Conference, to meet the special expenditure of keeping down slavery. He should like to ask the hon. Baronet to say, when he replied, what was the extra expenditure in putting down slavery that this Export Duty was meant to meet, and whether the expendi-

ture was as large as the amount received in duties. The result of the duties had been that in two years ending 1888 the export of palm kernels from Lagos dropped from 2,500 tons to 1,000 tons. The Committee would see, therefore, that the Lagos traders had just reason to object to the monopoly which, owing to the action of Cabinets at home, had been set up on the Niger River. If the Government at home had been content merely with having called into existence the Royal Niger Company, and had limited its trading to certain places, say, north of Onitscha, perhaps those he represented would not have asked him to specially draw the attention of the Committee to the matter; but the Cabinet of 1892 improved on the Cabinet of 1885, and had extended the area over which the Company ruled, handing over to them the Mahini country, a large and most fertile portion of the Oil Rivers district—about 90 miles of some of the richest territory in that part of the world. How was it that the Foreign Office permitted this to be done, notwithstanding that they had a most serious representation from the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce and the Lagos traders against it—supported, too, by the opinion of Her Majesty's Consul resident in those parts? Those he represented believed that the extension of Sir Claud Macdonald's rule over the whole of that area would be of enormous advantage to the trading community. It would do away with the double system of duties obtaining there. At present, the charging of duties on goods going out of that territory would lead to confusion. The unhappy natives had no idea of customs houses, and would be easily placed in an interminable fog as to whether they were breaking the law or not. The country was riddled with countless streams which were the roadways of the district. Clearly it was expedient that such a district should be under one authority. He should be told that the Niger Company originally came into existence owing to the enterprise of our Gallic neighbours, who were going north, south, east, and west annexing territory; that the Company was chartered in order to secure possession of these territories to the British Crown. But, if so, he hoped the Committee would agree with him as to the reasonableness of the Company leaving the Claud Macdonald

territory and going farther afield, with all its advantages—its Imperial support and so on. It should leave, under the jurisdiction of Sir Claud Macdonald, the lower part of the river, which had long since been opened up to British trade, and which had been brought under British influence by Treaties made with Her Majesty's Government, direct through its own Consuls, and not in the least owing to the action of the Niger Company. Although this most successful government of the Oil Rivers Protectorate—which had immediately begun to pay its way—had been established, the district had been sliced off and handed over to the Royal Niger Company. He did not think this Company came to them with the cleanest of hands. They all knew that beyond seas many things were done by people who bore our name and sailed from our shores which could not be defended. He did not wish to believe that all the statements which came from these districts were true, but it seemed pretty clear that some very questionable things had been done by agents of the Company; and he should like to know how far they had been made the subjects of inquiry by the Foreign Office in days gone by? He believed there was a great deal open to censure in the early conduct of the Company. There was one thing which had been brought under his notice in 1885 and 1886. A few months before the Charter was granted an agent of the Company captured three children belonging to a certain tribe, and held them as hostages. The Company had written to the Foreign Office saying that the act was an exceptional one under an exceptional state of things. But after the three children were captured, and a white person was taken in retaliation by the natives, and kept in a black hole for some time, an agent of the Company was actually sailing by and taking no measures to secure this person's liberty. There were other stories of a sinister character, which had been narrated in the columns of *The Liverpool Daily Post*—a journal whose editor had been a well-known man in the House. It was stated in that paper that natives endeavouring to run the gauntlet through the territory of the Company had been shot at. He could not vouch for the truth of that, but this and the other stories to which he referred could easily be verified.

Then, again, the Company was surrounded with mystery, and its own servants were bound to secrecy as to its action under a penalty of £1,000. The clause in the contracts with their servants ran as follows :—

“Mr. — agrees that he will not, either during the currency of this agreement or for a period of ten years after its determination, from any cause whatever, without the assent of the Company, communicate to the newspapers of Great Britain or other countries, or to any outside persons, official or private, any facts, whether commercial, industrial, scientific, or political, in connection with the business or administration of the Company, or the district occupied by the Company, or with those who shall have visited or become acquainted with it during his employment in the Company's service, and that he will not publish, or distribute privately, any pamphlet, book, or other paper disclosing any such facts, nor in any way knowingly induce any person, or persons, to carry on any occupation of profit within such districts. . . . The amount specified is by way of liquidated damages, and not by way of penalty, but any such payment shall not prejudice the right of the Company to restrain a continuance of such breach.”

Sir Claud, when Major Macdonald, had been sent out to inquire into the allegations against the Company, but his Report had never been published. He was afraid that many Foreign Office Reports were for the Foreign Office alone, and could not be published, but he had good reason to believe that many officials—not merely Major Macdonald—had several times brought to the knowledge of the Government facts which showed that the operations of the Royal Niger Company ought to be more carefully looked into than they had hitherto been. To his mind what should be done was this : some Crown Commissioner should be sent to reside in the district. Furthermore, in his opinion, the Company ought to be compelled to publish periodical accounts similar to those which were published by the old East India Company, showing the receipts and expenditure, both administrative and commercial. Administration and trading accounts should be kept rigorously apart. What the British East India Company were compelled to do under Acts of 33 Geo. III., c. 52, and 53 Geo. III., c. 155, he claimed that the Royal Niger Company should be compelled to do, because they had ousted all other traders from their district. This did not apply to the British South Africa Company, in whose territory there were no outside traders; but in the case of the

Niger Company the Government ought to require it to send up accounts of all their expenditure and revenue to be laid before Parliament. He had ventured to bring this matter before the Committee, because they had hitherto received no reply on these matters from the Foreign Office. No doubt it would be said that these Companies were the cheapest form of annexing territory to the British Crown, and that it did not matter in the long run which trader made the profit; but he felt convinced that, if they wanted to spread civilisation rapidly and to found it on a sound basis, the soundest policy was to allow competition to come in. That would be much more efficacious than the policy of tying the hands of traders by allowing a monopoly.

MR. J. W. LOWTHER said, he had already trespassed upon the time of the Committee for some little space, but would now promise to be brief. He was glad the hon. Member for Liverpool (Mr. Lawrence) had at last had an opportunity of bringing this matter before the House, though he was afraid he could not agree with the hon. Member in the view he had presented in regard to the action of the Niger Company. The hon. Member represented that the Government had handed over the administration of this vast territory of 500,000 square miles to the Niger Company. That Company, by pressing up the river, had enabled Great Britain to bring under her sphere of influence the vast territory in question. Liverpool merchants who traded with that part of Africa had not ventured up the Oil Rivers.

MR. LAWRENCE said, that he knew of one firm which had been up there for 40 years.

MR. J. W. LOWTHER said, that his information pointed to the fact that at the time the Charter was granted to the Niger Company they had bought out every one of the traders on the whole river, and they had gone behind the Liverpool traders, who confined their operations to the mouth of the Oil River, and had pushed up to the east, and therefore it was not unnatural that a certain amount of trade jealousy should arise on the part of the Liverpool merchants as against a Company whose operations had proved to be eminently successful. His hon. Friend talked about monopoly,

but where was the monopoly? By the Berlin Treaty of 1885 the navigation of the Niger was open to all the world; therefore, the clients of the hon. Member were entitled to make use of it. And what duties were imposed on merchants? Absolutely none. There is not a single Import Duty imposed on any merchandise on the two rivers, except in the case of alcohol, tobacco, and war material. If the clients of the hon. Member wished to introduce those things into the country duty would have to be paid, but as to ordinary articles of merchandise—in which the hon. Member's clients probably dealt—there was not a single Import Duty of any sort or kind to be paid throughout the length and breadth of the dominions of the Chartered Company. According to the information supplied to him (Mr. Lowther), not only was there no monopoly, but the trade of the independent traders had actually increased in the district since the Niger Company had been granted a Charter. In 1886 the Niger Company had the whole of the trade; in 1887 independent traders had 1-17th of the trade; in 1890 they had 1-12th; and in 1891 they had 1-9th. He did not feel called upon to defend the Niger Company, the Conservative Government having been in no way responsible for the granting of the Charter. While he was at the Foreign Office he came to the conclusion that the Company was doing a most admirable work, because they prevented any importation of spirits above the deltaic region, and in the lower regions had imposed a very high duty on alcohol. It had enormously developed the country in the time it had been there, and had acquired for British trade and influence this vast territory, which amounted to nearly 500,000 square miles, and which, if it had not been so acquired, might have been swallowed up by France 10 years ago.

*SIR E. GREY said, that in regard to the point raised in the first speech of the hon. Member for Penrith, as to whether any fresh Papers on Madagascar would be laid on the Table, he could not give an answer without further inquiry. The question had been raised in the House already this Session, and the consideration which influenced the Government in refusing to give them was that, affairs in Madagascar being still in

a critical state, even if Papers which might be produced had no direct bearing on the questions at issue, they might indirectly have some disturbing influence which it was not desirable to provoke. However, the point raised would be considered. The question of the Return of the tariffs of foreign countries would have to be considered by him with the President of the Board of Trade before a reply could be given. The Papers as to the cession of Vitu were in course of preparation, and he did not know why they had not yet been presented to Parliament. There had been no intentional delay in presenting them. With regard to Samoa there had, no doubt, been some trouble there, but there was no intention to inflict retributive justice on the person who was the cause of it. Mataafa was unfortunate; he did not happen to be the nominee of the Treaty Powers; and, secondly, he was not successful. He was placed on board a man-of-war, and it was for the three Treaty Powers to decide what should be done with him. He would probably be placed upon an island belonging to one of the Treaty Powers, where he would be secure, so far as Samoa was concerned. By his removal the Government of Malietoa had been strengthened, and it was hoped that affairs in Samoa might progress satisfactorily as soon as the new officials had arrived. With regard to Manicaland, the British and Portuguese Commissioners had met on the spot and had gone through certain delimitations, but failed to agree. The question of final settlement was now the subject of correspondence between the two Governments. Regarding the Soudan, he was as much against the policy of starving the Soudan as the hon. Member himself, but the question must depend upon the future influence of political considerations. As to Chantaboon, they had received assurances that its occupation was only to be temporary, while as to the Most Favoured Nation Clause, the Treaty was so distinct that the Government would be bound to see that no commercial advantages were given to other countries which would result in the exclusion of British trade. With regard to Nyassaland, it had been the object of the present Government to insure that its administration should be impartial as regarded the

various interests concerned, and the Government had hitherto made no change in the conditions under which it was administered. It should be remembered that in all new territories this country had to consider whether the taxpayers would agree to expenditure enough to take them over. If the British taxpayer was not asked to pay, they must be prepared for some anomalies in existing administration. As to the Niger Company, it had administered the territory over which it ruled well, and had raised no political complications. After the most careful inquiry it appeared that the Customs raised did not so much as cover the amount which the Company spent in administration. It was one of the few Chartered Companies which paid a dividend.

*SIR J. FERGUSSON (Mauchester, N.E.) said, the Debate had been necessarily discursive, but beyond all doubt the most prominent subject before the Committee had been the state of affairs in Siam. In his humble opinion, the Committee ought to accept as satisfactory the statement made by the Under Secretary. He could not associate himself with the opinion of the hon. Member for Sheffield (Sir E. Ashmead - Bartlett), as he did not believe that British prestige had been lowered in the East and in India by the occurrences that had taken place. We did not, and we never had, assumed responsibility for a protectorate in Siam, and he ventured to think our reputation was more likely to suffer from extravagant pretensions than from confining our efforts to our legitimate interests. The Under Secretary of State had accentuated the statement he made on a former occasion with regard to our great commercial interests in Siam and the Resolution of Her Majesty's Government to defend and protect them. He believed they might look with confidence to the Foreign Secretary to act up to the spirit of that statement, and they would pay careful attention to the result of the negotiations that were going on. He believed the Secretary of State had due regard to the interests of British commerce, for it would be not only a national loss, but a national disgrace to allow those interests to be injured or destroyed. The Committee ought to be

satisfied so far with the assurances of the Under Secretary.

Mr. HANBURY rose—

SIR W. HARCOURT: I beg to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided :—Ayes 140 ; Noes 55.—(Division List, No. 296.)

Question put accordingly, and agreed to.

Resolution to be reported.

Motion made, and Question proposed

"That a sum, not exceeding £25,680, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March 1894, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Department of Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies, including certain Expenses connected with Emigration."

*SIR E. ASHMEAD - BARTLETT said, he wished to call attention to the position of affairs in Mashonaland. That position was critical, if not perilous, for British subjects and British interests. There were some 1,500 British subjects now engaged in developing the resources of that distant, but most promising and naturally rich country. They were practically cut off from the rest of the British possessions. Hundreds of miles separated them from any immediate assistance which could be afforded either by the Imperial or the Colonial Government. The hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Hanbury), in a speech he had made earlier in the evening, had attacked Chartered Companies. He (Sir E. Ashmead - Bartlett) was sorry to hear that from the hon. Member, because if the hon. Member would carry his mind back to the latter portion of the last century and the earlier portion of the present century he would see that the East India Company, the great prototype of the present Chartered Companies, had done the greatest amount of good for the commerce and Imperial power of this country. The greatest commercial development of this country abroad had originated from the efforts of private individuals, working sometimes for their own hand and sometimes banded together as Chartered Companies. What was the

position of the British Chartered Companies in South Africa? They had been carrying on a great work of exploration and development in one of the richest territories of the world. A grave danger now threatened them. Lo Bengula, a powerful and savage Monarch, who could put from 15,000 to 20,000 armed men in the field, was dissatisfied with their progress, and threatened them with serious danger, if not complete destruction. Although the colonists might be able to defend themselves within Forts Victoria and Salisbury from any attacks by Lo Bengula's warriors, their work, their wealth, and their resources were of such a character that their retirement within the forts would practically ruin all their enterprise. Their work was twofold—mining and agricultural. There were no two forms of industry so open to destruction by an enemy as mining and agriculture. Everybody knew how easily crops could be destroyed, cattle carried off, and the machinery and appliances of mining ruined by an active enemy. Therefore, the retirement of the colonists within those forts would mean the practical ruin of their settlement and the destruction of their agricultural and mining enterprise, which were very open to the enemy's attack. The Government had assumed an unjust and illogical attitude towards this great British enterprise, for they had said to the Chartered Company that their forces, which would be adequate for the defence of the forts, but absolutely inadequate for the protection of the settlement from the raids of the Matabele, were not to undertake any offensive movement, but were to remain on the defensive. But the only practical way of dealing with the danger would be by a speedy movement of the whole of the British forces in Mashonaland upon the King's kraal. He had asked the Prime Minister the other day whether the defence of a position was not often best secured by offensive tactics. That statement was received with ignorant jeers by the Radical Party, and he was not surprised at that. The latest news from Mashonaland was that, in the opinion of Sir H. Loch and of the responsible authorities in Mashonaland, Lo Bengula was at the present moment temporising, because he had sent some 6,000 of his men on a raid into the Mashukuhunbwe

country to the north of the Zambesi, and until they returned he would be unable to take the offensive against our colonists. When that force returned Lo Bengula would be in a position to throw between 15,000 and 20,000 armed barbarians against the small body of 1,500 colonists in that distant country. What was the character of those Matabele? The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies had tried to throw some responsibility on the late Government. "Though Lo Bengula's character was known," said the hon. Gentleman, "the late Government had some negotiations with the Potentate." He would venture to submit that that argument was wholly beside the matter. The hon. Gentleman had added that these raids of the Matabele, which used to be of a most destructive and horrible character, had practically ceased. But that was not so. The raids had been resumed in the present year, and had been attended with all the horrors of the massacre of the helpless Mashonas and the carrying into captivity of their women and children. Every British Government had at some time or other to enter into negotiations with Powers and Potentates whose character for humanity might very largely be disputed. The object of the late Government, as well as of the Chartered Company, in entering into negotiations with the King was to secure peace and order for the large districts which had hitherto been exposed to the raids of these savage tribes; and it was because that policy, which had been successful for several years, was now threatened with attack by Lo Bengula that he now brought the matter before the Committee. He would refer hon. Members who wished to know anything about the Matabele and their raids to the letters which appeared in *The Times* of that day and on previous days, the statements in which would be fully confirmed by everyone who knew anything about South Africa. He would read a few extracts from a letter which had appeared in *The Times* of August 29th, from the Bishop of Derry, whose knowledge of South Africa was derived from the most authentic sources—

"The Matabele are descended from a Zulu tribe which emigrated in 1825 under Um-milhquiri, father of Lo Bengula. They form a military state or caste; they are soldiers, not for defence but for the raids upon feebler tribes for cattle, slaves, and especially women. Mashona-

Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett

land is the centre of their raids, their happy hunting ground. The Matabele loves to kill, lives to kill."

The Bishop then went on to describe the raid of the Matabele. The kraals of the Mashonas were surrounded at night. In the morning the savages made a descent on them, massacred the men, and carried off the women, children, and cattle into captivity. A certain number of Mashona men were preserved in order to drive the Mashona cattle into the country of the Matabele, and when they arrived there these unfortunate men were brutally slaughtered before the eyes of their families. That happened this very year, and yet the Under Secretary for the Colonies told them that the raids were things of the past.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. S. BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I did not say that. I said to a large extent.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, the words "large extent" were not used by the hon. Gentleman, or, if they were used, they were used in such a way that the attention of the House had not been fixed on them.

MR. S. BUXTON: The hon. Gentleman's question to me was whether or not I could say that the raids had ceased within the last few years. As a matter of fact, with the exception of the raid the other day, the raids are to a large extent things of the past.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said he differed from the hon. Gentleman as to his impression of what he had said on the subject. The cessation of these murderous raids was due to the policy of the late Conservative Government and of the Chartered Company. But what had happened this year in Mashonaland? In July one of Lo Bengula's impis raided the country, and many of the unfortunate Mashonas were massacred close to Victoria itself, and their women and children were carried off. Lo Bengula, when remonstrated with by the agent of the company, said that the Mashonas were his slaves, and that he had the right to treat them as he chose. For the last 50 years the unfortunate Mashonas have been subjected to this persecution, and thousands of them had been killed and their women and children made slaves. The country in which

these atrocities were being perpetrated was a country under British protection, a country in which the British flag was flying. It might be true that the Chartered Company were largely responsible for peace and order in Mashonaland; but it was impossible for the Government to repudiate the responsibility, which must in the last instance fall upon them for the protection of the British subjects in that country, and for the security of those who looked up to them for security. The Government had thrown upon the Company the responsibility of protecting British subjects within their territories, and yet had forbidden them to take aggressive action against Lo Bengula, which seemed to be the only effective method of giving protection to those who were dependent upon them for their lives. All that was asked was that the Company and the British settlers in their district should be allowed to deal a deadly blow at this barbarous and cruel tyrant, and thus secure Mashonaland for all time against the raids of the Matabele. When Lo Bengula's impis returned from the raid they were making against the Mashukuhunbwes it would be impossible to protect Mashonaland from the overpowering numbers of these savages should they attack the settlement. If such a thing occurred, Her Majesty's Government would have to bear the responsibility. The Government had adopted the very worst policy that it could adopt. They had adopted the half-and-half, meddling and muddling, policy which always characterised a Ministry of which the present Prime Minister was the head, and refused to permit the Company to adopt the only rational means of defending themselves against these raids. Lo Bengula claimed that the Mashonas were his slaves, and that he had a perfect right to carry off their cattle and their women and children. What were these Mashonas doing for the settlers? They were supplying the necessary labour by which alone the country could be developed; they acted as agricultural labourers and mining labourers in Mashonaland. These unfortunate people had taken refuge from Lo Bengula in their mountain fastnesses. They had been induced to come down from these fastnesses in the belief that they would be preserved from the cruelty of the Matabele under the protection of

the British flag. But they did not get that protection; they were still being raided by Lo Bengula. The Bishop of Derry in his admirable and eloquent letter well described the terrible results of these raids—

“The Mashonas are absolutely necessary for the development of the country, whilst their extermination is growing nearer every year. The sight of gentle, unoffending servants simply hacked to pieces, their blood spurting over the Englishman's gown, or the Englishman's coat, is something too terrible for thought to dwell upon. This cloud, big with death, ever threatening to break into a fresh storm, and forming again and again, must be dissipated, unless the peaceful development of Mashonaland is to become impossible.”

The present condition of affairs was described in an extract which he would read from *The Times* newspaper—

“Dr. Jameson, the Administrator of Mashonaland, who knows more about the situation than anyone, has declared the present position to be impossible, and says that it renders action of some sort imperative. Mining work in Mashonaland is suspended; the natives who supply the manual labour cannot be induced to come down from their fastnesses. Prospectors are obliged to remain within the protected area of the Company's occupation. On all sides the opinion appears to be gaining ground that a trial of strength between the forces of barbarism and civilisation in that part of Africa is becoming inevitable. Such a trial has in no way been courted by the Company. War is financially undesirable, and if the conflict could have been postponed for another decade, the Company would have been in a better position to enter into it with the necessary assurance of success.”

All this showed that a grave responsibility would rest on the Government if they adopted the policy they had announced to the House. Her Majesty's Government had no right to blow hot and cold in this matter, for it involved the well-being and prosperity of 1,500 British subjects, and possibly their lives as well. Either the Government should undertake responsibility for the protection of our fellow-subjects in Mashonaland, or should give the British South Africa Company a free hand in dealing with Lo Bengula.

COMMANDER BETHELL said, it was obvious that the Chartered Companies must be restrained by the Government to some extent; it was not less obvious that if war ensued the Imperial Government must sooner or later interfere to protect British subjects. The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs had that evening spoken of Chartered

Companies as excellent institutions, but in his own view the policy of colonising by means of such Companies was very doubtful. It might be that the accounts which had been referred to might turn out to be somewhat exaggerated, and it might even yet be found preferable to square Lo Bengula rather than to fight him. But whether that was so or not, he thought it was quite clear that inasmuch as the Imperial Government restrained the Chartered Company from taking any step which they have believed to be necessary for the safety of those over whom they ruled, obviously in some way or other the Imperial Government would have to come to their assistance in time of difficulty. He would suggest to his hon. Friend, who thought more vigorous action should have been taken by the Government that he should remember that if the Imperial Government was called upon to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for the Chartered Company, it might have something to say to the Chartered Company about the chestnuts after they were pulled out. He would not now enter at greater length into the ethics of Chartered Companies. He would prefer to proceed, as formerly, by slow steps into a new country. That course was pursued in Nyassaland with extremely happy results; and, while upon this point, he would like to ask that more frequent Reports might be published as to the condition of this part of Africa. Although he would have liked to have had some discussion before Parliament closed on certain important questions connected with Uganda, they could not well discuss anything until the Papers relating to that part of Africa were before them.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I want to say a word or two upon questions relating to African colonisation, but before I do so I would like to say that I am also very much interested in another Colony—the Bahamas—the discussion in regard to which, I believe, will be raised by my hon. and gallant Friend opposite. It is quite as much for the convenience of the Government and the Committee as for ours that we should separate what we have to say and keep each subject distinct; but, of course, if the Government are going, without giving us the slightest warning, to move the Closure at some early period, then, of course, it will be

necessary for us to deal with the various subjects together. I do hope that the Under Secretary will take this opportunity of giving the Committee in some detail the opinions of the Government upon the whole question of Chartered Companies, which is a subject of the utmost importance, and has, within the last few years, received great development. The Chartered Company of Borneo has, perhaps, been made a precedent, which has been largely followed in the case of Africa. I am not prepared to say that this is the best policy to follow, and experience must have shown that there are great difficulties connected with it. On the other hand, there is much to be said in its favour. If we are to proceed with that policy there ought to be some continuity, and some rule ought to be laid down as to the responsibility of the Imperial Government in connection with Chartered Companies. There is no advantage at all in Chartered Companies unless you intend deliberately and permanently to throw upon them the responsibility which you have committed to their charge. You say to a Chartered Company—"We give you powers to provide for the peace, order, and good government of the land which we trust to your care," and then at the very first opportunity, the moment there is any trouble in the land, there is at once a demand upon the Imperial Government that they should interfere, and, apparently, the Imperial Government drifts and drifts until at last it does interfere. We have, therefore, all the disadvantage with regard to Chartered Companies, all the trouble and risk, and none of the advantages. I think that is altogether a mistake. For myself, I may say that I have not seen reason to doubt that the system of Chartered Companies might have been a very good system, at all events, in the early days of the colonisation of these countries; but, as I have said, you should make an arrangement with a Chartered Company and stick to it. You must say to them—"You have the responsibility, and you must take it up. If you go into a country you must take the risk." In the case of the British South Africa Company, I am not aware that they have even disputed this responsibility, or their readiness to fulfil their obligation; but then the Government comes in and interferes with them,

and when the Company, which, by the way, had asked for no assistance, proposed to take a forward movement or an aggression, as it had been called, but which was really a defensive movement, as he understood it, against this Chief Lo Bengula, then the Imperial Government steps in and says, "You shall not move an inch without consulting us: you are not to take the only true method of protecting the people who look to you for protection; you are not to take the only reasonable method, which is to punish Lo Bengula for his aggressions." If the Government was going to take the responsibility of saying—"You shall not punish Lo Bengula for his aggressions," then all I can say is that in that case the Government will have a very heavy responsibility if any massacre of either native or European subjects of Her Majesty took place. I think the Government ought really to state the matter plainly for the information of the Committee. We ought to know exactly what our relation is to these Chartered Companies. Are they practically independent bodies? In that case let them take the responsibility, and then they will have no claim on this country; but if the Government resolve to interfere with the policy of the Companies, we shall be answerable for any failure of that policy. I hope we shall have a clear statement on this subject.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. S. Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I do not think the Committee will expect me on this occasion to enter at length into the question of Chartered Companies generally. We have Chartered Companies in various parts of the world. So far as the Colonial Office is concerned we have only one in any sense under our control; the Foreign Office have four or five, and I do not think it would be expedient on the present occasion that I should attempt to lay down any principle which ought to direct the Foreign Office, as well as the Colonial Office, in dealing with these Companies. But so far as the British South Africa Company is concerned, the position is that they acknowledge themselves to be entirely responsible both for the administration and the protection of the territory over which they have control, but in their Charter, as regards any question of dispute between

them and the chiefs in their territory, there is a distinct clause which enables Her Majesty's Government, if they think fit, to interfere in that dispute and to forbid the Company taking a forward action, or to come to some arrangement with them in regard to that particular matter. Government are in communication with the Company in regard to the dispute with Lo Bengula, and they have made no complaint whatever in regard to the attitude Her Majesty's Government have taken up. They have declared themselves perfectly competent to look after their own protection, and they have declared themselves very well satisfied with the moral support which we have given them.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT : What is the moral support ?

MR. S. BUXTON : The moral support is that we have, as regards the posts of danger in Bechuanaland, sent up more police, and we are prepared in that sense to show Lo Bengula that, as far as we are concerned, he cannot attack our territory with impunity. It has been assumed that the Company are in a position to attack Lo Bengula at the first moment. That is entirely and absolutely incorrect. The Government are, of course, bound to take an interest in the action of the Company, and what we have done so far as regards their position is simply this—we have said that at the first moment they should not make an aggressive movement on Lo Bengula without our knowledge and authority. A good deal has been said about Matabeleland and Lo Bengula and his raids, which I do not desire to defend ; but I think we ought to require two things. In the first place, these raids are no new thing, and, in the second place, as regards the raid the other day, Lo Bengula declared that he sent the impi in order to punish the Mashonas, partly on our account—because they had stolen some telegraph wires—and partly because he wanted to get back some cattle that had been stolen. I think it is quite clear that this impi did largely exceed his orders, and that they were very severely punished by a large number being killed.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (interposing) : What was the subsequent statement ?

MR. S. BUXTON : His statement was that which we have always admitted

—namely, that the Mashonas were his subjects. We have always admitted that they were his subjects, and his statement that they were his slaves was another way of saying that they were under his jurisdiction. What I wanted to point out was this : at the present moment, whether as a matter of right or wrong, there can be no justification on the part of the Company for an aggressive movement which the hon. Gentleman is so anxious should be undertaken, and where also, quite apart from the rights and wrongs of the case, at the present moment they are not in a position to make it. And, so far as we are concerned, we are not going to be rushed into another South African War. We feel it is only right and just from the point of view of Imperial interests as well, I am bound to say I think of the interests of the Company themselves, that they should not by a forward movement, without proper support, be allowed to suffer some reverse which might raise a very large number of native troops throughout other parts of Africa against the white men. We are, as far as we can, desirous of ending this dispute in a peaceful way ; we are very anxious to take no more risks than we can possibly help, but at the same time the Government are fully aware of the responsibilities which they have undertaken by forbidding this forward movement. They believe that is the right policy. They know that at the present moment the Chartered Company themselves are in accordance with the action they have taken, and I can only say in the very delicate position of the question at the present moment that remarks such as those of the hon. Member are, in my opinion, very mischievous and highly inexpedient. [SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT : Which remarks ?] The observations which the hon. Member used more than once, that in his opinion we ought to allow and encourage the Company to attack Lobengula whether right or wrong—[SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT : I said nothing of the kind]—or whether they are likely to be successful or be defeated. These remarks are so much in accord unfortunately with the views of persons on the spot—but not with responsible people in the Company—that I fear unless a strong expression of opinion in this House is made, they

Mr. S. Buxton

may easily rush us into this war which we are very anxious to avoid. I hope, at all events, that we may be able to avoid any difficulty with Lo Bengula, and I think the hon. Gentleman ought to remember that the Company and these Colonists have been very fortunate in having had up till now a very easy and peaceful time, and I do not think on the first difficulty which arises that they ought to complain, or that they ought to call upon Her Majesty's Government to support them in their aggressive movement. We are prepared to defend the territory for which we are responsible; we are prepared to do our best to avoid difficulties of this sort, and the Company themselves declare that in their opinion they are quite prepared to meet any emergency. Therefore, as far as we are concerned, while we fully feel the responsibility of any action we may have taken in the matter, we believe that such action as we have taken has been in the interest of peace and in the interests of the company themselves, and we believe that if a difficulty arises we shall be in a proper and right position to meet and deal with it. With regard to what has been said as to further Papers on this and kindred matters, I have in the last day or two laid some Papers on the Table, which I hope will be printed and circulated in a very short time. As regards the question of Swaziland, I think hon. Members will feel that it will be more convenient to discuss that question when we reach it in the ordinary course; and if hon. Members desire to speak on it they had better do so on the special Vote instead of mixing it with other questions.

*THE CHAIRMAN (Sir J. GOLDSMID, St. Pancras, S.) called upon Sir C. Dilke, when—

*SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said: I desire, by way of personal explanation, to say that the Under Secretary has very considerably misrepresented what I have said. I did not advise a forward movement. I said that the Government had no right to throw all responsibility upon the Chartered Company, and at the same time forbid all offensive movement. The first I knew of the forward movement was the statement by the Government that they had distinctly forbidden a forward movement. With regard to the statement of the hon.

Gentleman, in my opinion, on the whole, not unsatisfactory, and if his answers to my questions had been in the same sense, the House would have been spared much of my remarks to-night.

*THE CHAIRMAN: I must point out to the hon. Member that this is more than an explanation.

*SIR C. W. DILKE called attention to the action of naval officers on the Treaty shore of Newfoundland, and said it would be impossible for Parliament to impose its will upon any other Colony which had responsible and representative institutions in the manner in which it had attempted to do in the case of the self-governing Colony of Newfoundland. The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies had been reported to have said, in reply to a question, that the recent extraordinary action of the naval officers was in pursuance of a discretion conferred by Treaty. He had afterwards explained that he was misreported and had not said "Treaty." But the discretion alluded to was not contained in any Statute, and it appeared to him that the powers which were exercised by the naval officers were outside any law. Turning to the Blue Book which had recently appeared, he said that the first action taken by Lord Ripon in the matter, to judge by a telegram sent to the Colonial Government, went in the same direction as that in which the late Government had gone in their dealings with the colony, only the language was still more peremptory. In the telegram Lord Ripon threatened that Her Majesty's Government would be compelled to resort to coercive Imperial legislation. The whole question now in dispute arose out of the meaning to be attached to the words saying that we should not molest or interfere with the French fishery in the Royal declaration attached to one of the Treaties. The British contention was that we had a concurrent right of fishery on that part of the Newfoundland shore upon which the Treaty of Utrecht had given the French the right to land and dry fish. That part of the coast was an integral portion of the Colony and it returned two Members to the Colonial Legislature. It had not been until the lobster fishery commenced, in the year 1882, on the Treaty shore, that conflict arose on the French Treaty rights. In 1887 the French naval officers began to cut the nets of British

fishing boats that were engaged in fishing off the Treaty shore, and to remove British lobster pots, and so did that which our Government had declared that they had no right to do. He denied that Newfoundland had been unwilling to carry out Treaty obligations, and declared that if, instead of a feeble colony, they had had to deal with an Australasian Colony, no attempt would have been made to bully the Colony or to propose Imperial coercive legislation, as had been attempted in the case of Newfoundland. He did not think that it was to the advantage of the Colony that arbitration should take place upon the limited subject to which it was confined, and as regarded which it constituted a partial admission of a monstrous claim. He did not wish to interfere with the Treaty rights, but in their protection of the French they had gone far beyond the letter of the Treaty. They had prevented their own Colonists from making use of their own country, and it was because he felt that they had gone much too far that he ventured to call the attention of the Committee to the matter.

MR. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough) rose to Order.

*MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER said, there was no question of Order involved, and called upon

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central), who had risen simultaneously with Mr. Morton. The hon. Member said that, having been recently in Newfoundland, he would impress on the Government how deeply the Colonists felt upon this question, and how necessary it was to arrive at a settlement.

*MR. A. C. MORTON said, that he did not intend to detain the Committee unnecessarily, but he was of opinion that they ought to protect the British citizens in Newfoundland. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. J. W. Lowther) had stated that the colonist desired to "rip up" the Treaty of Utrecht. That was not so. The Newfoundlanders had stated distinctly, through their Delegates who were here in 1891, that they desired and were willing, to purchase the French rights, whatever they were, at a fair price. And all that they asked of the British Government was that, as Newfoundland was a poor Colony, the British Government

should lend them the money at a low rate of interest, and he (Mr. Morton) was assured that the Newfoundlanders would pay both interest and principal of such a loan. He (Mr. Morton) did not think much of the proposed Arbitration. After all, it would only decide whether a "lobster" was a fish or not, and would leave the main question undecided. On the whole, he (Mr. Morton) thought it would be just as well to drop the proposed Arbitration altogether, and to approach the French Government in a friendly manner with a view to settle the question finally by purchasing the French rights; and it was admitted that the French people had rights on the Newfoundland coast. Until that was done the "Newfoundland difficulty" would never be settled. And he (Mr. Morton) earnestly hoped that the present Government would do their best to get the matter settled. He (Mr. Morton) had by several questions called the attention of the Under Secretary of State (Mr. Buxton) to some grievances of the Newfoundlanders, but the replies were not very satisfactory. One of those matters was with regard to the naval officers acting as Magistrates in questions affecting the rights of the colonists. What the Newfoundlanders said was that they had Magistrates and Courts of their own on the land, and they objected to their citizens being tried in secret on British ships without any chance of their being properly represented or protected by publicity. He (Mr. Morton) hoped that the Government would in this matter allow the colony complete Home Rule. Then there was the question of Admiral Sir B. Walker, and the compensation cases. He was informed that the Admiral had evaded service of the writs which had been issued against him. That, if correct, was a disgraceful state of things, and should not be allowed by the British Government to exist for a single day. Surely the British Government could appoint some respectable solicitor at St. John's to accept service of these writs, and allow the Supreme Court to hear and settle these cases. In this, as in other matters, he (Mr. Morton) hoped that the Colonial Office would do their best to remove the grievances which were properly complained of, and do justice to our oldest colony.

Sir C. W. Dilke

*SIR J. GOLDSMID said, as he understood the matter, there were three points of complaint. The Colonists complained that the Government here had decided against them without fairly considering the position of affairs; that by the Treaty the French had the right to put up temporary buildings only for the purpose of curing cod, whereas they had put up most substantial factories in order to do something else; and further, that the British Government did not protect them against the French, who destroyed the nets and implements of the local fishermen, although they had at least equal rights with the French to fish for crustacea as well as for cod. He thought the Admiralty might easily give instructions to the Naval Officers to prevent the French from taking the law into their own hands. He could not see the object of arbitration. What was the point for arbitration? Was it whether a lobster was a fish? If that were determined, how would it settle the dispute? He agreed with much of the argument of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean (Sir C. W. Dilke), and he thought it was only fair to the Colonials that they should be consulted with reference to what should be done in these matters affecting themselves.

MR. S. BUXTON: Three points have been raised, and I shall deal with them in their order. With regard to the objection as to Justices of the Peace for the Colony, they were appointed at the request of the Colony; and as soon as the Colony is able to appoint local Justices, the Government will be glad to relieve these officers from a position which they do not desire. In many parts of Newfoundland they have been of great advantage to the inhabitants, who have approved of the bulk of their actions. We cannot now go back, and we are bound by the Acts that previous Governments have for many years passed. As to the question of coercing the Newfoundlanders, I can only say that England has always sympathised with their difficulties, and has made attempts in a sympathetic and liberal spirit to meet their views. In 1857, in 1864, and in 1874 action was taken, and the difficulty with France as nearly as possible concluded; but, unfortunately, the Newfoundlanders rejected our proposals, and no settlement was arrived at. As to the

question of the particular matter to which the permanent Act will apply, I admit to the full it is a limited reference which goes to the Board of Arbitrators; and I think every one of us—certainly Her Majesty's Government—would be only too delighted if every one of these difficult and anomalous French Treaty questions could be referred to arbitration and settled by definition. Unfortunately you cannot go to arbitration unless both sides are prepared to do so. The late Government more than once approached the French Government with a view to seeing if all the questions at issue would not admit of arbitration. The French Government, however, have refused to arbitrate on all the points, and I think we shall all agree that the present moment is not at all a favourable one to meet the French Government with a view to complete arbitration. That being so, and the position being an anomalous one, it appears to me better to have these small questions arbitrated upon than to allow them to add to the friction already existing. I can only say that we have endeavoured, and will still endeavour, to meet the Newfoundland Government in the most friendly spirit we possibly can. The Despatch referred to, which I am glad to think the hon. Member regards as an advance in the right direction, was written with a view to getting them to send a delegation over here to discuss the question, and to show that we, as far as we could, consistently with Treaty rights, were ready to meet them in regard to their own local matters. We trust that they will endeavour to meet us in the same spirit, so that this section of the matter may be removed as one source of friction with France. That is the position so far as we are concerned. We are anxious to settle this section of the matter.

*SIR J. FERGUSSON said, that during the five years he was Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs this question had constantly occupied the attention of the Government. Nothing could be a greater mistake than that which appeared to dwell in the mind of the hon. Member for Peterborough—namely, that the late Government—and he supposed he could speak also for the present Government—were in any way indifferent to this question,

because Newfoundland was not one of the largest Colonies, or its people one of the most numerous and best able to make their voices heard. On the contrary, this question had occupied an amount of attention out of all proportion to its magnitude and the size of the Colony, or the interests involved. As the Under Secretary of State had said, it was a matter of great difficulty with which, after all, two great Powers were concerned, each tenacious of the privileges and rights of its subjects, involving questions as to which there was considerable difference of legal interpretation. He had been surprised at the remarks of the hon. Member, but he had been still more surprised to hear from the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean (Sir C. W. Dilke), who had had large experience in connection with foreign affairs, and who, he freely admitted, was a very considerable authority on many points of foreign affairs, arguments which showed such a total disregard of the rights and susceptibilities of other Powers. When the right hon. Baronet deprecated arbitration and said that we had the rights of our Colonies to protect, and that they should be left to manage their own affairs, was it possible that he was ignorant of, or indifferent to, the position of the French Government on this question? How was it possible that one nation—still less a colony of a nation—could judge its own cause? Where there was an International difference for one Power to say—"These are our rights, and these we will maintain," is nothing less than saying—"We will go to war unless our view is accepted." Was it to be supposed that the French Government would tolerate an assertion by us of the right of the Colonists of Newfoundland to say what was the interpretation to be placed upon certain Treaties, and to what extent they would carry them out? It was evident that the responsibility rested with the Power who made the Treaties, and that it was the duty of that Power to see that they were carried out. The British Governments had been far from indifferent to the susceptibilities of the Colonists. They had run considerable risks of difficulty with the French Government, and he was bound to say that the French Government had been forbearing in the

matter. To say that we could permit a Colony to ignore obligations under which it lay, to interpret a Treaty for itself and disregard the rights of France under that Treaty, seemed to him to ignore and disregard the plainest principles of International Law. The hon. Member for Peterborough said—"Why go into arbitration about the matter of lobsters?" There were a school of politicians who said—"We ought to go to arbitration upon all matters of International difference;" but when it came to any particular point that had to be arbitrated upon they said—"You have no need to go to arbitration." It was perfectly impossible to contend on the one hand that arbitration was the course in all cases of difficulty, and then to decline to go to arbitration because it did not suit them to do so.

MR. A. C. MORTON: I never said that.

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: But the hon. Member said that some way of settling the matter ought to be found with the French Government. Well, the only way of settling a dispute was to go to an International tribunal, and that Her Majesty's Government had been willing to do. But here arose the difficulty. They had to consider the limits and grounds of arbitration. Neither Power was willing to refer to arbitration what it regarded as sovereign rights. The French asserted their right to something like concurrent possession of the Treaty shore with ourselves, and to build salmon weirs on the streams—they did build them, in fact, and they had to be removed. The French would like us to refer to arbitration whether they had a right to do such things, and whether they possessed concurrent rights on the Treaty shore. This we could not allow. Neither would the French Government submit to arbitration matters they considered to be their undoubted rights under the Treaty, consequently the Reference had to be narrowed to the limits we had stated. Nevertheless, there were some questions of principle here involved, because, if the curing of lobsters, which was not an established practice when the Treaty was entered into, lay within the right of "drying fish," then it might follow that the necessary buildings must be put up for the purpose. A good deal depended on that question. He had only risen to

Sir J. Fergusson

point out how vain and futile it was to say that they could leave to the Colonies the right to settle affairs that were matters of International arbitration. We could not deal in amity with a foreign Power with whom we had contracted International Treaty engagements were we not to charge ourselves with the fulfilment of those Treaty obligations, and were we not ready to settle by arbitration matters we could not settle by diplomacy.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN said, he was unable to agree with the strictly official view put before the Committee by his right hon. Friend opposite. The right hon. Gentleman was bound by his responsibilities to support the view taken by successive Governments, and to accept the view which had been stated to the Committee by the Under Secretary. When he (Mr. J. Chamberlain) was in America, dealing with a fishery question of a different kind, he had had the opportunity of making the acquaintance of some of the foremost Representatives of the Colony of Newfoundland. He had entered into conversation with them on this subject, and had learned a great deal about it. He confessed he had come to the conclusion which had been so well stated to the Committee by the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean. Those who heard the right hon. Baronet would say that these discussions in Supply were not purely obstructive. The right hon. Gentleman had given an account of this dispute with regard to the lobster fishery on the Treaty coast of Newfoundland, which had been accepted by the Under Secretary of State as substantially correct; and what was the conclusion that the right hon. Gentleman drew from the statement—a conclusion which must have been accepted by everyone who heard him, and who, at the same time, was prepared to accept his facts as correct? It was that the French had extended their rights under the original Treaty and under the King's Declaration until they were now claiming more than either in equity or in law they were entitled to. The Newfoundlanders, according to the right hon. Baronet, were absolutely right in their contention. What was to be done? It was suggested by the Government that they

should be forced to arbitration because the Colony would not go willingly. The right hon. Baronet said there were certain questions affecting territorial rights which were not fair subjects for arbitration. "Suppose," he said, "the French claimed a Treaty shore on the Isle of Wight, would you go to arbitration on a claim of that kind? Clearly not. Why should you go," said the right hon. Member, "to arbitration on a similar question because it happens to affect a Colony?" Under these circumstances, they arrived at this conclusion—that, in the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman, they could not admit the claim of the French—they could not go to arbitration. What was the alternative? Was the right hon. Gentleman prepared to go to war? Really, this was very important. This question had been raised by two supporters of the Government who belonged to the New Radical Party. Whenever people came forward to defend the rights of the Empire, and the property of the Empire, they were accused of being Jingoës at once; but here were two hon. Members, belonging to the New Radical Party, who pressed on the Government a course of action which meant war if it meant anything.

*SIR C. W. DILKE: If it is put to me as a question, I say we have no demand at all to make on the French. We have simply to remain in possession of the rights which we have. If he asks me whether I think there is any risk of war in that I say no.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN said, he had not asked any question of the right hon. Baronet; but he was prepared to give way to him at any moment he desired to make a further statement. As he had said, he was in agreement with the right hon. Baronet; but he wanted to have a clear understanding as to the position of the new Radical Party on the question of Treaty rights, for it seemed to him that it must inevitably lead them into war. The right hon. Baronet said it would not lead to war, but that was simply the right hon. Gentleman's *ipse dixit*. It would not lead to war if the French Government gave way; but how did the right hon. Baronet know that they would give way? What authority had he to speak for the French Government? He said we had no demand to

make on them, but at the present moment French officers were cutting the nets of our people, they were preventing the establishment of railways and of local communication, and interfering in many ways with the territorial right of our Colonists. And were we to sit still? "No," said the right hon. Baronet, "we were to give instructions to our Naval officers to prevent the French from doing these things." But what would be the result of that? War. ["No, no!"] It was absurd for the right hon. Member to interrupt him and to say that it did not mean war with France. What was the alternative? It was repression—to say to the Newfoundlanders—"You are a small Colony; you do not interest us. It is true you are the oldest of the British Colonies; but as a pecuniary matter, if we strike a balance, we shall not be the gainers by your possession; and under the circumstances, if you do not take our advice and give way to the French, though we admit that you are right and the French are wrong, we will not protect you, and you must work out this question for yourselves." This was really a most important question, on which it was well he should clear their minds of cant, and to have a clear notion of what their policy should be. This was a case in which his right hon. Friend would, he thought, be prepared to say—"Our honour in this matter is concerned, and we are bound to accept even the risk of war in protecting our Newfoundland Colonists." If the right hon. Gentleman said that, he would not say that he (Mr. J. Chamberlain) should not be inclined to support him; but, then, do not let the new Radical Party accuse him and his friends of being jingoes. The other alternative was to say to the Colony—"Go, in Heaven's name, and settle affairs with the French!" That was the position taken up by the hon. Member behind him.

MR. A. C. MORTON: No, no!

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN said, he did not know whether the hon. Member's desire was to repeat his statement.

*MR. A. C. MORTON said, he objected to what the right hon. Gentleman was saying about him. He (Mr. Morton) had stated in his speech that what he desired was that they should approach the French Government in a friendly way with a view to purchasing their

rights. He had said that the people of Newfoundland had stated distinctly that they were willing to pay for these rights.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN said, the proposals of these amateur diplomatists were most ridiculous. The view now put was not that put by the hon. Member in his original speech.

MR. A. C. MORTON said, he had put that view.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN said, the hon. Member proposed that they should approach the French Government in a friendly way and say—"You are absolutely wrong; you have no rights. Now, what will you take for your rights?" It was well-known that the French would not sell their rights; but if they were prepared to do so, it was equally certain that any price they put on them would be much larger than Newfoundland could afford to pay. Newfoundland was a miserably poor Colony, with a population of 300,000 or 400,000. But did the hon. Member propose to put the expenditure on the British taxpayer? They had seen no inclination on the part of the new Radical Party to spare the British taxpayer; but he confessed it would be another thing to be carried to their credit if they required Parliament to pay for the extinction of rights which did not exist. This discussion threw light on many interesting questions. It threw light on the foreign policy of the new Radical Party and on their self-governing legislative policy and their policy with regard to the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament and the veto of the Crown. In the case of Newfoundland there was an undoubted and unimpaired and indefeasible supremacy of the British Crown; the Imperial Parliament had a veto over the legislation of the Colony, and yet here was a case in which a small Colony refused to carry out the Treaty engagements of the Imperial Power, and the right hon. Baronet said that he and a great number of his friends would do everything in their power to prevent the Imperial Parliament from exercising the supremacy of the British Crown and from vetoing the concurrent legislation of the Colony.

*SIR C. W. DILKE: I am loth to interrupt my right hon. Friend, even when he refers to me as speaking for the new Radical Party, though I have spoken simply for myself. I repudiate the sug-

Mr. J. Chamberlain

gestion that I would back up the Colony in refusing to carry out Treaty engagements.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN said, he was well aware that the right hon. Baronet contended that the French had no Treaty right, and that they were wrong in their claim. But the position of the Government was the reverse of that. They admitted the claim of the French as a subject of contention which they were willing to submit to arbitration. How was supremacy to be exercised over Newfoundland when they found a powerful Party led by the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean ready to use all the Forms of the House to prevent it?

*MR. A. C. MORTON said, he wished to repudiate a great deal that the right hon. Member for West Birmingham had said. He believed that the French had Treaty rights; so did the Colonists, and they had no desire to rip up the Treaty. They were willing to buy the French out. With regard to the practicability of this purchase, the right hon. Gentleman ought to know that the United States purchased two of their present States—one from France and one from Spain—and that within recent years they had bought a large tract of territory from Russia. Surely the British Government could do something of the same sort. [*Cries of "Divide!"*] It was nonsense to talk of the "new Radical Party" as desiring to carry out a Jingo policy. They had no such desire. What he desired was that whatever rights the French had we should purchase. There was no question of war in the matter, because all these things could be settled if the Government wished it in an amicable manner. [*Cries of "Divide!"*] The Under Secretary had said that the cases he (Mr. Morton) had brought under the notice of the Colonial Government were mares' nests; but judging from the reply of the hon. Member he, at least, did not seem to think so. The people of Newfoundland did not think so. It had been admitted that there was something in some of the cases; but it was contended that the matter could only be settled by the Government. This was, unfortunately, the way in which the Colonial Office had generally treated the Colony. Whatever complaints were

made they were almost always said to be "mares' nests," and until they could induce the Colonial Office to adopt a better mode of dealing with the questions, difficulties would be constantly arising. [*Cries of "Divide!"*] He contended that it was the duty of the Colonial Office to arrange with the British Admiral as to accepting service of writs. He (Mr. Morton) had a letter from a Member of the Assembly of Newfoundland, in which he stated that he had taken out a writ against Sir Baldwin Walker, but had been unable to serve it because he had left the country. Six other cases had been sent to him, in one of which the claim was for 2,000 dollars; but Sir Baldwin Walker, although he had been in the country, had evaded the service of the writ by only coming on shore on Sunday, and getting away to his ship before the time at which the writ could be legally served. He (Mr. Morton) did not wish to concern himself in any dispute between the Colonial Office and the Admiralty; but he trusted that care would be taken to appoint someone in Newfoundland to accept service of the writs. [*"Divide!"*]

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The discussion which has taken place has been no doubt interesting and important; but I think it will be felt that it has now reached its natural termination. [*Cries of "Oh!"*] I understand there are still several questions to be raised under the Vote in regard to other Colonies than those that have been dealt with, and I think the Government might now consent to report Progress. [*Cries of "No!"*] I beg to move to report Progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(Mr. A. J. Balfour.)

SIR W. HARCOURT: I hope the Committee will be disposed to sit a little longer. I believe that the other subjects to be discussed will not take long, and seeing that the Government have obtained only two Votes in the past two days—the Home Office Vote yesterday, and the Vote for the Foreign Office to-day—I think the House should go on a little longer. [*Cries of "No!"*] Do hon. Members opposite think that one Vote a day is a satisfactory rate of doing the large amount of work yet before them?

In these circumstances, I think we should go on with Supply.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR : The right hon. Gentleman appears to think that the time which has been occupied on this and the preceding Votes had been unreasonably long. If he will look back at the record of the proceedings of previous Parliaments he will find that, by comparison, the time which has been occupied on these Votes has been extremely limited. I would remind the right hon. Gentleman that two days for discussion on the Home Office and Foreign Office Votes is a very limited amount of time compared with that occupied on those Votes last year. The Foreign Office Vote, which has been closed after four hours' discussion, has usually taken two nights; and it must not be forgotten that we have yet to discuss the Report of the Supply taken last night. There are many important questions to be raised on the Votes, and it is only in Supply that Members find their opportunity of criticising the policy of the Government. I do not think there is any desire to discuss unimportant Votes at undue length. All we ask is that discussion shall not be cut short by the arbitrary action of the Government.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN : Dealing only with our discussion to-night, I would point out that at least two or three of the important questions which have come before us have been raised by the right hon. Gentleman's own side. I would also point out that Members—notably the hon. Member for Camberwell—who sit on the Liberal side of the House, who have given notice of their intention to bring forward certain matters under the Foreign Office Vote, have left the House under the impression that there will certainly be no opportunity of discussing them after 1 o'clock in the morning. One question to be raised of which I know something myself has to do with the Bahamas. I think that out of courtesy to hon. Gentlemen who have put down these notices we should not attempt to proceed with the Votes at this hour. When we were discussing the conduct of business, the Prime Minister, in answer to a statement of mine, which was to the effect that under the new Rule it was intended by the Government that we should sit up every night until 1 o'clock in the morning, distinctly repu-

Sir W. Harcourt

diated any such idea. My right hon. Friend has spoken as though we were only going at the rate of one Vote a day. I would point out that on Tuesday the Government obtained no fewer than five Votes, in addition to which they have since obtained the whole of the Home Office Vote, the Foreign Office Vote, and have now pretty well got through the Colonial Vote. Most important questions have been discussed, including Siam, Madagascar, and the raids of the Matabele. Any one of these subjects at an earlier period of the Session would have been good enough for two days at least, whereas we have got rid of half-a-dozen in a few hours. Any reasonable person who takes note of the number of important subjects which have been discussed during the past two days will at once be ready to admit that no time has been wasted. The Government may do what they please, but they cannot get this Vote. In view of the Opposition, it will only be putting the House to unnecessary trouble if the Government force us to go to a Division.

SIR W. HARCOURT : The right hon. Member for West Birmingham a short time ago expressed his desire to bring forward the question of the Bahamas. All that the Government desires is that the right hon. Gentleman will bring that question forward now.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN : Not at 1 o'clock in the morning.

COMMANDER BETHELL said, he did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer was aware of the fact that the hon. Member who intended to raise the question of the Bahamas was not present. He had gone away, believing that the Vote now under discussion would not be passed to-night. He (Commander Bethell) and other Members had understood that after the question of Newfoundland had been dealt with Progress would be reported. He would appeal to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to accede to that course.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL : Do the Government propose to take the postponed Resolution relating to the House of Lords to-night?

SIR W. HARCOURT : Yes.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: That will occupy some time.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 43; Noes 133.—(Division List, No. 297.)

Original Question again proposed.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer suggested that the Motion with reference to which notice had been given should be brought on to-night. I have already pointed out that, as regards the Motion in which one of the right hon. Gentleman's own supporters are interested, it is impossible for that gentleman to bring it forward, because he has gone home. As regards the matter that I am concerned with, no doubt its discussion will not occupy much time, but it is a subject when there could by no possibility be any reference to it in the public Press. The matter concerns the administration of justice in the Bahamas, and it is a subject that is of intense interest to the Colony, at all events, and which cannot be reported in the Press at such an hour. At all events, I do not choose to let it come forward without the possibility of its being reported. It is now 25 minutes past 1, and the Government have still, by the necessities of the case, to deal with the Report of Supply, including the matter on which they sustained a defeat the other night. I think it is asking too much that we should proceed with the ordinary work of Supply. Understandings entered into with the Prime Minister appear to me not to be worth anything at all. He goes away—"Oh, oh!"—and his Lieutenants will not keep his engagements. ["Oh, oh!"] But I will not press that point. I quite understand that the tactics of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer are part of the policy of bullying the House of Commons. Well, we have resisted that before, and I shall continue to resist it to the end. Under any circumstances I beg to move that you, Sir, do now leave the Chair.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do now leave the Chair."—(Mr. J. Chamberlain.)

SIR W. HARCOURT: I will not discuss the question in the tone adopted by the right hon. Gentleman, who says he does not choose to let the Committee discuss a certain subject. Whose language, I should like to ask, is the language of "bullying?" The right hon. Gentleman's is not the tone that I hope any gentleman uses on these Benches. I only ask, in the interests of all parts of the House, and in view of the late period of the Session, that hon. and right hon. Gentlemen should do what they can to facilitate the despatch of Public Business. The right hon. Gentleman admits that the question on which he desires to speak will only occupy a short time, and it seems to me, therefore, that his only fear is lest posterity should lose the benefit of the speech he is prepared to make. That is, no doubt, a very important matter. I should be very sorry that future generations should not be able to study that oration. In former times we used to consider 1 o'clock an early hour, and I am told that in another place, where they are not so anxious about the preservation of their orations, they are still debating. If the House of Commons considers itself physically weaker than the House of Lords, and is so much more solicitous about the reporting of its speeches, it will be useless to protract this struggle, and I do not propose to do so. I would, however, express a hope that on other occasions these questions will be approached in a different spirit from that adopted by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I entirely share the wish of the right hon. Gentleman that questions of this kind will hereafter be treated in a different spirit. As the right hon. Gentleman has given way I will not follow him in his extremely insolent remarks. [Cries of "Withdraw!"]

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I rise to Order. I wish to ask whether the right hon. Gentleman is in Order in describing the observations made by a Member as "insolent remarks?"

*THE CHAIRMAN: I did not hear the words. If the right hon. Gentleman did use them they are not Parliamentary, and I think the right hon. Gentleman will see the necessity of withdrawing them.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN : I have great pleasure in withdrawing the expression, in accordance with your ruling, and I will substitute another word which has been admitted to be in Order, and say, instead of insolent remarks, venomous observations. I must protest—[*Cries of "Divide !"*—]—against the misrepresentation of my language ; and again I say that to treat a question which is of the greatest importance and interest to one of our Colonies—[*Cries of "Divide !"*—]—at half-past 1—[*"Divide !"*—]—when there can be—[*"Divide !"*—]—I say to treat the affairs of an important Colony—[*"Divide !"*—]—I say to allow—[*"Divide !"*—]

*THE CHAIRMAN : Order, order !

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN : To allow a matter which interests an important Colony—[*"Divide !"*—]—to be discussed at half-past 1 in the morning, is to show great want of respect to that Colony.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—put, and agreed to.

Resolution to be reported To-morrow ; Committee also report Progress ; to sit again To-morrow.

SUPPLY—REPORT.

Resolution [6th September] reported.

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS, 1893-4.

CLASS II.

"That a sum, not exceeding £56,697, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Home Department and Subordinate Offices."

Resolution agreed to.

SUPPLY [5th September]—REPORT.

Order read, for resuming Consideration of Postponed Resolution,

"That a sum, not exceeding £22,595, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Offices of the House of Lords."

Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he had intended to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he could not see his way to postpone the consideration of this Order to next Monday. If the right hon. Gentleman had seen his way to do so he would have complied with the wish of a large number of his supporters in the House. There was a feeling abroad that the subject of this Vote required a great deal of discussion, and that it was ridiculous for this popular Assembly to supply the means to "another place" to enable it to defy and impede their legislation. He believed that though they might not be able to do it this Session, the time was not far distant when the feeling to which he referred would assert itself by Constitutional methods, and the infringement of the liberty of the people would be resented by cutting off the Supplies. In view of the late hour and the late period of the Session, and of the other business the Government had to do before they broke up for the short vacation, he did not propose to enter at length into the subject to-night. At the same time, he did not think he would be doing his duty if he allowed the Vote to pass without attempting further to reduce it. Though they carried a reduction in the salary of the Clerk of the Parliaments by £500 the other evening, there was a strong feeling that this official was not the worst feature in the long list of sinecurists in the House of Lords, and that the case of "Black Rod" was even worse. In addition to the salary he received as Black Rod, this gentleman was on the Pension List as a retired Admiral, and was furnished with an official residence.

SIR W. HARCOURT rose to Order. It was not at this stage possible to move a further reduction of the Vote without re-committing the Vote.

MR. SPEAKER : The Question is "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution." That Question having been proposed, no further reduction can be moved.

MR. SEXTON : In view of that, Mr. Speaker, I take it that my hon. Friend would effect the purpose he had in

view by dividing against the whole Vote.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he had consulted what he had thought was a considerable authority on the subject, and had been told that he would be in Order in moving a reduction; but as Mr. Speaker had ruled him out of Order—

SIR W. HARCOURT: He has not ruled that.

MR. SPEAKER: A reduction can be moved to a Vote on Report; but in this case no Notice of Motion had been given, and no hon. Member rose to move; therefore I put the Question, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he was sorry he had not announced his intention to the Speaker. He, however, was willing to accept the situation as it stood. He would adopt the suggestion of his hon. Friend, and signify his protest by opposing the entire Vote.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH said, he thought it was understood that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would make a statement as to the course it was intended to take with regard to the reduction carried upon this Vote in Committee.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I do not think there is any course to take except to agree to the Report on the Vote as it was passed the other night. I have been in communication with the House of Lords to see what can be done in reference to the Vote. I hope that some arrangement may be made; but I am not able at present to say whether it will be possible. All that I am at present able to say is that we must take the Vote as passed in Committee.

MR. A. C. MORTON said, he had great pleasure in supporting the hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool (Mr. T. P. O'Connor.) They had stood a great deal during the past few months in the shape of threats from the House of Lords, and now he thought was the time when they must do something more than merely remonstrate. It would be understood that the Division would be taken as a protest against interference with the rights of

the people on the part of the House of Lords, and not that it was intended to deprive the officers of that House of any salaries or wages that might be their due.

SIR W. HARCOURT: The Government must support the Vote. It may or may not be that this House will ever come into conflict with the other House of Parliament. If it does, this is not the way in which the battle will be fought. If we have differences to settle with the House of Lords, they must be settled in a very different manner to reducing the Votes for Clerks. The Vote was reduced the other night on the ground that the salaries of the Clerks in the House of Lords were too heavy, a view that hon. Members may hold very fairly. But I must protest against the notion that if we have a Constitutional issue between the House of Commons and the House of Lords it can be fought on such a battle-field as a Vote for the salaries of Clerks.

MR. SEXTON (Kerry, N.): We who are Irish Members consider first our duty to the people of Ireland. I cannot forget that before the Home Rule Bill was drawn and introduced into this House the Leader of the House had the audacity to declare in public that the Bill, whatever it might be, would be rejected by the House of Lords. In face of that declaration, I consider that any opportunity for attacking that institution in any form is most opportune.

*MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Notts, Mansfield) said, he wished to point out to the hon. Member for Peterborough, who had said that he had no wish to deprive any officers of the House of Lords of the salaries due to them, that if he supported the Motion the hon. Member would refuse payment of all salaries whatever.

MR. A. C. MORTON: No; we have given a large amount on account.

*MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS wished to say that when the proper time arrived he would be prepared to take his share in any conflict with the other House if the necessity arose, but he agreed with the Chancellor of the Exchequer that that conflict should be fought out in some different fashion than that now proposed.

*SIR J. FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.): It is useless to argue with hon. Gentlemen who take the line that on account of political differences with the House of Lords they would refuse to vote money towards its establishment. But I would ask the House generally to consider the somewhat undignified position the House would place itself in if it adopts this Motion. Some time ago objections were raised to the salaries of the officers of the House of Lords, and a Committee of the Lords was appointed by the late Government to consider the matter. The House of Lords freely entered into the feelings of this House and proceeded to reduce the salaries to the scale of the salaries of this House—[*Cries of "No!"*—I think it will be found that reductions amounting to £7,000 have been made in the House of Lords, and on the expiry of the tenure of the present holders of the office the salaries will be reduced to the same scale as the salaries of corresponding officers in this House. I think that every Member who desires to maintain the honour and dignity of the House will vote against the Motion now before us.

*MR. PAUL (Edinburgh, S.): As I object to voting a single sixpence to the House of Lords for any purpose or under any conditions, I will most cheerfully support my hon. Friend opposite if he goes to a Division.

MR. LOGAN (Leicester, Harborough) said, that as the Representative of an agricultural constituency, if the Motion went to a Division he would consider it his duty in the interests of his constituents to protest against the House of Lords by voting for the Motion.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 96 ; Noes 63.—(Division List, No. 298.)

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to amend the Education (Scotland) Acts with respect to the age for attendance at School." [Education (School Attendance) (Scotland) Bill [Lords.]]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to amend Section 10 of 'The Companies (Winding-up) Act, 1890.'" [Companies (Winding-up) Bill [Lords.]]

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (BLIND AND DEAF CHILDREN) BILL.

That they do not insist on their Amendment to the Elementary Education (Blind and Deaf Children) Bill, to which this House has disagreed.

LAND REGISTERS (SCOTLAND) BILL. (No. 447.)

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

NOTICE OF ACCIDENTS BILL.—(No. 199.)

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [21st March] read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

NAVAL DEFENCE AMENDMENT BILL. (No. 450.)

Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; to be read the third time To-morrow.

LONDON (EQUALISATION OF RATES) BILL.—(No. 332.)

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

CONSOLIDATED FUND (No. 4) BILL.

Read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

COUNTY SURVEYORS (IRELAND) BILL [Lords.]—(No. 453.)

Considered in Committee, and reported, with an Amendment; as amended, to be considered To-morrow.

REFORMATORY SCHOOLS BILL [Lords.] (No. 457.)

Read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

And, it being after One of the clock, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put.

House adjourned at five minutes after Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 8th September 1893.

Several Lords—Took the Oath.

SCIENCE EXAMINATIONS.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

THE BISHOP OF SALISBURY asked the Lord President of the Council whether the Science and Art Department would reconsider the exclusive system of payment by results of examination, in view of the recent effects of that system and the general dissatisfaction of science teachers, and would adopt that in use in the Education Department of fixed grants for scholars properly attending and instructed, supplemented by a system of rewards for those who show especial merit? He said, that the present system of the Science and Art Department—of payment by results for individual scholars—pressed very hardly on the teachers in the schools, who were not in that way adequately rewarded, because it, of course, cost as much to teach stupid boys as clever ones, and the Department always had the power to greatly raise the standard for passing, as he believed had been done this year.

*THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (The Earl of KIMBERLEY): The aid of the Department is not granted exclusively on a system of payment by results of examination. On the contrary, a capitation grant is made to both day and night organised science schools, provided that the scholar on whose account the grant is claimed has made 250 attendances in the case of the day school and 60 in the case of the night school, and passes in a subject of science or obtains a higher success in a subject in which he has already passed. But the Department is aware of the need of some modifications in the present system of aid, and it is hoped that as the Local Authorities under the Technical Instruction Act get their schools and work better organised the Department may be able after a time to extend its capitation and fixed grants in lieu in part of payments by results; but this must be

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a work of time. I hope that answer will be satisfactory to the right rev. Prelate.

THE BISHOP OF SALISBURY said, he wished to thank the noble Earl for the answer he had given; but, although the grant was called capitation, he would point out that it was really only given for the scholars who passed with success. They must pass in one science, and got nothing unless they succeeded in passing the examination. It was, therefore, a system exclusively of results. He begged to give notice that he would draw attention to the subject at an early day.

SHOP HOURS ACT (1892) AMENDMENT
(No. 2) BILL.—(No. 256.)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

LORD PLAYFAIR said, this was a purely technical Bill. It had passed through the other House without opposition and without a single Amendment, and he hoped their Lordships would give it a Second Reading.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."
—(*The Lord Playfair*.)

Motion agreed to; Bill read 2^a accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the whole House.

FERTILISERS AND FEEDING STUFFS
BILL.—(No. 263.)

THIRD READING.

Bill read 3^a (according to Order), with the Amendments.

LORD RIBBLESDALE moved formal Amendments, which had been agreed to in Standing Committee.

Bill passed, and returned to the Commons.

METROPOLIS MANAGEMENT (PLUM-
STEAD AND HACKNEY) BILL.

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

LORD MONKSWELL said, this Bill had passed through the House of Commons. It was not contentious, and merely proposed to make two united

parishes separate Local Government Districts, on the ground that they ought to have complete control and management of their own accounts.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."
—(*The Lord Monkswell*.)

Motion agreed to ; Bill read 2^a accordingly, and committed for Tuesday next.

GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND BILL.

(No. 265.)

SECOND READING. [ADJOURNED
DEBATE.]

[FOURTH NIGHT.]

Order of the Day for resuming the Debate on the Amendment to the Motion for the Second Reading, read.

Debate resumed accordingly.

***THE EARL OF CRANBROOK :** My Lords, when I see the serried ranks in this Assembly it is obvious that a great question is under discussion, and it is more obvious, when I see the crowded Benches on that side and on this, that this is no Party question, but a question which concerns the interests of the whole country, and on which every patriot is called upon and is bound to give an opinion. Much has been said upon the dispute which has taken place in the Liberal Party on the occasion of the introduction of this Bill. Far be it from me to impute motives of unconscientiousness to one side or the other ; but there are circumstances connected with the change which I think invite attention. When people are converted in battalions and platoons it causes some suspicion ; and therefore it is that it has not been for the first time that the name of the great magician who effected the wonderful transformation has been brought into a somewhat prominent position. And when it is complained that remarks are made with respect to that remarkable man, it may be said that he has been the one great central figure who has appeared throughout the whole of this controversy, working and continuing to work in circumstances which must excite our wonder as to his physical capacity, as well as his intellectual power. My Lords, he has been the Colossus, and though far be it from me to say anything as to those who have told us how they came to be converted from their own independent opinion, yet I cannot help

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thinking that he was the Colossus who bestrode that narrow world, or that Liberal world elsewhere, and though it may be that a portion of his Party were not influenced by him, yet I think it is perfectly clear that, in the words of Shakspeare—

"The petty men
Walked under his huge legs and turned about
To find themselves"—

in a majority. I will not use the painful words with which that quotation ends. But, as a matter of fact, the change appeared to be coincident with the change of a minority into a majority and with the exclusion from Office into the possession of it. We have been taunted with taking a pessimistic view of the Irish character. I am not going to dispute whether the optimistic or the pessimistic view is the right one ; but it is clear that you must take men upon their own statement as well as upon the statement which those who have been concerned with them have made of them ; and after all, in all concerns and transactions of life, the question of character is one which is a matter of reputation, and which is entered into in every case in which you may put persons in a position of trust. The confessions which we have had have been very interesting. We had my noble Friend (Lord Ribblesdale) coming forward to give a most extraordinary account of his conversion. His was a conversion apparently not caused by repentance for his own sins, but the sins which he confessed for others. He made full confession of our sins, but he made small of his own. He said he was influenced by the fact that the majority of the Irish Members continued the same after the Government had had six years of power, and that, therefore, because in those six years no change took place all hope of proceeding was at an end, all hope of treating the Irish in any way but the one he now adopts, though there is no greater security for the remedy he proposes being operative. The other case is that of the noble Earl the First Lord of the Admiralty (Earl Spencer), who told us that he began to have doubts in 1885. I do not think that his conversion was complete at that time—that he had found salvation. But, though he began to have doubts, he was at that time an advocate, I will not say for

violent coercion, but for exceptional laws up to the beginning of 1886, within a few weeks of the time he took office. In May, 1884, at Belfast the noble Earl said that English statesmen and the English nation would face their enemy with a determination not to be beaten, and would not give up one point or idea in order to maintain the united Parliament of England and the Sovereignty of the Queen; "I say this," he continued, "not only to the English and Scottish nations, but to the Irish nation." Does the noble Earl mean to say that he had in his mind at that moment anything but the Repeal of the Union? He was dealing with men who were against the Sovereignty of England and of the Queen; he was speaking of men who were Republicans, who were looking forward to a Fenian Republic in Ireland, and he knows that there is not one of the men whom he now proposes to put in trust who was not acting in combination with them and receiving their active encouragement and support. But even in 1886, within a few weeks of taking Office, he said that if the clauses against intimidation were given up the power of the National League and intimidation would increase to an enormous extent, and "the liberty of Her Majesty's subjects in Ireland would be destroyed." Which subjects? The liberty of those to whom you say now you are going to give unlimited liberty, or those whom you are going to put in the position of being oppressed by those to whom you give that liberty? He added, that it was essential for a policy to be pursued by which law and order would be restored and maintained in Ireland. Last night Lord Rosebery told us that he had then come to the conclusion that there ought to be no more exceptional laws, though Lord Spencer, who knew Ireland, felt that there must be such laws in order both to restore and maintain order; and said you could not rely on any ordinary jury in Leinster, Munster, or Connaught. These were the terms in which the noble Earl in charge of the Bill spoke at the beginning of 1886, within a few weeks of the time when we were called upon to deal with the Bill of that year. Now, the conversion was said to have taken place—in consequence of what? Because the Conservatives were in a minority

at a period when it was absolutely impossible for them to renew any Coercion Act, or any exceptional law, because there was no time to do it. But they went to the country, and when they came back in 1886 it is notorious that if there was that fear for a short time there was not only the intention to bring forward, but there was the preparation of measures, in order to take care that law and order should be preserved in Ireland. We have heard something to the effect that inducements were held out. Where is the proof? Who has been selected as the agent of the Tory Party? Who has been the person who is supposed to have combined with them? It has been denied by a man of the highest honour, one who has gone from among us, and no one I imagine will impeach the chivalrous truthfulness of the late Lord Carnarvon. It has been denied by Mr. Balfour in the other House in terms which should have convinced anyone, and even yet we find that the Prime Minister has taken upon himself more than once to repeat the insinuation, if he does not state it as a fact. The noble Earl (the Earl of Rosebery) who spoke last night with so much humour, and good humour and candour, said that he would not enter into the details of the Bill, but that he would examine the principle. What is the principle of this Bill? It is a separate Legislature for Ireland. I will not call it a Parliament if noble Lords opposite do not like; but do you suppose you are going to have a Legislature in Ireland with power to enact laws, and that it will not swell into a Parliament? It is a view that is too comical; it is too absurd. I, for my part, will never hesitate to express my opinion that, though it may be most important to examine the details of the Bill to show how insoluble the problem is, the very fact of establishing a separate Legislature in Ireland gives up everything, because it puts powers into the hands of men who, while they have been without a Parliament, have been endeavouring to put themselves into the possession of power for certain purposes, and who when they have a Parliament will, undoubtedly, make use of it for the extension of their schemes to the utmost—for the object which they have in view. Mr. John Stuart Mill said that an absolute or qualified separation of the

two countries would be a dishonour to the one and a serious misfortune to both. I hold that opinion very strongly. Then Mr. John Bright said (and I agree with him)—

“It is not a question of more or less; I am against the establishment of a separate Legislature in Ireland, because all the consequences will follow, whatever restrictions you may put upon them.”

When we come to the Bill itself, it is the produce of the wit of man after seven years of incubation. It has been altered again and again while it has been before Parliament during this year. We were told that the Bill of 1886 was dead; that it had no life during the seven years. In the meantime, we have had no Bill before the country—only the question whether there should be a Legislature in Ireland or not, and that mixed up with a number of other questions. In its details this Bill, although it is the last, is, in my opinion, the worst that has been before us—the last and the worst. The great master and magician of finance, whose speeches on finance have been the admiration of the world, produced a scheme which, when it came to be examined, was found to be wrong in its calculations to the extent of £350,000. It was promised that there should be justice and equity in finance. I have heard no answer to the speech of my noble Friend (Viscount Cross) the other night, proving to demonstration that no less than £750,000 was handed over to the Irish to buy our own degradation and submission to them. It is difficult to talk of these things coolly, they are matters of serious import; and it has to be—if I may use a coarse expression—rubbed into the minds of the people of Great Britain that the Irish are not able to start on their career without putting their hands into our pockets, and being paid by us for the degradation of Great Britain. And then we were to get rid of friction. Why, the friction will be greater than ever. Anyone who has had much to do with the Treasury knows that it is not easy to get on with. When they have a Treasury in Ireland, will there not be friction between the two Treasuries in carrying out the terms of this Bill? Even although they might not be unjust in themselves, there may be a good deal to make the hair of

the Irish Chancellor of the Exchequer stand on end in dealing with the British Treasury, as that of English officials often does. There is no finality in the scheme of the Bill, as it is to be revised at the end of six years; and under what circumstances is it likely to be revised? With regard to the land, there is now an abandonment of the second Bill which was brought in in 1886, and of promises that were made by the noble Earl (Earl Spencer), by Mr. Morley, and in the most emphatic terms by Mr. Gladstone. The Prime Minister always guards himself in what he says, and when his attention was called to what he had said about obligations of honour, he said it was an obligation with respect to facts and circumstances which were then existing. I know he did say “the sands are running out”; but an obligation of honour depends upon its justice and equity, and not upon its acceptance or non-acceptance at a given time. The offer was founded on the strength of the claim that the Land Question should be dealt with here and should not be left to the Irish Legislature. I am told—but I have not been able to verify the statement by reference to *Hansard*—that in the other House the Attorney General said that if the Land Question were not settled by the Imperial Parliament in three years the Imperial Parliament “would be under an obligation to fix the terms and conditions under which it should be delegated to the Irish Legislature.” We have heard nothing of that sort from the noble Earl; and I should like to know whether the statement I have cited is true or not. If the Government are in power, do they mean in three years to fulfil the obligation stated by the Attorney General on their behalf? The position in which the police are left seems to me to be one of the iniquities, and also one of the dangers of the Bill. It is admitted on all hands that the police have been the stay and safeguard of the nation. They have been an honest, well-contented, well-conducted, and well-disciplined force. Now you strike a blow at it. It is as if you had stunned a man with a blow and then expect him to fulfil the duties which he could only perform in a state of full health and strength. You are destroying the *esprit* of the police. They know that everything is to be taken from them, and that

they are to be deprived of their position upon poor and miserable terms. In the meantime they are supposed to work well under an Executive which is taking steps to cripple and destroy them. The Lord Lieutenant is to have the police under him; but I want to know to whom he is going to be responsible? I understand he is to be responsible to the Irish Executive, and, therefore, to the Irish Legislature; but he is also to act as representing Her Majesty, on the advice of her confidential advisers. How is he to exercise these two functions with decency and dignity? If he thwarts his Irish Cabinet they can stop the Supplies. What is he to do then? Change his Ministry? But suppose he has the same Ministry or one like it forced upon him? What a miserable position the Lord Lieutenant would occupy if a Vote of Censure were inflicted upon him! All these things do not seem to have been fully considered; and when a question was asked about them in the House of Commons there was no one to give a satisfactory answer. No doubt there is to be separation between the Irish Legislature and the military, which is to be under the command of the Lord Lieutenant; but if the interference of the military be required it will be asked for by the Local Authorities, and the Lord Lieutenant must consult his Irish advisers, because it will be impossible for the Lord Lieutenant to exercise his powers without reference to his Ministers and his Parliament. And the veto will have to be exercised under conditions similar to those in which the military will be employed. Then we come to the Exchequer Judges and the Judicial Committee. That, with all deference to my noble Friend (Lord Playfair), is a mere paper protection. Who is to initiate proceedings before the Judicial Committee, and who is to be the party to argue in these cases before it? And who ever heard of cases of abstract principle being referred to a Judicial Committee, to settle not a particular case, but large questions which are afterwards to be disputed in the Courts as to the extent of their meaning — what was meant by those who gave the judgments? We come to the other limitations and restrictions in the Bill. Limitations and

restrictions are imperfect bulwarks to set up when you have let out the flood. They are always swept away. The great stream carries with it everything, and these smaller things are soon swept away. The limitations and restrictions will be the subject of continual fret and irritation. My noble Friend (Lord Swansea), who at so early a period of his initiation to this House gave us so solemn a lecture last night, in tones which showed he was come from a domineering Assembly, told us that the Leaders of the Nationalist Party would hold high office, and that they were not such fools as to throw away their office. Suppose the people want some extension of power and you do not give it them, what becomes of your office? And are there to be no rival ambitions in this new Legislature, no rivals for supremacy and influence—things which men value more than most things in life? All Legislatures, we know, continually strive to increase their power, and do you suppose the Irish Legislature will not press on to get greater powers than it has? It is one of those things I should have thought were beyond argument. But there is a great deal more than that. Those gentlemen who are to hold high office have given pledges—pledges to evicted tenants, to people who entered into that criminal “Plan of Campaign,” of which they were the instigators. I do not hesitate to say that they have demoralised the people of Ireland in making them believe they would have anything for the asking, all the more if they enforce their demands by outrage and crime. From the moment the Prime Minister declared that the Clerkenwell explosion brought the Irish Church within the sphere of practical politics Mr. Parnell saw his advantage. He said—“We know how to work upon the feelings of the Prime Minister;” and we all know how he brought him into his power. From that day the demoralisation of the people has ensued, which has in many instances been too much pandered to, and insatiable demands will be made when the time comes for those who made the promises to perform them. Do you suppose that, when these men have to choose between being traitors to the people which elect them and traitors to you, they will stand by you? Do you suppose that the Fenian organisation is extinguished in

Ireland, and that no pressure will be placed upon the Irish Ministers by that secret and earnest body? Do you suppose that the Irish Americans, the "Ireland of Retribution," the larger nation of Ireland which is in America, will stand still and allow these men who have been their agents to fall short of the promises they have made in order to get the money from America by which alone they could carry on their machinations? Of course, this Bill is accepted by the Nationalists. Did you ever know a case in which a man who wanted to defend himself or to commit a crime would not thank you for the weapon you have put into his hands? They know, as we know, that, having accepted this proposed Legislature, they will have accepted that which will give them every opportunity to treat it as provisional, and to proceed from step to step until there ensues, I do not say separation, but that which is worse than separation, a dominating Power ruling over us in Ireland and elsewhere and preventing us from doing justice to the subjects of Great Britain who are loyal to the Crown. My Lords, is there anything to prevent these people from enacting that the Plan of Campaign shall be a lawful thing for the future? An attempt was made in the House of Commons to get *ex post facto* laws excepted, but it was rejected under that dominating influence; and there is to be a power in this Legislature to make any *ex post facto* laws, a thing which is not allowed in any way under the American Constitution, which may bring degradation and ruin upon people who have simply done their duty in matters connected with the offices they hold. These, my Lords, are serious things; and you have to consider whether those people who make these pledges and who have given themselves over so absolutely to the Fenians and Irish Americans will be able to resist that powerful and enormous pressure which will be put upon them. And then the evicted tenants. My noble Friend (Lord Swansea) said he would be prepared to legislate anything which would protect and preserve property. "Ah!" said the noble Earl opposite, "too late." When you have given these powers you cannot resume them. It is all very well to talk of the supremacy of Parliament being reserved. My Lords, the supremacy of

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Parliament has been parted with, absolute power has been given to the Irish Legislature to deal with all questions not specifically reserved, and the Parliament of England could not without dishonour take upon itself to legislate upon those subjects which it had delegated. It could legislate, no doubt, for the repeal of this measure. It could repeal it; but that, again, is one of those things that we cannot look forward to with much hope. We cannot suppose that those who had been induced to pass this Bill would be likely to repeal it, and so thrust themselves into difficulties and troubles which they are anxious to get out of. Now I come to another point, which I must dwell upon. The character of these men, as painted by themselves, I will not quote. Everybody knows what they have been. Everybody knows that many of them are filled with hostility to this country; that they wished success to the Mahdi, to the Afghans, to the Boers, when British regiments were commanded and constituted by their own brethren, and the blood that was shed was Irish blood. These are the men to whom you are going to give these enormous powers! These are the men you suppose you can ever make firm and constant friends of England! It has been said by the noble Earl that he did not charge the men who were asking for these great powers with being criminals, and I think it was the Prime Minister himself who said that though he charged Mr. Parnell he did not extend the charge. Were those 1,200 men whom you shut up in Ireland without trial—were they suspected of crime or not? If they were not, a gross violation of law was committed; if they were, how dare you now turn round and say you never suspected them? You cannot get out of the difficulty. You imprisoned them without trial, and, having done so, you have condemned them as guilty of crimes against their country, and yet you propose to give them these enormous powers. You are told—it has been repeated again and again—that this measure will give contentment to Ireland. We are charged with being pessimistic, but could anything be more optimistic than the different speeches which have been made promising contentment as the result of this Bill? We have had Memorials from vast numbers of Roman Catholics—those who are bold enough to

speak out—we have seen Presbyterians, Churchmen, and Nonconformists practically unanimous against this Bill, and yet the part of Ireland which is worst you are going to give mastery over the best, to put the living under the dead, and to assume that that state of things will bring about contentment. The noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (the Earl of Rosebery) said at Paisley that the statesmen of England knew more about Ireland than any portion of the Irish people. Does the South know as much about the North of Ireland as we know about the whole of Ireland? Yet under the Bill the South is to exercise a sway to which it is not entitled. The Bill, in short, is an attempt to put an inferior Ireland over a superior Ireland—a faction over the nation—instead of leaving both to the mitigating influences of an Imperial Parliament which would do justice to each—an attempt to set one against the other, in continuance of the perpetual conflict which has gone on for many a long year, and would not be stopped by this most wretched measure. Mr. Parnell said the Irish had no right to ask for more than the restitution of Grattan's Parliament, but it is now proposed to give to them not only a Legislature, but an appendant Legislature. In the time of Grattan's Parliament you legislated for the Empire without any Members for Ireland sitting in your Parliament, excepting those returned by British constituencies. Now, for the first time, you propose that there shall be an addition to our Parliament. It was during Grattan's Parliament that Great Britain's influence and interest were at stake. Lord Rosebery last night, with great candour, acknowledged that Mr. Pitt had in the circumstances no course open to him but to call for the Union; and it is notorious that Lord Cornwallis—a most genial, benevolent man, and most anxious to conciliate the Irish if he could—came to the conclusion that nothing could save Great Britain unless a Union were established. The noble Earl has given the House his reasons, not why this Bill should be carried—because he never entered into that question of this Bill at all—but why something in the shape of Home Rule should be offered to the Irish people. He says he wants to give Ireland something that is worth defending.

Is it credible that my noble Friend can be a party to a Bill which would prevent the Irish from defending themselves or anybody else, because they are under this Bill prohibited from drilling—from availing themselves of naval and military resources, and how they are to defend themselves or anybody else under those circumstances I cannot imagine. Mr. Pitt felt that in a case of difficulty Great Britain ought to have every rein in its own hands, so that it should guide the coach, and manage the whole concern, so that every influence and power could be concentrated in this country, in order that there might be no danger from Ireland. The noble Earl assumed that, in the event of a European war, it was possible that those who were now striving to obtain this measure might, in case it were rejected, be so traitorous that they would welcome the French or any other nation; and he assumed that if this Bill were carried they would have something so well worth defending that they would not. But it was under Grattan's Parliament, when the Irish had their own Legislature, that the Rebellion took place, and when disloyalty reached such a height that the French, it was supposed, would be welcome in different parts of Ireland. Whatever restrictions you may impose, do not tell me that in setting up a separate Legislature for Ireland you are not in substance repealing the Union. Up to 1886 we have had a consensus of statesmen who had no doubt whatever of the importance of the Union. I happened this morning to see a passage in a speech of Burke's with which I so entirely agree that I should like to quote it. Of course, I do not say this Bill is a separation; but it is the way, in my opinion, to what is worse than a separation. He says—

"I think, indeed, Great Britain would be ruined by the separation of Ireland, but that as there are degrees even in ruin it would fall most heavily upon Ireland. Ireland would be the most completely undone country in the world, the most distressed, and in the end the most desolate country in the world. Many people in Ireland do not know how much depends upon her continued connection with this Kingdom."

Now, I know we are told that this is no repeal of the Union. Do not, my Lords, deceive yourselves by words. Do not tell me that if you set up a separate Legislature, whatever restrictions you put upon it, that you are not repealing the Union. Daniel O'Connell

never spoke of separation; he always guarded himself against it, but what did Sir R. Peel say? In April, 1834, he said—

"I want no array of figures; I want no official documents; I want no speeches of six hours to establish to my satisfaction the public policy of maintaining the Legislative Union. I feel and know that the Repeal of it must lead to the dismemberment of this great Empire, must make Great Britain a fourth-rate Power in Europe, and Ireland a savage wilderness; and I will, therefore, give at once and without hesitation an emphatic negative to the Motion for Repeal."

I cannot forbear to recall to the noble Earl opposite (Earl Spencer) the words of one who in my youth exerted a potent influence in politics. What did Lord Althorp say, a man who was an honour to the Party with which he was connected—

"He hoped and trusted that the advocates of the Repeal of the Union would never succeed in the attainment of their object. No man held civil war in greater detestation than he did, but he should even prefer that to the destruction and dismemberment of the Empire."

By this measure the Government propose to give too much from the point of view of Great Britain and too little from the point of view of Ireland. Lord Playfair and other noble Lords who have spoken have expressed the opinion that the retention of the Irish Members was forced upon the Government by the Unionist Party. That view, however, has not been supported by any scrap of proof. For my own part, I have always said that the only good thing in the Bill of 1886 was the plan for excluding the Irish Members. They were excluded in the time of Grattan's Parliament, and why should they be included now? But the reduction of the Irish Representatives in the House of Commons to 80 is, in my opinion, tantamount to an admission that the present number of 103 is a disproportionate amount of representation to have given to the Irish. Why they should have 183 Representatives, for that is what it comes to, as I shall show presently, I do not understand. We were told, I think by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, that Mr. Gladstone shares the objections which we feel to the retention of 80 Members.

THE EARL OF ROSEBURY: I only said that Mr. Gladstone had indicated rather clearly his preference for the other plan.

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*THE EARL OF CRANBROOK: I agree with the noble Earl. Mr. Gladstone has the most extraordinarily open mind respecting these matters that any great statesman could have. In 1886 he certainly said that he would "never be a party" to the retention of the Irish Members. He may have changed his mind on the point, but I doubt it. However, he has inflicted upon this country a plan which he himself admits to be "an anomaly," and which is an invitation "to intrigue" and "a great danger." Mr. Morley, at Newcastle, urged upon the people the importance of excluding the Irish Members from the British House of Commons, and yet he has now voted for the Third Reading of a Bill which contains the very provision which he then protested against. What did Mr. Morley say about this plan of retention?—

"I do not care what precautions you take; I predict that there is no power on earth that can prevent the Irish Members in such circumstances from being in future Parliaments what they have been in the past, and what to some extent they are in the present—namely, the arbiters and masters of English policy and English legislative business, and of the rise and fall of British Administrations."

Is it not atrocious that the two men who have condemned the plan of retention in terms like those should have induced the House of Commons to pass a measure in which that very plan of retention is embodied? In passing, I would ask how the election business arising out of the return of these 80 Members is to be managed. You have made no provision in the Bill for the trial of Election Petitions. Then I should like to know whether the Irish Members are to be exempted from considering Private Bills in Committees, or are they to form part of Committees on Private Bills relating to England only? All these things must be considered. Consider what will happen if this plan of retention is preserved. The 80 Members will be returned, not by the same number of constituencies, but practically by the same voters as the 103. The 103 Members of the Irish Legislature will be reinforced by the 80 Representatives. The bulk of the 103 Members in the Irish Parliament, and the 80 Irish Members in the Imperial Parliament, will have one and the same Leader, and all the subjects which are excluded from the cogni-

sance of the 103 Members in Dublin will be raised by the 80 Members here. And this is the way in which you propose to get rid of the friction caused by Irish Business in the Imperial Parliament. You are going to create a power which will dominate you in that Parliament. The Government say that if these privileges are granted the Irish will be checked in their actions by a sense of responsibility. It is at this point that the question of the character of the men to whom you propose to entrust these powers becomes so important. Mr. Bryce, when writing philosophically about the American Constitution, said—

“The chief lesson which a study of the more vicious among the State Legislatures teaches us is that power does not necessarily bring responsibility in its train.”

Now, to this proposed legislation Great Britain has not given its assent. The Union was a Treaty, and now you propose to repeal it, and to inflict degradation upon England. The Prime Minister, I know, boasts that he is a Scotchman; but I think that he, who was born and educated in England, and who owes so much politically to England, might have hesitated to declare that this country, which had resisted his imperious will, “required discipline.” He writes to an American—not one of the chief and best of Americans, but a man who has written of this country in a hostile manner—and says that “England requires disciplining,” and so he devises a plan under which he gives us the off-scouring of the Irish Parliament, such as they may choose to send, in order to extort further concessions to the Irish Nationalists. The Prime Minister has said that “Great Britain was entitled to a voice on this question.” She has given utterance to that voice. In 1887 the right hon. Gentleman said that the retention of the Irish Members was “a British question,” and not an Irish one; yet it has been carried by the Irish vote against the whole of Great Britain. Now, my Lords, in the final issue, we are told that we are 33,000,000 to 3,000,000, and that we can reconquer Ireland. Well, I think Mr. Gladstone is hardly the general who could undertake the reconquest of Ireland. After all, these concessions have been made to Ireland by a cowardly surrender: the idea of reconquering her is so preposterous and absurd that it does not require

discussion. I am told, my Lords, that statistics show that Ireland has been impoverished since the Union. There is abundant evidence that Ireland has grown in riches, and would grow in quiet if you would allow your own Acts to operate. You keep passing Acts of Parliament, and then, like children growing flowers, you take them up by the roots to see how they are going on. The remedy you have proposed is worse than the disease; it will poison the two countries, and bring about constant friction and constant animosity and struggle. Now, my Lords, I will say one word about this House, of which I have the honour to be a Member. It is a second House, and a part of the Parliament of this country. Your Lordships have your rights, as large, except in finance, as those enjoyed by the House of Commons. Though not a Representative Body, I admit, it is your Lordships' duty to examine all questions that come before you, in view, not only of your rights, but of the expediency and policy of your action. Unfortunately, there is no question in politics which comes before us in an abstract condition. It is always weighted with circumstances which you have to take into account. We are taunted in the other House for speaking of the proceedings of that House, as if it was not a question before us. But, my Lords, we are part of the Parliament of England, and we have a right and duty to see that that Parliament, so far as we are concerned, does its duty; and we have a right to look at and comment upon the action of the other House if it evades Parliamentary law and resorts to expedients which we believe to be false and fatal in themselves, injurious to Parliaments in all parts of the world, and to call forth a despotism in Parliaments, which is equally abhorrent as despotism in individuals. We are called upon to try this question as upon our honour and as men who are interested in a peaceful, happy, and contented Ireland; and I venture to say for myself and those who act with me that we are not less interested in a peaceful, happy, and contented Ireland than noble Lords opposite. I am, to a certain extent, deeply and personally interested in Ireland; but I do not think it right, because a child or a lunatic desire a torch or weapon, to put it into their hands.

This Bill is one which the Government themselves admit will not be final. It is a Bill provisional in many most important particulars, and if passed must come on for reconsideration. We agree that we have solemn duties in connection with Ireland. You despair; we hope. You have given up; we are faithful to our Imperial destiny, and believe, though it may take time, that we have the means to redress every grievance of which Ireland can complain. Now, my Lords, I will conclude by quoting some words of that great Tribune of the people, as he was called by the noble Earl (Lord Rosebery), Mr. Bright, as they exactly express my feelings—

“Save its population (Ireland's) from the future conduct of the men who are answerable for much of its present sufferings and for all the disorder by which it is now afflicted and disgraced. There are 2,000,000 of loyal people in Ireland. Let us be firm in our resolve; and if it be possible—as I believe it is possible—save them for expulsion from the guardianship of the Crown of the United Kingdom and from the shelter and the justice of the Imperial Parliament.”

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HERSCHELL): My Lords, I have listened with interest and admiration to the speech of the noble Earl who has just sat down. I shall have some difficulty in following him, because I cannot but feel deeply conscious that, while he has been speaking the sentiments of vast multitudes of noble Lords within this House, I am going to advocate a cause which here has few friends, and I must necessarily come in conflict with the sentiments and opinions of many noble Lords present. I shall, at all events, endeavour so to conduct the argument which I have to put before your Lordships as to avoid saying a single word which may stir susceptibilities any further than is absolutely necessary. I have been struck with the constant repetitions throughout this Debate of the statement that no arguments have been adduced in favour of the measure now before your Lordships. I do not wonder that such expressions should come from noble Lords who come here from Ireland. I think it is not unnatural that a measure in which they are so deeply interested, and which must stir natural prejudices, should have been regarded by them mainly from one point of view; but I confess I am astonished that noble Lords who have been Liberals,

and who call themselves Liberals still, although they may deem the dangers of a measure of this description as being too weighty to be encountered, nevertheless fail to see how much there is in it, and must be in it, to commend it to those imbued with Liberal principles. I say there has been a failure to recognise this, because we have heard from more than one, in effect though not in words, this description of the measure:—That it is the mere offspring of the self-will of a fanatic who has lost his head, accepted by subservient Colleagues who have lost their principles. [*Opposition cheers.*] I accept those cheers as a proof that the minds of noble Lords calling themselves Liberals who can thus view this measure have not been addressed to the arguments which with all unprejudiced persons will weigh in the consideration of the question. The noble Duke who moved the rejection of the Bill said that it was the duty of statesmen to forecast the future effect of any measure that was proposed. I agree; but there is another condition just as rigorously required by statesmanship, and that is that before forecasting the future you shall have weighed the arguments on both sides, and that you shall have examined the arguments which are opposed to your natural prejudices and preconceived opinions or traditional policy with as much care and scrutiny, and give them as full and fair weight as the arguments that are on the other side. The noble Duke commenced his speech by sweeping on one side as wholly irrelevant the references made by Lord Spencer to the history of the connection between England and Ireland since the Union. I confess that when we consider what is the matter with which we are now dealing, it is a most astounding proceeding to treat that history as irrelevant. What is the question now before your Lordships but this—whether any arrangement concerning the Parliamentary relation of the two countries arrived at at the beginning of the century is to remain untouched, or whether events have shown that the time has come when it is expedient, in the interest of both countries, that a change should be made? Is it possible rationally to arrive at an answer to such a question as that without looking to see what have been the fruits of the measure whose continuation or alteration is now in ques-

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tion? The Act of Union has been treated by many who have spoken in this Debate almost as if it were a divine institution and as if it were to be regarded with a reverence which made it almost blasphemy to say a word against or treason to suggest that it should be altered. And yet, after all, it was an arrangement arrived at not so very long ago, and, although I do not for a moment question the great ability of the statesmen by whom that measure was advocated and passed, I do not think anyone will contend that they were infallible. I am not going into an inquiry how that measure came to be passed in Ireland. It undoubtedly was passed in this country in a time of great national emergency, and, indeed, of imminent crisis. Even at that time of danger and emergency there were not wanting noblemen in this House of experience and judgment who believed it to be a mistake. Lord Fitzwilliam, in the Debate in this House, contended that—

“It would weaken instead of strengthening the means of resistance to the enemy.”

And he added another statement which is not without its interest and importance in relation to the Parliament of Ireland. He said—

“The House had the experience of ages; that the dangers apprehended from a separate Legislature had not arisen.”

What were the objects in view at that time? For my part, I think that it is quite compatible with the belief that the circumstances of that time demanded that arrangement to believe now that the circumstances of our time may demand a modification of it. There is one most important circumstance in the relative positions of the two countries which must not be lost sight of. The closer means of communication to which the noble Earl who has just spoken has alluded have afforded facilities and powers which did not then exist in this country in relation to Ireland. Further than that, at that time the population of Ireland was one-third of the population of the United Kingdom. The population of Ireland is now only one-eighth of the population of the United Kingdom; and I am by no means sure that if the conditions which exist to-day had existed at the beginning of the century Mr. Pitt would have been in favour of the Act of

Union which he carried out. Therefore, it seems to me it is not in the slightest degree a slight on the memory or statesmanship of Mr. Pitt that one should believe that the arrangement then arrived at was in need of modification. What were the expectations and anticipations held out to those who advocated that measure? They hoped and believed that it would weld the peoples of the two nations into one. It has become now a ground for sneering when there is any talk of the “union of hearts.” But the idea is not a new one. The words almost were used in the discussions on the Act of Union. “United hearts” was what people were led to expect by some of the speakers as the effect of the Union. It was expected, too, that it would bring about a state of things without which good government does not exist. I should like to quote the words that were used by a noble Earl in this House as to what is essential to good government.

“Good government,” he said in these Debates, “should carry with it the confidence, affection, and ready zeal of the people.”

There were, no doubt, at that time those who doubted whether these hoped-for results could be achieved. We are able to-day to determine whether they have been. What is the condition of things we find? The Union under that Act has continued for 93 years, and to-day and during the last few days from almost every speaker in this Debate in opposition to the measure we have heard references to the loyal minority of Ireland. What is this but a confession that there is a disloyal majority? [*Cheers and counter cheers.*] Noble Lords cheer. I will deal with the question how this came about, and what is the cure for it. But are noble Lords satisfied with that condition of things? What does it mean—a disloyal majority? That there are some millions of our fellow-subjects in an island close beside us who have been subject to the Rule of Her Majesty and her predecessors for years, who are opposed to the rule under which they live, who desire its change, who resent the measures that are adopted towards them, and who believe that they are being wronged. I believe that that is the only spot within the broad dominions of the Queen, with the numberless forms of government under which her subjects

live, and with the myriads of which they consist, where such a state of things could be possibly found. [*Cheers.*] Is that not a momentous fact? Noble Lords cheered it as though they were rather pleased with it, as though it was not a thing to be ashamed of and bitterly repented. That is the condition of things which we find after all these years, I will not say as the fruit, but following upon and succeeding this Act of Union; and all I am contending for is this—that whatever else it has done it has not produced that condition of contentment, it has not secured those conditions of good government which we hoped for it, and anticipated for it, and for which in the main it was passed. I think that the British Parliament, as a piece of legislative machinery for Ireland, has been a failure. I think it has not quickly enough discerned Irish wants. It has turned a deaf ear to them often when they have been urged before Parliament. It has delayed too often, cruelly and wrongly, the redress of serious grievances, and it has naturally stirred up, and inevitably stirred up, a feeling of hostility to the institutions of this country. I should like, before I pass from that, to allude to one sentence of the noble Earl. He says—

“ You told us in 1870 this measure was to be a satisfactory solution; you told us in 1881 that that measure was to be a satisfactory solution. We find none of them a satisfactory solution.”

Just what I contend. We have never, in the British Parliament, sufficiently understood Ireland to secure a satisfactory solution, and consequently when the Irish have told us that what we believed was solving the question would not solve it, we passed the measure that suited our opinions, and that was consonant with our ideas, and we found by bitter experience that they were right and that we were wrong. These are the measures which have been from time to time passed. They have been varied by coercive legislation which became necessary and I admit always is necessary when you have discontent or to suppress revolt against your institutions of the description I have referred to. I know it has become the fashion nowadays to speak of Coercion Acts as though they were rather magnificent legislative achievements of which we have no reason to be ashamed. That was not the language used by the

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statesmen of either Party until recently. We are reproved for expressing sometimes hostility to or dislike of Coercion Acts, and it has been suggested that you cannot be opposed to them unless you are in sympathy with criminals or crime. That was not the attitude of statesmen of either Party in the earlier generations of this century. Coercion Acts were always introduced under pressure of extreme urgency, to meet a condition of things which were very critical, and passed only for a time—avowedly only justifiable on account of the critical situation, avowedly to be repealed the moment the situation became no longer serious. Now, we have so far advanced that we have come within the last few years to pass a permanent Coercion Act for Ireland, and we consider that, circumstances having brought us to pass once for all a permanent Coercion Act for Ireland, it is really a triumph of legislative achievement for that country. I have been astonished at some of the language used with regard to this legislation. I admit that Coercion Acts often are necessary. I believe that whenever you do not or cannot satisfy the just aspirations of the people and make them content with the government under which they are living, Coercion Acts, or some form of coercion, are necessary; but I none the less hate the process, believing that the necessity for Coercion Acts proves that there is a disease which seeks a remedy. Coercion Acts are spoken of as light things. What do they mean? You take away in regard to Ireland some of the safeguards which the wisdom of our ancestors has placed on the administration of justice in England for the protection of the people from wrong, hardship, and unjust treatment. Are those safeguards of no concern here? Would we endure, is there an English Minister who would dare to propose for England a measure such as we passed for Ireland? An English Minister dared not do so, because he could not pass it. It would be impossible in the state of things existing here that such a Bill should ever become a law. It can be passed for Ireland, because the British Parliament by British votes take away the safeguards in Ireland where we are not subject to the law. I do not say that it may not be necessary to do so; but I will never fail to utter my protest against the view that it is a

light matter or one of small moment. When it is said that these Acts are only passed against those who are not law-abiding and who will not conform to the law, has not that been made a justification of every tyrannous form of government and law? Are we not always told—"Keep within the law; say and do nothing to which the Government can object, and then these laws will not touch you"? That has never been considered a sufficient justification; and, moreover, I do not believe that those safeguards can be removed without the risk of injustice. My noble and learned Friend said that there had been no cases where people under the Coercion Acts had received injustice. I do not believe it. I am satisfied myself that there were cases in which injustice was done for want of those safeguards on which we here rely. I think it is established by these two circumstances with which I have dealt that there is a disease which has not been cured either by your bribes from time to time—for that has been the form of some legislation—or at another time by your Coercion Acts. The disease still exists. What has led to the discontent which exists? I think it is quite possible that if measures which were passed late had been passed earlier discontent might not have been what it is. But I think that this discontent, which has been caused by the consciousness that the legislation of the British Parliament has not succeeded in producing happiness and prosperity, has naturally united itself with national sentiments and aspirations. I do not see how it can be doubted that there does exist in Ireland among the majority of the people a desire for some distinct national life. Every circumstance to which I can look in the course of the present century seems to me to conclusively prove it. My noble Friend (Earl Cowper) said that the cry for Home Rule was a modern one, that it only began in 1870, that before that time it was Fenianism, and before that Repeal. I agree. It has taken many forms, and it would be a superficial view to treat these as separate things; the same principle underlays them all. Whether it be Home Rule, or Fenianism, or Repeal of the Union, it was the same cry and desire for a means of self-government which would enable the people to bring, as they believed they

could bring, to themselves the prosperity, contentment, and happiness which we have failed to bring to them. It is said—"How can you expect to satisfy the Irish with a plan of Home Rule when you say they have desired something so much more extensive than that—Fenianism, or it may be Repeal?" Have we not seen instances in which there has been a cry for a more extended form of national life which has yet been satisfied with a narrower? Did Hungary, when she agitated for years and fought, seek that arrangement which now prevails and under which she possesses her autonomy? She sought something more than that; and even when the present arrangement was entered into there were some holding extreme views who retired dissatisfied and disgusted because she had not got more. But, nevertheless, the arrangement has brought satisfaction, and contentment, and peace; and those who demanded and insisted that more ought to be obtained became diminished in numbers and less important as time went on. I see no reason to suppose in any instance that a smaller satisfaction of demands which have been made may not bring contentment. It is said that the tendency of the time is towards national consolidation, while this measure tends to separation. I do not for a moment deny that the tendency of time has been towards national consolidation; but there has been another principle, which side by side with this national principle has been more and more coming into force and operation, and that is the principle of decentralisation of local autonomy. Perhaps in the greatest instance of national consolidation which we have seen in our time—the Empire of Germany—that national consolidation has been found not inconsistent with the completest local autonomy. Is there anyone who believes that if another course had been taken, if the separate Parliamentary Governments of those portions of Germany which now form the Empire had been taken from them, and an attempt had been made to govern a united Germany, or administer its laws and legislate for it through a united Parliament, Germany would have been stronger to-day than she is? On the contrary, the national consolidation would never have taken place. Germany, which is an Empire not wanting in

strength, an Empire not disregarded by her foes, would not have been the Empire she is to-day. The conclusion to which these facts seem to me to point is that the only hopeful policy in regard to Ireland is a policy which shall seek to satisfy those desires and aspirations which she recognises, and which would enable Ireland to govern herself and manage her own internal affairs. I may be asked—Why do you think this is a hopeful policy? As far as I see, no other policy has been suggested which holds out the slightest hope. I say it is a hopeful policy because, as far as I know, wherever you have given to those who have been discontented and who have felt the yoke of Parliamentary Government under which they lived, a freer system, wherever you have recognised their desires and conceded them, you have brought contentment and peace. Now it is said that our conversion to these views has been very sudden. I do not know that it necessarily follows, because a conversion is sudden, it is therefore either mistaken or insincere. But if it were so, it would prove that Catholic Emancipation was a blunder, and that the policy of Free Trade was a mistake. Talk of sudden conversion! I was refreshing my recollection a day or two ago with reference to the passing of Catholic Emancipation, and I came across this passage in *The Annual Register*—

“The Duke of Wellington in December had written in express words that he saw no prospect of a settlement of the question; that it was impossible to expect men to consider it dispassionately and to come to an ultimately satisfactory conclusion, and that it had better for a time be buried in oblivion.”

The writer proceeds—

“When the Duke of Wellington thus declared on December 11 that he saw no prospect of a settlement, what man could imagine that he had already decided forthwith to force it to a settlement? When he expressed the opinion that it ought to be buried in oblivion, would it not be a deep insult to the understanding and honesty of his grace to imagine that he meant by that the instant agitation of the question before Parliament, and that, too, as a Government measure?”

Your Lordships will recollect the language used in the other House, especially with respect to Sir Robert Peel's action on the Corn Laws. And yet these men live now in the admiration, esteem, and veneration of their countrymen; and I

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prophesy that the time will come when those who now receive the same measure of abuse will not be regarded the worse for it by their countrymen, who will recognise the benefits of their action. I invite your Lordships' attention to the situation in 1885. A Franchise Bill had been passed, and there was about to be an election, and in the House of Commons this statement was made by the Leader of the House and of the Conservative Party, speaking on behalf of the Government—

“You have now given this large measure of franchise. It is inconsistent with that measure to govern the people of Ireland by the old method of coercion.”

I think that was a momentous statement. It indicates to my mind, as it could only indicate, one thing—that at last there was a search being made to find some other method of governing Ireland. For inasmuch as Ireland needed to be governed, and you were not going to govern her by coercion, how were you going to govern her? There was obviously an idea of some other policy, and that could only have been a policy of conciliation; and there could have been no policy of conciliation which did not take the direction of something in the nature of Home Rule. But that is not all. Do not let me be misunderstood. I am not for a moment using this argument as a charge against the Conservative Party that they intended to advocate Home Rule. My argument is that they themselves were looking, and announced to the country that they were looking—and were so understood by the country and by us—for some other means of governing Ireland. That was followed by another momentous event. There was an interview between Lord Carnarvon—the Viceroy of Ireland—and Mr. Parnell, of whose character and sayings we have heard a great deal during this discussion. Could anyone fail to see that, after such a declaration had been made and after such an interview had taken place, there were circumstances which must stir the thoughts of any man on this question and compel his attention to the inquiry—“Are we to go on with the old system of coercion, or are we to adopt some other means?” There were then 85 Nationalists returned to Parliament; there was an indication under this free franchise of the opinion of

the great majority of the Irish people. What was to be done? It is said that statesmen one after the other had approved the Union and defended it. Undoubtedly they did. I do not suppose that there is anybody who would not prefer to leave untouched the Act of Union, if that Act were regarded with equal affection and esteem by the whole of the British Islands. It has been one of the conditions of political life in this country that whenever measures have been passed, though they were distasteful to a large minority, they have been accepted and honestly acted upon. And so it would naturally be with the Union. No statesman would rashly or readily attempt to disturb a settlement so solemnly arrived at. But there often comes in national life, as in individual life, a crisis. You have trodden a path unquestioningly for years, until you are compelled to face the question—Are you taking the right road? It is easy to walk in the accustomed way; it is very unpleasant to face the questionings and difficulties that arise when you begin to doubt whether you are on the right road or not. It is much easier to dismiss the doubts. But there comes a time when you can dismiss them no longer, and you are obliged to face the problem. This was the case with many in 1885; and it was certainly the case with me. It is a great delusion to suppose that the minds of people in England were never stirred about Home Rule until Mr. Gladstone brought the matter forward. I do not know whether others had my experience; but I represented a constituency in which there were many working men; and I know that there were many who had misgivings, and more than misgivings, as to the policy of coercion in the Parliament of 1880-1884. I was asked at various times by one and another whether it would not be possible to give to the Irish Home Rule. They saw that you never could govern the Irish without coercion unless you made some concession, and the mind of the English democracy was turning in this direction—that there was no reason why you should not give the Irish some form of Home Rule instead of coercion. It is said that the change took place to buy the Irish vote. What was the situation? At that time the Conservative Party were in Office. There had been returned in the previous

autumn a Liberal majority of 86—a majority such as was only balanced if all the Irish Members, from Ulster and all parts, together voted with the Conservative Party. What had the Liberal Party with such a majority as that to fear? Why did they need to buy the Irish votes? They would only need them if they were unitedly thrown in support of the Conservative Party. If all the Irish Members did not support the Conservative Party, the Liberals would have an ample majority. Could we suspect that the Tory Party would attempt to buy the Irish vote, or that they would try to bring about such a combination of Irishmen of all Parties as to defeat the Government which had so large a majority from Great Britain? I admit that a change of this kind cannot be made without danger. I have never shut my eyes to the weight of the arguments which may be adduced against such a change. I have pondered and looked at them from every point of view; and I feel that they are of serious gravity, and that they well deserve to be considered. I do not regard it as a light thing. I think that any statesman or body of men who attempted to lead the country to a change of this description with a light heart and in any other spirit than one saturated with the conviction of the importance of the change would be very foolish—would be mad. But when I say that I fully realise all the dangers of such a change, I must ask—Is there no danger in leaving things as they are? We have had painted to us pictures of the dangers which may arise from a change such as this; but there has not seemed to be, in the mind of any single speaker who has addressed your Lordships, the dimmest consciousness of the dangers which exist in the present state of things. There is scarcely an instance you can bring to prove the gravity and danger of the change which does not equally prove the danger of leaving matters as they stand. The whole basis of the pictures which have been drawn by those who have preceded me rests upon this—that after this Bill passes Ireland will be discontented, and anxious to throw off the English yoke. But if things are left alone, will not the danger be then just as much? It would be there in its most serious form. I have spoken of the national aspirations and desires of a large

body of the Irish people ; but I have not spoken of the sympathy with those feelings which exist in the tens of thousands of Irishmen scattered not only throughout Her Majesty's dominions, but in all parts of the world. Is there no danger in such a state of things ? — a discontented people in Ireland, a multitude sympathising with them in America, gold passing freely between the two countries. Are there never times when our relations with America become critical ? How can we shut our eyes to the danger, and pretend that all is peace when there is no peace ? There is this added danger—that the full sympathies of vast multitudes of Americans who are not Irish, who have no connection with the Irish, and who in a sense may be said to have no love for them, are nevertheless strongly with them in their demand for autonomy. The existence of that sympathy, the belief that wrong is being done, and that a demand that might be conceded is being refused—these are most important factors in considering the situation. If a concession be made which is felt to be just and reasonable, and which is safe, you will remove this danger at all events, and instead of there being sympathy with Irish discontent and a desire to assist Irish discontent in Ireland the sympathy will be the other way. It is said, however desirable it may be to attempt to introduce a change of this description, no measure is possible ; statesmanship is not equal to dealing with the question and creating a well-considered and workable scheme. I should be sorry if that were true. I admit that the task is one of enormous difficulty ; I admit it is one in which we may well desire the aid of the best intellects in this country without regard to Party. I admit it is impossible to devise any scheme not involving great difficulties ; but I cannot forget that, more than a century ago, a knot of men drawn from a very limited number, who, however, were sons of England, were capable of framing a scheme and Constitution which has stood the test of a century, and has been the admiration of the civilized world. And are we reduced to such intellectual or statesmanlike impotence that it is impossible for us to devise a scheme which shall settle upon a better footing than the present the relations between England

and Ireland. I, at all events, do not believe it. Now it is said that this Bill, indeed, is not perfect—that it is full of imperfections. [“Hear, hear !”] Yes, my Lords, I quite admit it. But I say that there is no scheme which can be made perfect, there is no Constitution in the world which is perfect. If the same intellectual acuteness that is applied to this Bill were applied to the British Constitution you could prove that it is utterly unworkable, and that not many months or years could elapse before things would come to a dead-lock. But if this measure be desirable and right, are we, because a perfect scheme cannot be constructed, because no scheme can be devised that will be free from difficulty, to abandon the task ? I confess I feel it is idle to argue with those who are opposed to us on the provisions of this Bill, and for this reason—because I admit that there are dangers and difficulties in the scheme. If your point of view is that no scheme at all is necessary and that there is no reason for attempting to give self-government to Ireland, why, of course, there is an end of the case ; any scheme which is in any sense dangerous or perilous would prove to be undesirable. When you say that nothing at all is to be done, there is no use in discussing details, but I propose to allude to some of the points that have been raised. The proposition that the supremacy of Parliament is not maintained can only be established if you select your own meaning for the words, and that meaning one which has not hitherto been given to them. The legislative supremacy of Parliament is complete ; Parliament will be able to legislate, and its laws will be as much in force in the Sister Country under this Bill as before. The enforcement of them is not generally included in Parliamentary supremacy. It has been said it would be a breach of honour for this Parliament to legislate upon subjects remitted to the Irish Parliament. It would be nothing of the kind. There remains the legitimate use of the provisions contained in the Preamble, and of the clause to which allusion has been made, which mean that you set up a subordinate Legislature without impairing the supremacy of this Parliament. It is this which explains and justifies the insertion of the words to which I allude ; they could only serve

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that purpose ; neither the enactment nor the words in the Preamble can be said to serve any other purpose. You cannot get rid of the supremacy of Parliament ; no words can preserve it more than it preserves itself ; and the only object in inserting the words was to meet such an argument as the noble Earl has used. In answer to the noble Duke, I maintain that we have always drawn the distinction between a United Empire and a United Kingdom ; the fallacy involved in not drawing the distinction has been on the other side. Everywhere speakers have denounced the disintegration of the Empire. I maintain the unity of the Kingdom is preserved when you have a common Parliament in which sit Members for every part of the United Kingdom, with power to deliberate and vote upon its affairs. You do not destroy the unity of the Kingdom by delegating certain functions to a subordinate Parliament. The noble Duke said that Parliament makes and unmakes Ministries. A more extraordinary and astounding proposition I never heard advanced. Does this House believe itself able to make or unmake a Ministry ? Let it pass any Resolution it likes, and Ministers will remain. Let this House try whether a Resolution of Censure will drive a Ministry from Office. It is true that, by Constitutional practice, votes of the House of Commons make and unmake Ministries ; but it is new to me to hear from a Whig politician, and a Leader of the Constitutional Party, that the House of Commons and Parliament are synonymous. Therefore, when it is said it is necessary to the supremacy of Parliament that there should be interference with the Executive, I say you are using the term "supremacy of Parliament" in a sense in which it has never been used before. I admit that there will not be the same control over the Irish Executive. If one thing is certain, it is that there has never been any concealment or question that it was part of the scheme that there should be an Irish Executive. The noble Earl asked why Irish Members, any more than Members for Australia or Canada, should sit in the House of Commons ? There seems to be good reason why we should not include Representatives from Australia or Canada, while we include

those of Ireland, because we do not leave to the Irish Legislature matters over which the Legislatures of Australia and Canada have full control. The reason of this is obvious—it is that proximity renders it in the highest degree expedient that we should have, for example, a common system of currency. More than that, when you are giving with these reservations a subordinate Parliament, if you are to maintain the supremacy of this Parliament and its ultimate control in case of absolute necessity, it is impossible to do it with justice or propriety if you are to exclude Irish Members. More than that, when you are retaining in the British Parliament absolute control in matters so greatly affecting the interests of Ireland as do those named in the 3rd clause of the Bill, there are certainly strong reasons against excluding the Irish Members from the British Parliament. If there was one thing that was more clearly placed before the country than another it was that it was to be a part of the scheme of Home Rule that Irish Members should be retained in this Parliament. It is said that you now include them and permit them to vote on all questions. Now I agree at once that that is a matter of very great difficulty. I should prefer myself, I frankly admit, a scheme by which the Irish Members should only vote upon those reserved questions or Bills relating to Ireland. But the difficulties of such an arrangement will be obvious to anybody, and although I may not think those difficulties so serious as some do, although I might have desired some method of that description to be passed into law, yet the difference between that and the retention of the Irish Members for all purposes seems to me, when you are dealing with such a Bill, if it be a Bill at all necessary, a matter of detail. The noble Earl has suggested that by this scheme Great Britain will be in a worse position than she now is. I confess I look at the matter as a practical man, and although I would have desired their exclusion from voting except upon reserved matters it seems to me we shall be in a better position, and not in a worse, than we were. The noble Earl says—“ But you retain to them a certain power of interfering in legislation which concerns you, while you cannot legislate

about local Irish affairs." Personally I confess that, put in that way, I at least have not the slightest desire to legislate or take any part in legislating in local Irish affairs. I regard it as a burden or a responsibility to be performed if there is no Body to whom it can be delegated. I treat it as a hardship upon me that whilst the Irish can meddle in my affairs I cannot meddle in theirs. I can understand the hardship so far as they can meddle with mine. Yes, my Lords, it is a hardship which exists now, and which you are seeking to perpetuate; but to say it is a hardship that we cannot interfere in their affairs is a thing which does not commend itself to my understanding. There is not a local English, Scotch, or Welsh matter upon which the Irish Members will be able to vote, and on which they could not vote and turn the scale, on which they will not vote and turn the scale now, if this Bill passes, upon which they could not turn the scale if this Bill had never been introduced. I look for an improvement in that respect. I believe, in the first place, you get an enormous advantage in regard to time which will become available for English, Scotch, and Welsh affairs which is now absorbed by Ireland. You will get rid of her and you will have more time to devote to your own affairs. In the next place, you will find that the Irish, when they are managing their own affairs, will become very keen and active in relation to them, and you will not find the same keen and constant attention to English, Scotch, or Welsh legislation which you have at the present time. As a practical man, taking that view and wishing what you wish, I say I get something under this Bill; I get nothing if you throw out the Bill and the present state of things prevails. With regard to the mode in which judgments are to be enforced, questions were asked me. In regard to the Judges of the Courts they will be enforced as they are now. The questions put assume a refusal on the part of those whose duty it is to enforce the law to do so. What now is the ultimate resort in such a case? Why, force, and nothing but force. But it does not follow that it will be necessary. But it will be certainly used to force the law if it is found to be so. It has been said that the Exchequer Judges are like

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Aunt Sallies on the racecourse. I cannot see any such resemblance. The question put to me is a riddle which I am unable to solve, put in extremely enigmatical and picturesque language. I do not see what the difficulty is. It seems to me the position of the Exchequer Judges is made very clear under the Bill. The noble Lord who spoke before me, asked how the Exchequer Judges were to be appointed. If he looks at the Bill he will find they are to be appointed as they are now, and be removable in the same manner—a Motion in both Houses of Parliament. And matters after this Bill will be the same as before in that respect. With regard to the financial provisions with which I do not intend to deal except to say one word. The noble Viscount, Lord Cross, said that your Lordships have a right to know that the Bill embodies the convictions of the Government. I rather question that right. When a Bill comes from the other House it embodies the opinion of the House of Commons, and it does not matter whether they are the convictions of the Ministers or not. On any particular provision Ministers may have been overbalanced by a majority of the House of Commons, but to contend that every provision, except on a vital point, must express their convictions appears to me to be a novel doctrine invented for the occasion, and of which we have never heard before. In regard to the financial proposals I do not care to dwell at any length for this reason; there are very weighty arguments against Home Rule, and you may convince the Committee that this policy which we believe to be just and expedient is unjust and inexpedient; but of this I am certain—if you do not convince your countrymen against Home Rule by other arguments you will never convince them by any petty huckstering about a little more or less in regard to the financial arrangements. I believe this of the English people: those who think it just and right will be glad to have it made in these terms; those who do not will object to it in any form. I turn to a part of the case which is undoubtedly of great importance, and that is the position of the loyal minority. I am not going to say a word disrespectful to the loyal minority, but this I must say. At the outset, I cannot subscribe to the

doctrine that either a minority or a majority would be justified in resisting the law as passed by Parliament and refusing obedience to it merely because they apprehended there might come to them some possible harm. I can understand men feeling that the state of government which has been created and under which they live has become so intolerable that any risk must be run rather than submit to it, but that must be an actual existing state of things, and not a mere guess which may come about. I should be most desirous of seeing any safeguards introduced for the protection of the loyal minority subject to one limitation, and that is that they be not such as to give a minority the rights of a majority. A majority must rule, and a minority cannot rule a majority. The position of the landlords and their agents has been a good deal mixed up with the fears of the Ulster or of the loyal minority. Now, they are two very different things. I do not mean for a moment to say that the interests of the landlords are to be disregarded. Far from it. But it is not about the interests of the landlords, about questions of rent and otherwise, that the loyal minority, the people of Ulster, are specially concerned. As I understand, their fears may be said to be threefold. They fear unfair religious treatment, unfair differential legislative treatment, or perhaps unfair treatment generally by the Legislature, and they fear unjust taxation. I believe myself those fears are enormously exaggerated. I do not believe there is any tendency to unfair religious treatment or unfair taxation to the minority, and I base that belief on experience; your belief is based upon speculation. All experience tends to show that this unfair treatment is never received. Take the Irish Municipalities, in some of which the Nationalists are in a majority. Take the Corporation of Dublin. The Corporation of Dublin administers its affairs as well as Corporations which are governed and controlled by the loyal minority, and deals with its political adversaries just as fairly as political adversaries are dealt with anywhere else. It has arranged its financial affairs with unusual success, and the men who have been doing this municipal work are the same class as the men who will have to

deal with those other affairs in the proposed Legislative Assembly. Therefore, looking at the acts done in the municipal life of Ireland, you have not only no reason for fear, but every reason to expect, that in the larger legislative life which you propose to give them you will find them actuated by the same motives. It is said you are going to hand over the government of Ireland—the fate of 3,000,000—people to these persons—to men whose characters have been spoken of in words of reprobation; but, looking to the men who now represent the Nationalist Party in the House of Commons, I believe you will be able to find men to fill the Executive offices with as much ability, public spirit, patriotism, and fairness as actuate men who fill positions of the same kind in this country. Let us look at it for a moment as a matter of self-interest. Those men will desire that their Government should be successful, and they will have every motive to deal with the North. It seems to me, in reality, the chance would be that the North would get something more than its due; and I will tell you why. Does anybody suppose when this Bill passes that you will have only one Party in Ireland? You will have two sides to a Chamber. One will have the same legislative desires as the other which is opposite them, and the Party on the other will be anxious to gain the alliance and support of the Representatives of Ulster; and there is not the slightest reason to fear that Ulster would suffer under such circumstances. I admit there is apprehension, but I am not prepared to accept the statement of bankers, merchants, and others as necessarily to be relied upon, because in times of great political excitement, and when animated by political feelings, they do not always state what is accurate any more than do the rest of mankind. My belief is that the experience of this Legislative Assembly would remove that apprehension, and that, when it was seen there was no injustice or unfairness in dealing with different parts of Ireland, it would go far to remove much of the bitterness which now exists and make Ulster better friends with the rest of Ireland, and would take but a short time to remove enmity which unfortunately at present exists. With regard to the landlords, we

have been told that 4-5ths of the landlords of Ireland have been able to collect their rents with greater ease than those of England. We have been asked why we had not introduced a Land Bill. I confess I should have liked long ago to have seen a measure of land purchase passed, eminently satisfactory to have obtained a settlement which would free an Irish Parliament from the responsibility of dealing with this matter. But I believe, myself, that might have been done in connection with the proposals of 1886 without any serious financial risk to this country, or serious loss; but that was not the view taken at the time of those who opposed the Government in 1886, and the Land Bill was used as a stick with which to beat the Home Rule Bill all over the country. The people of England were told it was a monstrous Bill, and one not to be passed. If now it is impossible, in the state of public feeling, to pass such a Bill, they are the persons who are responsible for the state of public feeling which has made that impossible, and it does not lie in their mouths to ask why we do not introduce a Bill which they have done their utmost to render difficult, if not impossible. It is said that the people of Great Britain are against this Bill, and that they have shown it by recent elections. I am not prepared to admit that as a matter of fact. My belief is that the majority of the electors of Great Britain voted in favour of the Bill. I admit that the majority of the Representatives returned were against it; therefore, there can be no doubt in a great many instances—and I have investigated some—that the scale of the elections was turned by the same persons voting in several places, and, therefore, the opinion of the people of Great Britain is not necessarily represented by the number of Members returned. It is next said that there was no mandate for this Bill in all its clauses. The noble Duke says the Bill, and every clause in the Bill, must be before the country. To what would that reduce our Legislative Assembly? I say nothing to a *referendum ad hoc*. The Representatives of the people meeting in Parliament would have to pass the Bill as it stood, because they had no mandate to amend it. It is also said that the Bill has not been discussed. Then why not take

your revenge on the other House? Pass the Second Reading, amend the Bill in every clause, and force the House of Commons to discuss it. It is said that the Bill was discussed with the object of educating the people. It took 86 days in the other House, and they were not enough, to educate the people as to the Bill, and your Lordships are going to make that education complete in four days. I, of course, know that this Bill will be rejected amidst tumultuous and enthusiastic cheers. I wonder if there are sounding in your Lordships' memories the echoes of cheers just as enthusiastic which were but the precursors of the victories of great reforms. We watch on the shore the flowing tide, and as we watch it we scarce can believe in its approach, but its approach is none the less certain. My Lords, if this measure is, as we believe, founded on principles of equity and justice, principles which in past times have borne precious fruit, your Lordships' action, though it may retard, cannot prevent or even long delay, the ultimate triumph of our policy.

LORD HALSBURY: I must congratulate my noble and learned Friend upon his excellent speech, although there are some matters on which I am in controversy with him. I believe there has been a real effort to deal with some parts of the Bill which is before your Lordships' House. But I have noticed with some surprise that the Ministers who are responsible for the Bill have talked about anything but the Bill; and I must say, with a feeling of pride in my old profession, when it came to the turn of the Lord Chancellor, there was an effort, at all events, to deal with the arguments which were directed against the passing of the measure. Let me say a word on what I think is a misapprehension in the mind of my noble and learned Friend. I do not think anyone cares about the conversion of any person unless it is sincere, and to be a conversion it must be assumed to be sincere; a thing which makes the history of this Bill, and where it comes from, and how it comes, important. There is a more than half-implied right that you have no option but to pass the Bill which is now sent to this House by the House of Commons. I am not going at any length into that matter; but I suppose nobody would

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gravely contend that a portion of the Legislature would have a right to put itself in conflict with the country by legislating on questions on which the country has never been consulted. We have heard from the noble and learned Lord something about the internal relations of the Party to which he belonged before the surrender of 1886. I think I am entitled to say that no responsible politician prominent in political warfare had ever pronounced before that year in favour of any measure of Home Rule whatsoever. In fact, up to that time there was a deliberate determination on the part of the Liberal Party to preserve the Union intact. The policy of this Bill was sprung upon the country as a surprise, for before 1886 it had not been adopted by any Party except the Nationalist Party. I do not think the words of the Duke of Devonshire could bear the interpretation my noble and learned Friend has placed upon them. What he did ask was what reference had been made by the noble Earl who had moved the Second Reading. With regard to the Bill itself no reference had been made to it. I think we are all agreed as to the great and serious importance of such a subject as this. I am afraid I cannot think so, because I notice in the amusing speech of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs last night it seemed to me to be hardly appropriate to so grave an occasion. Rightly or wrongly many of our fellow-countrymen believe that their happiness, property, and even lives depend upon the decision of Parliament in this case. Such apprehensions are not likely to be allayed by the noble Earl's jocose observations. Upon the question really before us—namely, that “this Bill be read a second time,” I am bound to say the noble Earl said not a word. I admit that during the interval between 1886 and 1892 we heard a great deal about Home Rule, but those who spoke about it never gave a satisfactory answer to the question—“What does Home Rule mean?” But now we have a Bill on the subject before us, and what does the noble Earl do? He repeats the vague and ambiguous statements about Home Rule which were made in the interval to which I have alluded. If the speech of the noble Earl opposite was intended as an exhibition of tactics and diplomacy it was a complete success,

because I will undertake to say that if at some future time the noble Earl were to say—“I spoke in favour of some measure of self-government for Ireland, but I never approved one single clause of this Bill,” he would be perfectly within his rights. The noble Earl did not utter one single syllable in defence of the clauses of the Bill. In fact, he said very candidly that he would not, and he gave a reason—I was going to say not quite respectful, I will not say to your Lordships' House, but to Parliamentary Institutions. Suppose, my Lords, a Minister of the Crown, having a large majority who he knew would vote for him, came down to the House of Commons, and said to them—“This is a Bill I recommend, but I will not trouble you to discuss it.” Would that be a Constitutional thing for him to do? Parliament consists of both Houses. Neither House is a Parliament without the other, and considering the interest taken in this measure, and the manner in which noble Lords had come from north, south, east, and west simply to give their approval to the measure, it all went to prove that it was part of a system of separate Assembly. It is hardly suggested, my Lords, that this Bill has been discussed. We have had from the other side of the House nothing pointing to what the Bill is going to effect. No speech has been directed to show that this or that particular clause will remedy this or that particular defect. We have nothing put before us but this general proposition—“Something must be done, because what has been done in the past has not succeeded.” That may be a very good reason for saying that something must be done, but how does it recommend the adoption of the principle of this Bill? And I have to remind you again that the question is that this Bill may be read a second time. Now, my Lords, I will say a word or two about the Bill itself. It does, in effect, repeal the Act of Union. I know that it has been said that it does not, but whether it does so or not may very easily be discovered by anyone who reads the Bill and the Act of Union. Does a thing assume a different aspect because you call it by a different name? I heard my noble and learned Friend continually use the phrase “subordinate Legislature.” If the Irish Legislature is to be a subordinate Legislature, why does not the Bill say so?

When it was suggested that that word might be introduced to render that beyond doubt it was refused. It is the duty of the Government, I presume, in thus initiating a new Constitution, to see that justice is done both to Ireland and England, and I should have expected from the promoters of the Bill some effort to show that that has been done. But has it been done? It has been pointed out that the new form which the new Governing Body is to assume is one that will lend itself to the oppression of one section of the community by another. That apprehension is seriously entertained by a large number of people. Why, then, instead of a general lecture on the impropriety of indulging in pettiness, have we not had some practical description of the grounds on which the apprehension to which I have referred is said to be groundless? It is the old story. You are to trust everybody, and it is assumed that there will be an entire change of heart and disposition on the part of those you have hitherto looked upon as your bitterest enemies. Is there, my Lords, any indication of a kindly and generous feeling towards those of their countrymen who are now in a minority in the House of Commons on the part of those who in the future will be in a majority in the Irish Legislature if this Bill passes? I confess I certainly find no evidence of it. I do not want, if I can help it, to speak of individuals, but who are the people who are to be elected into this new Legislature? The noble Earl who moved the Second Reading of the Bill, though he did not say so in terms, inferred that in the formation of the Legislative Assembly and the Irish Ministry the best persons would be adopted, and that there would be a change of disposition in those who are to exercise authority there. But I observe that Lord Swansea was of opinion that the men now in the House of Commons would hold high office, and I would rather accept his judgment on the point than that of the noble Earl. It is impossible not to know that these men, who were the subjects of the investigations by the Special Commission, have not lost their popularity among their constituents in consequence of the finding of that Commission. What reason, then, is there to suppose that they will not retain that popularity in the future with the people who had

retained it to get Home Rule in the past? It is said that they would be contented, but would they be contented with much less than they originally demanded? We must not prophesy, but our opponents may. I have no wish to prophesy. I only draw an inference which everybody must draw from the evidence. It has been said, in language with which your Lordships are doubtless familiar, that "provisional" is stamped on every line of this Bill. I think I should be disposed to say that "vengeance" is stamped on every line of the Bill. The loyal minority, the Police, the Civil servants, all of them are in turn to come under the vengeance of those who have been their enemies in the past and will continue to be their enemies in the future. I should just like to say one word upon that. A paper has just been handed to me containing a statement which I have not had time to verify myself, which is attributed to Mr. Grattan—"Give them the power and they give themselves your property." That strikes me as a motto to be placed just over the door of the new Irish Legislature. The extraordinary character of the Bill is well illustrated by the provision relating to the Exchequer Judges. They are appointed to determine certain questions, and the difficulty that presents itself to me is this. There is to be an ordinary Executive in Ireland, and therefore the Sheriff, by hypothesis, will not execute the process of the Exchequer Judges. The Exchequer Judges are to have the power to appoint a Sheriff of their own. Suppose what I may call the ordinary Sheriff, known to the law, is under the orders of the Executive Authority, and the new Sheriff—the Exchequer Judges' Sheriff—is ordered to do something which the proper Sheriff will not do, and the forces of the law are under the command of the ordinary authorities, what is to happen? The new Sheriff may call out the *posse comitatus*, and the ordinary Sheriff may take the same course. Who is to decide between the two? That is only one illustration of the almost impossible theory of having an Irish Executive which is to be controlled by another Executive. There is still a further difficulty. The Exchequer Judges' Sheriff has no funds, no staff, no officers; he is to be "a person appointed." All I can say is that I should not like, under these

circumstances, to be a Sheriff of the Exchequer Judges. With reference to the Land Question, one would suppose, from the sort of argument that has been addressed to your Lordships, that this was a sort of game of chess between the two political Parties. The landlords are the persons whose property by the hypothesis is imperilled. In order to protect them it is suggested that some purchase or land scheme is to be put before the people. The Liberal Unionists and Tories between them proclaim all over the country that this is a wicked, an unworkable, and an improper scheme. Suppose it were entirely erroneous to entertain such a view, are we to be punished? No. It is the landlords that are to have their property taken from them. That is not the attitude of a responsible Government. The question before the Government is whether or not the effect of the Bill may be to inflict a grievous wrong, and to take away men's property without compensation. The answer given is—"Oh, you agitated so that we could not pass our Land Bill, and so we are going on without it." That is not the mode in which such a question should be dealt with. Principles of justice and right demand that you should protect the property you have put in peril. I now come to the vexed question of the retention of the 80 Members. I do not myself know exactly what position we are in on that subject. My difficulty is a conundrum much more difficult than my noble and learned Friend professed to be able to solve. One knows perfectly well that down to within a few hours of the determination everybody supposed that such a provision was not to be in the Bill as it now contains. Three of the Ministers in this House disapprove of it, and nobody debated it in the House of Commons. If ever there was a Bill introduced with an apology in this regard this is that Bill. Can anyone say anything for the provision or adduce any logical defence of it? Does anybody reasonably contend that when we are here precluded from the discussion of Irish affairs we are nevertheless to allow 80 Irish Members to come and discuss our local affairs? The Lord Chancellor said it was not a privilege to discuss local Irish affairs. But that is not the point. The presence in Parliament of these men,

their influence and power, the mode in which they could make their presence known and disagreeable, those are the real questions; and when the matter is passed over as a joke and not worthy of being discussed from that point of view, I confess it seems to me that of all the extraordinary things that one has seen in Parliamentary life, nothing is more extraordinary than to see a proposition which has been repudiated by everybody in the first instance, which is not supported by the Ministers in the House from which this Bill comes, nevertheless put forward for your Lordships' acceptance without a single word being said in respect of its reason or common sense. I really do not know but what I am disposed to emulate the language of King Lear—

"Someone is going to do dreadful things; what they are now I know not, but they shall be the terror of the Earth."

I am not going into abstract views as to the extent to which resistance to lawful authority is permissible or not. People must judge for themselves what degree of outrage of the human rights justifies such a resistance. I deprecate any discussion of this matter. But, at the same time, what statesman or man responsible for the government of his fellow-creatures will safely neglect the possibilities of insurrection and armed resistance to authority? My noble and learned Friend said that the Union had failed in this—that notwithstanding it had been in operation for 93 years there had been continual recrudescences of crime and outrage in Ireland. But was Ulster loyal at the time of the Union? If Ulster now speaks with a united voice against the Bill, it is the effect of the Union. Perhaps it hardly avails to say that the intelligence, education, and property of Ireland are opposed to the Bill; for it almost seems as though education were to be a disqualification for the exercise of the franchise. The most conspicuous example of that is that one of the most distinguished seats of learning in Europe—Trinity College—is to be disfranchised. This Bill is partly a disfranchising Bill. One would have supposed that justice would have been done in giving representation to all parts of Ireland. But I find this in the Schedule, though I do not know who

is responsible for it. The County of Meath has an electorate of 12,000 and a population of 86,937. The County of Armagh has an electorate of 25,146 and a population of 143,289—nearly double that of Meath. But they are both to have two Members. By the abolition of the divisions of the counties—which is contrary to the principle adopted in this country—every one of the Loyalist Representatives in the South of Ireland will be taken away. Has that been done deliberately or not? No discussion about this has taken place in the House of Commons. The Schedules were closed; and no explanation of all this was given. What Reform Bill or great measure of any kind has ever been passed where you had not a discussion, at all events, about the distribution of political power? Either you had Conferences between the two Parties, or you had Boundary Commissioners, who took every care to see that there should not be an arrangement of boroughs or districts which would produce injustice. In this case only has it happened that an English Minister has brought forward a Bill in which he has arranged the whole thing, and has not permitted any vote except that on the question—"Shall this Schedule as a whole become law, aye or no?" If this were to be drawn into a precedent hereafter, what would become of the liberty of the subject? You say that 76 days of discussion were devoted to the Bill. I do not care if there were 176, so that the subject-matter demanded it. I could find a clause which should consist only of one line, and which, nevertheless, would form proper matter for a discussion of several months. Suppose it were—"Let the English Common Law be repealed." The discussion of that clause might well take 76 days, for the one line comprehended the whole of the English Common Law, which was the growth of centuries. And here, where the Bill enters into the most complicated political relations, and has added to it a reform, it is idle to say that a discussion of 76 days is extravagant. I know that a solemn warning has been given to us in tones of dreadful note. But I have no disposition to assume the position of a martyr on this subject as yet. I do not believe that I shall suffer for the vote I am going to give. On the contrary, I believe that it will be a popular

vote. I believe that by voting against this Bill, so introduced, so sprung upon the country, so concealed up to the last moment as to its nature and contents, and passed in a totally different form from that which it had at the Second Reading—I believe that the democracy of this country will say that, if there is one thing which proves the absolute necessity of such an institution as the House of Lords, it is that that House has given them an opportunity of making their voices heard on a matter in respect of which they had been tricked out of their votes by these men. Have you given in the Bill adequate protection as promised? I have not found it. Have you restricted the Irish from legislating on any of those subjects which it might be perilous to leave to them? I do not believe it. Would it be lawful, for instance, for the Irish Legislature to prohibit marriage between Roman Catholics and Protestants? Lord Playfair said that there had never been a Christian martyr in Ireland. I do not know how he defines Christian martyr. The noble Lord should read the histories of 1641, or of what happened at Wexford Bridge in 1798. I have read that those who would not abjure their faith were tortured and killed; and surely they were Christians and martyrs. I do not wish to revive memories which had better be forgotten. I know that some of the most loyal and devoted subjects of the Crown are to be found in the ranks of the Roman Catholics. Is it not true, also, that there are some of those not without influence in Ireland who nurse and cherish with undying vitality the spirit of ancient persecution? And it is in these circumstances that you are going to leave without further protection the loyal inhabitants of the North of Ireland to the mercies of the new Legislature. You know what they have said, but you do not believe them; they were words of passion. I confess that I should rather look at what people did, whether they denounced crime and declined to associate with crime rather than look at the lamb-like professions of these men. I am prepared to vote against this Bill because I believe it is not in accordance with the will of the country. It has not been explained to the people, and it is not understood by them, while it has not been properly discussed in the House of Commons.

Lord Halsbury

THE BISHOP OF RIPON said, it was their duty to lay aside all prejudice of political faction in answering a question of this kind, and he thought he could claim to have done so when he stood before them to speak as he did on this occasion. It came to him with a sort of pain that for the first time since he entered their Lordships' House he should be compelled to go into a Lobby different from that which would be occupied by his noble Friends Lord Spencer and Lord Ripon. All his early life was associated with the Irish soil and climate; he had visited her shores since then, and even now he never set foot upon Irish land without feeling that nature re-asserted herself, and a new thrill of impulse stirred within him. He had drunk in with rapture the language of those great men. Flood, Grattan, and Curran; he lived in their lives: he spoke in their speeches; he rejoiced in their aspirations; and, as he walked through College Green, often and often his heart would throb at the thought once more that the bank might be transformed into the House of Parliament. But in looking at a question of this kind he was disposed to ask whether there was any reasonable ground for hesitation? Whatever their impulse might be, there still came the thought to pause and consider before they acted. Speaking for himself alone, he should say that there had not been given due consideration to this measure by the people of the country. He had listened to the speech of the noble Earl last night, and it appeared to him that it was like a man who had built you a house. You objected to the arrangements of the windows, and he altered them; and you objected to the colour of the bricks, and he altered them. Your objections were met, and everything was altered, until he was disposed to ask himself where was the house. He agreed with the noble Earl (Rosebery) that the Irish Question ought not to be considered from the Party standpoint. It ought not to be dealt with in the rivalries and wrangling of Parties, but by sober, wise, and deliberate conference of Englishmen determined to do their best for that which was dearest to them, while doing that which was best designed to meet legitimate aspirations. There were two ways in which great systems of States might be established—namely, federation, as in the

United States and Germany, and incorporation or unification, which was the method by which the British Empire had grown. In seeking to set up a separate Legislature in Ireland the Bill seemed like an attempt to put the clock back in English history. It might be that the time had come when we should seek henceforth to pursue the ideal of federation, and when this Parliament should include Representatives of the Colonies as well as of the British Isles, and if he saw in this Bill a nucleus which might afterwards be developed into Imperial federation it would have enormous fascination for him. But while, with regard to the ideal of unification, the Bill was a retrogression, with regard to the ideal of federation it was ill-advised, because it was incapable of indefinite application in other cases. A federation scheme should be great and generous in its conception and framed with a view to its adoption in the case of Scotland and Wales as well as Ireland. This was not the case with the Bill; it dealt with Ireland as an exceptional case; it did not work out the idea of unification; and it did not involve the idea of federation. For these reasons—he might say Constitutional reasons—he was not prepared to give his approval to the Bill, and hesitated to do so. They all knew the Irishmen; the finest gentlemen in the world; loved for their simplicity, their charming expressions and individuality, their honesty, hospitality, and fascinating indolence. He did not mean to say they were idle; but he must say that out of all the races of the world they had rather a strong talent that way. When he said this, he said it with the utmost good temper, but they might have seen them as holiday travellers. But they were the most tenacious people on earth. There was no race under heaven so tenacious of their purpose and determination to have it. The religious feeling was much more deeply set in them than we had any idea of, and while we deplored religious differences we could not ignore them. It was said that ebullitions and outrages were seldom based on religious animosity; but he could not accept that view. Going back to 1798, what took place then? A number of men marched into Wexford to strike a blow for their freedom as they thought; 14,000 turned their hands against the Protestant

Party there and massacred them, and transformed what was intended to be a political movement into a religious one, the United Irishmen standing aloof in silent and sullen indignation. They might look forward to better times ; but he did not think the time had come when they could risk the interests of the Empire under the scheme of this Bill. They could hardly understand the passionate attachment of the Irish to freedom. He made no apology for any strong language the Irish had used—everyone used strong language at times. They had all used words they were sorry for, and he thought it was an unfortunate incident of this great contest that the past had been so much raked in order to find the bitter phrases used on one side or the other. Not thus should the question be debated ; if sometimes passionate words had been used on one side or the other, he remembered the words of Edmund Burke — “ I pardon something to earnestness wherever I see it.” Edmund Burke had said that the very Constitution laid down that when Representatives met in the House of Parliament they had no interests beyond the interests of the Empire, and local interests must of necessity be subordinated to the interests of the United Kingdom. He, therefore, must decline to accept the principle that any portion of the Empire under the dominion of Parliament was to be governed by the ideas which happened to prevail in particular localities. He made no apology for any strong language the Irish had used—we all used strong language at times. We had all used words we were sorry for, and he thought it was an unfortunate incident of this great contest that the past had been so much raked in order to find the bitter phrases used on one side or the other. Not thus should the question be debated ; if sometimes passionate words had been used on one side or the other, he remembered the words of Edmund Burke—“ I pardon something to earnestness wherever I see it.” It was said that the apprehended dangers of the Bill were purely imaginary, and that the future was entirely safe. In 1869 he felt it his duty to work against the Disestablishment of the Irish Church, very largely on the ground that the principle on which the measure was advocated was not a sound one for the English people to act upon.

The Bishop of Ripon

The doctrine was that Ireland ought to be governed according to Irish ideas, and that he felt to be so dangerous a principle that he ventured to say at the time—

“ As sure as that principle is allowed, the demand for Home Rule, or whatever they please to call it, could not in consistency be denied ; for if the principle is true, then you must take it with all that follows” ;

and that was exactly what had happened. If they accepted the principle that Ireland was to be governed by Irish ideas, then the day that Ireland asked for separation they were bound to give it her. There was no logical escape from that. But was it likely that the demand for separation would come ? There was one item in the Bill which struck him as very strange—namely, the provision that the collection of the taxes, among other things, should for six years be in the hands of the Imperial Parliament. There was no more unpopular man in the world than the tax-collector ; he was no more popular in Ireland than in England. He remembered that when a friend of his was discussing Home Rule with an Irish peasant he said—“ But, you know, you will have to pay your taxes to Mr. This or That in Dublin.” “ Oh, dear, no !” was the reply. “ Oh, but you will.” “ Oh, dear, no ; they are every one of them far too much the gentleman to ask that.” If the tax-collector was identified in the popular mind, not with the Irish Legislature sitting in Dublin, but with English rule, what chance had they of maintaining anything like the popularity of England among the people. It had been said this Bill did not change things ; that under the Union Ireland had not prospered to the extent it was expected she would. Certainly the Union had had this result—that while 100 years ago the United Irishmen opposed to English rule were the men of Ulster, to-day those men were all that had been described as loyal. The statistics put forward by Lord Playfair proceeded on the old fallacy of *post hoc propter hoc*. The country had passed through bad and difficult times, and Ireland, so largely agricultural, had suffered greatly in her agriculture, though England had endeavoured to help her as much as she could. England had not been wanting in generosity or sympathy for Ireland, and was ready to help her in the future as in the past. But it

was another thing to say that these conditions had sprung from the operation of the Union. He claimed that the Union had done much for Ireland, especially in her manufacturing centres. Supposing this Bill passed the sympathy of those men would be alienated by their being placed at the mercy of the majority, and every Loyalist would be converted into a Separatist. Resolutions had been passed by the Presbyterian and other Bodies deprecating this Bill. There was some risk that this Bill would not be in any sense final, but must stir up certain jealousies, which might develop into further dangers. Therefore, he could not be one to rush forward without thought in such a matter as this, feeling that the Bill might not assuage, but might possibly accentuate difficulties, feeling the question ought not to be dealt with by one Party, but by both Parties in the State, feeling also that every step taken unwarily might land us deeper in the Serbonian bog; believing also that even though there was delay there was enough generosity and enough appreciation in the minds of Irishmen everywhere to know that there was nothing which we would not be ready to grant them in satisfaction of their legitimate aspirations so long as we kept whole that Union and that Empire which is so priceless to us and so indispensable to them.

LORD MONKS WELL said, he wished he could think the right rev. Prelate was right when he spoke in his eloquent speech of the impartial judgment of that House upon the Bill. The speech seemed to him to lead to a lame and impotent conclusion. The right rev. Prelate said that matters were very bad indeed in Ireland, and that that country was hopelessly divided against itself, but he did not suggest a shadow of a remedy except that Ireland should wait. One of his arguments, indeed, was strongly in favour of Home Rule, when he talked of the passionate attachment of Ireland to freedom, and said that no people in the world were so tenacious of their opinions as the Irish people. In supporting the Second Reading of that Bill, he had no wish to make extravagant demands on noble Lords opposite who did not agree with him, and would not ask them, therefore, to share his views as to the merits of Home Rule. All he would urge upon them was that whether this Home Rule

policy was good or bad, it was, at all events, the best available under the circumstances, and the only one that had a chance of success. The only alternative policy suggested from the Opposition Benches was another 20 years' resolute government of Ireland. They said, no doubt with sincerity, they were eager to submit the question to the verdict of a General Election, but for that purpose they would have to put before the people this alternative policy of theirs, and they would never get a mandate to carry it out. That policy of "resolute government" had been tried and had failed. There was a time when the objections to that policy came home strongly to noble Lords on the Front Opposition Benches, though they had recanted their opinions in that respect. There was not the slightest doubt those objections would appear very serious to the democracy of England. A fatal obstacle to their obtaining such a mandate from the English people at the next General Election was the want of continuity in their Irish policy. After what happened in 1885, the people of England thoroughly disbelieved in the steadiness of their policy with regard to Ireland in any shape, and he did not think the events from 1886 to 1892 had altered their opinion. The Party opposite had not been steadfast either to Home Rule, Coercion, Revision of Judicial Rents, or Local Government for Ireland. By their own action the Party opposite had entirely cut away the ground from under their own feet, and the people would ask—"What guarantee have we that your resolute government which you ask a mandate for will be really a resolute government." He would ask those who advocated the sacred cause of the Union as against Home Rule why they had not always shown a firm front, and put aside the abhorred, detested, and accursed thing, and why they had made something like a compact or alliance with persons whom they denounced as ruffians of the deepest dye? He hoped to obtain the assent of some, at all events, of the noble Lords opposite to the statements he was about to make. Mr. Gladstone resigned on the 12th June, 1885. Three days afterwards Lord Salisbury began to form a Conservative Government, and the new Government began at once, as they were bound to do, to collect infor-

mation with a view to formulating a policy. The first step that the new Government took with a view of collecting that information was significant, and had given rise to a good deal of comment. On the very day after Lord Salisbury accepted Office there was sent out from the headquarters of the Conservative Party in London a circular marked private and confidential, asking how many Irish voters there were in the various constituencies where the Irish vote was strong, and whether that vote would be or not sufficiently strong to carry the election. That fact had never been denied from that day to this. The result of that Irish poll could not be announced to Parliament for nearly three weeks after the issue of the circular. Ministers met Parliament on the 6th July, presumably with the interesting information which they had obtained from the issue of that circular. The Lord Chancellor had gone fully into what followed. Sir Michael Hicks-Beach on that day announced that the Coercion Act was to lapse, and he made the statement that permanent coercion for Ireland was absolutely impossible under the circumstances. What was the next development? On July 17, in answer to an appeal from Mr. Parnell, there was a Debate on the Maamtrasna murder. In justice to the Party opposite it should be stated that many Conservative Members were thoroughly disgusted with the conduct of their Leaders in reference to the imputations they cast upon Lord Spencer and his administration of justice. The result was to persuade the Nationalist Party in Ireland that Home Rule was not so absolutely abhorrent to the Conservatives as people had supposed. That was not all. Another circumstance in connection with the Conservative policy was that on July 9, in the House of Commons, Lord Randolph Churchill was asked whether he adhered to certain opinions which he expressed in 1883 strongly denunciatory of the principle of Home Rule? His answer was—

"Anything which I may have said at that time was perfectly justified by the special circumstances of that time, and by the amount of information I may have had in my possession."

It might be supposed that in 1883 Lord Randolph Churchill had not the interest-

Lord Monkswell

ing information at his disposal which had been subsequently obtained in the method indicated. Then a most important utterance was made by Lord Salisbury, at Newport, dealing with the question of Home Rule, and throwing doubts on the efficacy of coercion for putting down boycotting. He went on to say—

"I have never seen any plan or suggestion which gives me the slightest indication that a solution of the problem had been found."

He further said—

"I wish it may be found, but I think we should be holding out false expectations if we avowed a belief which as yet, at all events, we cannot entertain."

Mr. Goschen, on the 10th October, commenting on that speech said—

"Does Lord Salisbury hope, then, that the solution of the Irish Question is to be found in the direction of federation, and that Ireland is to that extent to be separated from the United Kingdom?"

I cannot gather from this oracular sentence what the idea of the Prime Minister is upon the subject. The noble Marquess's Newport speech was followed, as was well known, on the 23rd November by the issue of the Parnellite Manifesto denouncing the Liberal Party. The Duke of Devonshire, at a dinner given to Lord Spencer on the 28th July, 1885, after saying he had no desire to dwell on the declarations made as to Irish policy by Government, said—

"It may be the necessity of the present Government that they should rely on the Party of Mr. Parnell for the conduct of business during the present Session."

And also that it might be their sole chance of securing a majority during the next election to co-operate with the Irish Nationalists. The noble Duke again at Belfast, on the 5th November, said—

"We are of opinion that an offensive and defensive alliance has for some time past existed between the Conservative Party and the Party led by Mr. Parnell."

Again, he said at Matlock—

"He adhered to his opinion that the Conservative Party had set a bad example of political morality."

And at a meeting of the Eighty Club, on the 5th March, 1886, the noble Duke spoke to the same effect. It might be said that a great deal had happened since 1885, and that the Leaders of the Party opposite had changed their minds—that their conduct with regard to coercion

from 1886 down to 1892 proved nothing as to their capacity. They knew their only chance of obtaining power was in their devotion to coercion and the Union. The steadfast action of the Government during those years showed that they had a fair share of that intelligence which kept people on the right side of the fence when they saw an infuriated bull on the other. The people could not be induced to believe in the steadfastness of the Conservative Party in any policy of Ireland. Had they any alternative course to Home Rule? Soft words could not turn away the wrath of the Irish people, who would be satisfied with nothing short of Home Rule. Would they refuse to yield to the aspirations of a high-spirited people upon whom they had lately conferred a largely-extended franchise? They had known for 700 years what it was to incur the animosity of the Irish people, and surely that experience had been long and bitter enough to justify them in doing what they could to conciliate and secure the friendship of a warm-hearted people.

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (The Earl of MORLEY), though reluctant to trouble the House at that period of the Debate, when almost every form of argument had been used, was unwilling to give a silent vote on the question before their Lordships, especially as he was the only Member of that House who, in 1886, felt himself bound to leave the Government of that day. That was a step which no one could take with a light heart and without great sorrow, but it was a step which he had never regretted having taken. Subsequent events had confirmed the opinions upon which he acted at that time. The Bill of 1886, condemned as it was by Parliament and the country, had been condemned to a still greater degree by its authors themselves by the production of the new measure now on their Lordships' Table. He almost thought the Government might have expressed gratitude to the Unionist Party for saving them from the discredit of passing the Bill of 1886, which they had acknowledged to have been a bad Bill by their substitution of the present one. But was the measure before the House really an improvement on the former one? Did it comply with any of the tests which the Prime Minister him-

self and Earl Spencer had at different times laid down as the tests with which any Home Rule scheme ought to comply? The measure was not a real settlement of the question. They had been told that "provisional" was written across every page of it. In the public discussions of this subject, much had been said about giving the management of their own affairs to the Irish people. If that phrase had merely meant a delegation of definite powers to Ireland to manage her own local affairs under proper restrictions, and with adequate securities for the supremacy of Parliament, he probably should not vote as he intended to do that night. But the Bill meant far more than that. It meant giving, not a subordinate, but a co-ordinate Legislature and Executive to Ireland, and in doing that the scheme involved grave dangers to the Empire and jeopardised the integrity of the Constitution. There were British, and English, and Irish questions involved in this matter, and he was astonished that no stress had been laid on them by noble Lords opposite. He had listened in vain for any reference to them in the speech of the noble Earl the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, who gave but a lukewarm support, not to the Bill at all, but to the principle in the abstract; as to the principle in the concrete, he took very good care not to commit himself to a single word in it. What was the justification for the Bill? It was said that the Bill was demanded by the Representatives of the Irish people, and he did not deny it; but it was demanded by them as the right of a nation, and the noble Lord opposite who spoke last night stated in precise terms that Ireland was a nation. Why, then, were they denied national rights—for surely it was not contended that the Bill gave all that a nation was entitled to? The nationality was asserted, and, at the same time, the national aspirations had not been satisfied. If there were limits beyond which the demands of the majority should be restricted, they should be the limits of national morality and national expediency, and no Government responsible for the welfare of this realm ought to confer on any part of it rights that would endanger the safety of the Empire or the integrity of the Constitution. He would carry the argument one step further, and ask to

what area were these rights to be confined? Why, if these rights were granted to Ireland, should similar rights be refused to Scotland, Wales, and Yorkshire? Still more, why should the right to be maintained in union with England be refused to Ulster when she demanded it by her masses and her classes? Were their Lordships prepared to go against the experience of yesterday? Were they prepared to accept these doctrines for Scotland and Wales, and other parts of the Kingdom? As the right rev. Prelate (the Bishop of Ripon) had said, though in somewhat different form—

“Federalism is surely a step forward, when it combines unconnected or semi-coherent communities; it is a step backward when you are disintegrating a United Kingdom.”

He would not deal with the other proposition advanced by the Government in bringing forward this Bill, that it was impossible for a British Parliament to deal fairly and justly with Irish problems. He was not there for a moment to deny that Ireland had been the victim of bad government in the past, but during the last 30 or 40 years our legislation had been just and generous towards Ireland, and he felt sure that if this unfortunate somersault had not been executed by noble Lords opposite seven years ago further liberal legislation would have been granted to Ireland in the shape for which the noble Earl (Lord Rosebery) said she had so passionate a desire—namely, local self-government. It takes generations to allay the animosities of centuries. But he would ask noble Lords opposite who talked of the impossibility of our doing justice to Ireland whether they were not somewhat to blame in fanning the flame of separation by encouraging the Irish Representatives in their hopes of getting absolute power in that country, and bribing the tenants by holding out to them that they would get their land for nothing or for pittance value? Was it by encouraging those political and pecuniary motives that the solution of the great problem of Irish difficulties would be facilitated? The noble Lord opposite last night gave the House some interesting statistics with regard to the failure of the Union. Among other things, he said that the failure of certain crops was a sign that the Union had failed. If the noble Lord examined the agricultural statistics of

this country he would find that the area under wheat had very much diminished. He thought that the reduction of the area under wheat might with equal logic be attributed to the Union—that the diminished yield per acre was just as much attributable to that event as the reduction of the area under potatoes. Even if the case of the Government was stronger as to Ireland, there would be the question, Would it be safe for the Empire to allow Ireland, geographically linked as she was to England, to have an independent position? He would ask the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to consult his naval and military advisers whether, under this Bill, the position of England would be as secure as it was now that she had the administration of Ireland. It had been said that the Act of Union was justified both by then existing external danger and by internal revolution. In the present state of Europe and of the world, was it impossible that England might be in as perilous a position at some future day as she was then? Then as to the Parliament constituted by this Bill, a question which vitally affected Great Britain. It was simply pedantry and cant to say that the voice of Great Britain was not to be consulted. When so vast a change was contemplated with regard to the retention of the Irish Members noble Lords opposite could never make up their minds what they would do. They first excluded them, then they included them for Imperial affairs, and then included them for all purposes. It seemed to him that having now nailed their weathercock to the mast they had adopted in the end the most dangerous of those proposals. No Irish matters would come before the Imperial Parliament, and yet a solid mass of Irish Members were brought there who had no local responsibilities. He would like to know what the electors of Great Britain would say when this clause was put before them, and they found that the irresponsible Members from Ireland would have larger powers in the management of Scotch affairs than Scotland herself. It would be remembered that the Reform Bill of 1884 added 500,000 to the Irish electorate, and one most important question raised on this Bill was that Ireland was very much over-represented at this present time

The Earl of Morley

in Parliament, and that the loyal minority were very much under-represented. With regard to the loyal minority, they were in a perilous position scattered throughout the different parts of Ireland. He remembered that the Duke of Devonshire, who was then a Member of the Liberal Cabinet, used the argument that he was not inclined to attach too much importance to the exact numerical strength of the Loyalist Irishmen. In any case, he said that representation could not be very large, and the real Representatives of the loyal minority were to be found in the 550 Members for England and Scotland, the vast majority of whom agreed more closely with the minority in Ireland than with the majority. That statement had not been repudiated, and therefore he assumed that it was accepted by the Colleagues of the noble Duke; and he asked whether it was fair, now that the effect of that Reform Bill was beginning to be seen, that those men who said the Bill would expose them to spoliation and oppression, and who had stood by us in days gone by should be sacrificed? Had there been only one Chamber in the British Legislature he had some doubts as to whether the Bill would have passed it. In all the other Constitutions of the civilised world a distinction was drawn between Constitutional and fundamental laws and those which were not. We had no such distinction. The theory and practice of our Constitution was that Parliament was supreme. That being so, a very heavy responsibility rested on their Lordships. They were asked to try an experiment which they could not undo. That experiment involved surrender to the disloyal; it involved betrayal of the loyal. It involved dangers to the Empire and to the Constitution, and before it was passed their Lordships were bound to give the people of Great Britain an opportunity—the first opportunity they had had—of discussing the main lines on which the Bill was based and the manner in which it had been passed. Every effort would be made to discredit their Lordships' House; every device would be used to conceal the real effect of the measure, and to wrap it up in other measures which might make it more palatable; but, unless the flame of patriotism burned low in this country, unless our generation was oblivious of its

great Imperial and Constitutional traditions, he, for one, felt little doubt that the verdict of the country would support the vote their Lordships' House was going to give, and would with scorn and indignation reject this dangerous and unjust measure.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY; My Lords, I feel that there is some satisfaction in occupying the position, which probably I hold, as that of the last person who will make a speech against Home Rule in the course of the present Session. But, although it is a position which has in it much of distinction and honour, it cannot be denied that there are inconveniences attaching to it. Many active and powerful minds have passed before on the path that I must follow. I am not only gleaning after gleaners, but gleaning after a long succession of gleaners who leave few ideas that I can venture to submit to your Lordships. But that consideration at least has this counterbalancing value—that, if not out of pity for your Lordships, if not out of a sense of the propriety of the situation, still out of mere poverty of ideas, it is impossible for me to detain your Lordships long upon this last critical night. I confess that throughout this Debate the one idea that has been present to my mind has been—Why have they introduced this Bill? I had hoped for some satisfaction from the various able speakers on the Government side, but, though their speeches were interesting and powerful and showed great intellectual resource, they showed that resource in nothing more remarkably than in the ingenuity with which every speaker avoided speaking of the Government Bill. The noble and learned Lord who spoke this evening made a few perfunctory remarks upon the Bill, but when he came to the matters of real conflict he was careful to point out that he did not agree with the Government on the subject. When he dealt with the retention of the Irish Members, which is an outrage upon England so enormous and so grotesque that I am surprised that it has ever found a place in any proposition emanating from a responsible Government—when he dealt with that he at once said he was not inclined to associate himself with so desperate a cause. He at once said he would have preferred some other arrangement very

much. Then, when he dealt with the abandonment of the landlords, with the certain ruin of a whole class to whom, if to anybody, the honour of this country is pledged that their diminished resources should be enjoyed in security and peace—when he dealt with that he said—“You did not support what we gave you in 1886, and although I think your present fate is very terrible, still you must acknowledge you have brought it on yourselves by resisting us.” And the noble and learned Lord finished his account of his own intellectual position by protesting, with a vigour which I have no doubt was perfectly sincere, against anybody desiring to know what was the real opinion of any Cabinet Minister upon any Cabinet Bill. Well, the noble Lord the Foreign Secretary last night was even more instructive. I have no doubt that he had in his mind some grave important delivery worthy of the position which he occupies and of the esteem with which he is held, which should guide the Houses of Parliament along the difficult path which the perplexities of modern times have forced them to go over. But when he came to the Bill he did what I have often observed in speakers with a singular facility for the lighter and most humorous kinds of speech. He took refuge in that in order to save himself from the necessity of expressing a grave opinion upon any grave subject whatever. But I admired the skill with which the noble Lord avoided the burning subjects of the day. He was oppressed with the restrictions of the time within which his observations were compressed. He felt that it was impossible to press the House too far, and yet he gave us a full quarter of an hour discussing the tactics of the Opposition in the House of Commons, which I should have thought, of all possible subjects, was the least fitted for discussion within these walls. But the effect was such as to reduce the time at his disposal so much that when he came to the question of the Ulster objection to this Bill he simply turned over his leaves and said that time would not allow him to deal with the Ulster question. With respect to the question of the admission of 80 Members—foreigners—to take care of our English legislation, the noble Lord was equally

The Marquess of Salisbury

happy. He said that it was impossible for him, in view of the prejudice of the great numbers on this side, to do anything but discuss principles, and therefore he would not discuss details. And the admission of the Irish members was merely a question of detail, and therefore he would not discuss it at all. It must be admitted that we did not gain very much guidance from the speech of the Foreign Secretary. But I am not sure that in saying that I imply any derogation from the high esteem in which we hold his dexterity and skill. On the contrary, it seemed to me that the problem which he set himself to solve was, “How shall I get through an hour and a quarter’s speech without undertaking any pledge which may be inconvenient to me in the future?” And if that was the problem which he set himself to solve, I am bound to say that he solved it with absolute success. There is not a word or a sentence in the noble Lord’s speech which can be used against him on any future occasion, except that particularly precious remark about the dangerous character of the London County Council, to which we shall refer on future occasions. I will not speak of the noble Lord who introduced this Bill. He had a very painful position to reconcile. He had got himself, by his own confession—though one of the most chivalrous and honourable of human beings—into an admission that he had committed a very mean and treacherous act. I am quite sure that he has not intentionally committed any mean or treacherous act; but it is impossible to refuse one’s sympathy to a man who by his own admission can find himself in a corner like that. But the noble Lord had a peculiar way of dealing with political opponents. He stated their case with great fairness; he said, “Noble Lords opposite say this and say that,” and then he follows it with the formula, “I do not agree with them.” Having got so far, he went no further, and he never offered any refutation of the position or arguments he impugned. With the help of that formula it was easy to construct a defence of the Government Bill, which could not be defended by any other formula whatever. I have omitted one remarkable observation of the Foreign Secretary which affects the position of the Government with which I was connected eight years ago. I

must say that this recalling of ancient history is rather hard on one; and it is difficult to carry one's memory back to all that happened in those times. My memory is simply prosaic, and possibly so far defective; but the noble Lord's memory is active and poetical, and it surrounded the history of the year 1885 with a brilliant atmosphere of legend, which I have no doubt will be the delight of poetical critics of the future. But I take this opportunity just to set the facts upon their true footing. The noble Lord represented that we, differing from the coercive policy of the Government of Lord Spencer, broke the continuity of that coercive policy, and thereby cut under the feet of the Liberal Party, and rendered it impossible for them to pursue a coercive policy in the future. I dislike the use of that word coercive. I dislike it, because coercion is usually used to describe the legislation which defends a Government against the political efforts of those who desire to overthrow it. That is the use which the word has obtained in every country in the world. But this is a case where the word is applied simply to the making more efficient of the Criminal Law for dealing with those criminals whom everybody condemns. There is, unfortunately, a small portion of the peasantry of Ireland who have formed this ideal for themselves — a general establishment and sanction of fraudulent insolvency, sustained by attempts at murder. And to prevent the application of that novel ethical code there is no doubt that from time to time the powers of the ordinary Courts have been increased and their efficiency in detecting and punishing crime augmented. If you like to call that coercive you may; but it is not coercive in the sense in which the word has been applied in every political disquisition during the last century in Europe. But, passing from that divergence, the noble Lord the Foreign Secretary stated or implied that in 1885 we had summarily interrupted the current of coercive legislation, as I have defined it, and that thus it was impossible for the Liberal Party to undertake such legislation again. What really happened was this. There was a terminable Crimes Act. It was an Act which was to terminate in 1885. It was an Act which was to terminate when the Session of 1885 terminated. It may have been the

intention of the Government of that day to renew it; but on the 6th of June, when the Division was taken by which their official existence was terminated, they had not produced upon the Table of Parliament a single clause in order to revive and perpetuate the law to which they were supposed to attach so much importance. If the Bill was not perpetuated it was their fault. They had a majority in Parliament. We had only this consideration to deal with; we had not the majority of Parliament. It was open to us to take the ordinary Constitutional resource and dissolve at once. That would not have given the Crimes Act to us immediately, but it would have given us that Act later. But the question was whether, in view of the Reform Bill which had just been passed, it being certain that another Dissolution would be necessary within a few months, it was justifiable to inflict on the people of this country and Members of Parliament that amount of inconvenience in order to accelerate the necessary strengthening of the provisions of the law by a few months. We thought, in view of the then position of Ireland, that the autumn might be safely passed without any such drastic measure which would have created such great inconvenience; and before we resigned, before our position was attacked, a Representative of our Government in the House of Commons had announced our intention to strengthen the Criminal Law. Those, therefore, who say that they changed their opinions because we had not been sufficiently prompt in reinforcing the Criminal Law forget that they did not change their opinions until after the declaration of Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, after that miserable excuse, such as it was, had been taken from them. But what would you think of any statesman who had announced his attachment to the great principle of union between the two countries, and was dependent on the question of whether his political opponents had revived or had not revived for two or three months certain provisions of the law? What would Mr. Pitt have thought if he could have foreseen that his distinguished relative in the present intended so to guide his political conduct that he was willing to shatter at a blow the whole edifice which Mr. Pitt had raised, because the Tories by delaying criminal legisla-

tion for a few months had cut the ground from under the feet of the Liberal Party. I confess that the excuse seems to me a sadder remark of the degeneracy of political opinion than all the tergiversation which has taken place during the lamentable eight years through which we have passed. There was yet another defender on the Government side, Lord Ribblesdale. His view, at all events, had the advantage of being so remarkable that I do not think that anybody else had taken it before, or that any one else will take it hereafter. He belongs to what may be called the noble army of confessors in this Debate. Confession is a very interesting element in literature. From St. Augustine to Rousseau, from Rousseau to Lord Ribblesdale, it is a most interesting record of the working of individual minds. But he seems to have conceived the idea that if there was anything in the Union, anything in the policy which Mr. Pitt had taken up 90 years ago after the experience of centuries, it ought to be established and proved by the popularity which it would win among Irish agitators within the space of six years, and when he found with inconceivable surprise that Mr. Healy and Mr. Sexton and their followers were not impressed with the advantages of resolute government in Ireland he at once concluded that Mr. Pitt was wrong, and turned round with all the vigour which a Gladstonian Peer might be expected to display. But I would represent to him that he must not commit the very ordinary mistake of imagining that all men are like himself. You cannot count on the maintainers of Nationalist or Fenian or Moonlighting opinion in Ireland changing their opinion with the rapidity which we have been happy to see Gladstonian Peers and commoners have been able to exercise during the last eight years. Alertness and agility are always admirable qualities. We always desire to see them exercised whether by mind or body, but the peculiar rapidity with which this exercise of turning Dervishes has been exerted by the Gladstonian Party is peculiar to itself, and cannot be paralleled in any portion of the annals of this country, or any other country of which I have ever heard. That was not the most remarkable part of Lord Ribblesdale's speech. The most remarkable part of Lord Ribblesdale's speech was that which it did

not contain. It did not contain one single reference to the Bill which he was put up to defend. Being a man of great ingenuity, and not shrinking evidently from intellectual paradox, it is very remarkable that he did not attempt to establish the value of one single clause in the Bill which had been committed to his care to recommend to the House. My Lords, I feel that we are in some difficulty owing to these peculiar tactics on the part of Her Majesty's Government. Of course, if they like to move that a Bill should be read a second time, and then say, in a half whisper, "But we cannot bear it" all the time; it places, I will not say the votes, but the arguments of the House in considerable difficulty, because, though our votes, as we are happy to believe, will entirely sustain the secret wishes of the supporters of the Government, it is very difficult for us to argue against them when we know they absolutely agree with us on every point. Well, my Lords, I ask myself again, "Why have they brought in this Bill?" We have obtained no information from the speeches which they have delivered. I am not surprised at it. But have we any information from earlier discussions? We used to hear something about the Colonies. We were told that there was the remarkable case of Quebec, where the grant of a Home Rule Bill had produced absolute agreement between classes that were formerly divided. I have some doubt as to the historical value of that illustration. I am told that Quebec is not that perfect Garden of Eden which some would induce us to imagine, but that the minority is being crowded out by the majority, and will very soon disappear altogether. I am told also that in Quebec alone of Her Majesty's Possessions on that Continent, a large Party has, through its Leader, avowed treasonable views with respect to the connection of the Colony with the Crown. I should not, therefore, be inclined to take Quebec for my example, even if it were in any degree relevant. But is it relevant? Is it possible to compare the position of a Constitutional Colony under the Crown with the position you propose to establish for Ireland under this Bill? Has there been for the last century any statesman so bold that he would propose to Parliament that a Colony should not only

enjoy autonomy such as the British Colonies enjoy, but should also have the privilege of sending 80 or 100 Members to the Imperial Parliament, representing no interests in England, bound by no attachment to England, lying under no responsibility with respect to the possible application of the laws passed here to the community they represent, and yet possessing an absolute vote, a vote as large as that of any of the Representatives of the country, on all questions which in the relations of life concern the people of this country often most deeply? My Lords, it is absurd. Such a proposition would not only have "counted out" a man; it would have sent him to Bedlam. The suggestion is inconceivable, that the interjection of 80 foreigners, who will suffer in no degree, and whose constituents will not suffer from anything they do, should have a special, isolated, and distinct privilege, due not to their character or their achievements in the past, of determining the position of the English Government. It is a matter of intense importance, for they attempt to tell you that this Home Rule is recommended by colonial experience. But colonial experience means that foreign affairs shall be given to England and domestic affairs shall be given to a colony. Never in any quarter of the world did the wildest theorist suggest that 80 Members for a Colony should have the power of legislating on English subjects and interests. That is one of the grounds on which we were told that Home Rule was desirable; but that is a theoretic ground. There was one practical ground which I used to hear in the past, I do not hear much of it now—namely, that we should get rid of all Irish questions and friction with Irish Members. I do not think there is any suggestion of that kind now. How are we to get rid of Irish questions? We have provided for 80 Irish Members, who must have something to talk about, and who must establish their position in the House of Commons in order to make themselves marketable wares in their negotiations with Ministers, and are we to expect that they will be treated as nothing less than foreign adjuncts to the British Parliament? Difficulty has undoubtedly arisen from many questions connected with Irish Government, but hitherto Irish questions have not included some of the matters which you have pro-

vided for discussion in the future Irish Legislature if it should exist. There is the religious question. You have provided that there is to be nothing in the nature of a religious establishment or of religious denominational education; these are put out of the power of the Irish Legislature. I am not discussing the wisdom or the unwisdom of such restrictions; but I do not imagine that that is the way to peace and quietness on Irish Questions. Your 80 Members sent mainly by Archbishop Walsh will not be quiet on the question of whether denominational education is to be allowed in Ireland, or whether the existing system is to be overset. They will not be silent on the question whether the Roman Catholic Church ought or ought not to be endowed. I am not saying whether it is wise or foolish, but you are merely deceiving yourselves if you imagine you can shut these things out from the Irish Parliament and allow 80 Irish Members to sit in the House of Commons, if you imagine that you can get rid of the Irish question by so contradictory a policy as that. Again, take the question of Free Trade. In this country we support Free Trade on account of the benefits it has conferred on certain industries; but it has been a sentence of death to agriculture in many parts of the country. How will Ireland look at Free Trade? She has no manufactures; she is all agricultural, and if an Irish Parliament asks itself how it stands with regard to the question of Free Trade I am afraid the answer must be very similar to that which was made by an Irish juryman who, finding himself alone in his opinion in the box, said he had never before met with 11 men so obstinate. We are absolutely alone. I do not say we are wrong by any means; but do you imagine you will shut out the question of Free Trade from discussion by an Irish Legislature, and that, with 80 Members in the House of Commons, without employment and free to do as they like, you have made any provision for getting rid of Irish friction and preventing Irish waste of time? The Irish Question will be with you as it has been in the past, only more intensely than in the past; and it will be so as the result of the provisions you have deliberately adopted. In the speeches of noble Lords opposite I see no hope of

escape from Irish friction. I see nothing in the false, misleading, and wholly fallacious parallel instituted with the Colonies to explain the object and aim which the Government have in view in proposing this Bill to the House. But what appears to me to be visible through all their arguments is that it is a policy of despair. They say—"We have not known how to succeed, and we must try something nobody has tried before." That is the position in which their arguments stand. It is true they are proposing something nobody has tried before; but they have no right, in resorting to the policy of despair, to ask you to take a step which involves the existence of the happiness and prosperity of a very large minority of the Irish people and of those who are distinguished by prosperity, by industry, by education, and by success. They have no right to ask you to make these things a subject of experiment, and to set them on the hazard, to be destroyed if they fail, in order to carry out a policy of despair because we have failed. Have we failed? Has the existing state of things failed? The state of things between England and Ireland is this. Ireland is a country which from the first has been deeply divided to the base by perpetual differences and conflicts. It is a society in which unity has never existed. When the English came seven centuries ago they did not diminish these divergencies, but they did not increase them; they existed as they had existed before. When the era of religious conflict arrived it was not true that the differences were caused by religion, but the differences assumed a religious character. They did not differ because they differed on religion, but their views upon religion lent themselves to the native constant, incurable differences and quarrelsomeness of the race. And so it passed through the era of religious dissension, and then came the period of representative Government. Representative Government is a splendid instrument of human happiness when the community is so homogeneous that division on one point shall not imply division on another; but that men will, according as each question is raised, range themselves according to their opinions, and give their voices for the benefit of themselves and of the community without passion,

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antipathy, or prejudice. But when there is a deep division, a division of race or a division of religion, a division which no experience can efface, a division which men will not give up on account of any lower secular motive, a division which goes from father to son and lasts from generation to generation, a division which rests upon tradition and sentiment and not upon any mere pursuit of individual interest, then representative institutions, if they are applied without a corrective, are the most dangerous curse that can be inflicted upon such a community. They continue, they deepen, they intensify those divisions, and ascendancy, on one side or the other as the circumstances of the age may give to either side the predominance—ascendancy and oppression are the results of representative government applied to a community so divided if there is no corrective. The only possible corrective is the fusion into a larger community in which such divisions have no influence. When the rebellion of '98 was over, and the miscarriage of that wild, chivalrous, but most unwise dream of Grattan had been exposed, Mr. Pitt had to consider, with the centuries behind him to guide him, how the peace of Ireland was to be insured. To do it with a strong hand was not possible; the date had passed for that. It might have been done a century or two centuries before, but in his day the thing was no longer possible, and no longer desirable if it had been possible. He felt that the only remedy was to fuse these conflicting parties, whom nothing could bring together, in the ranks of a larger community, where their peculiar subject of conflict was unknown, and where, therefore, in a common assembly the issues that were raised upon them could be impartially and equitably judged. That was the philosophy of his policy. Has it failed? It was not fairly tried. There were no words in the speech of the noble Earl the Foreign Secretary that I so thoroughly agreed with as when he dwelt upon the fact that Mr. Pitt's experiment was never fairly tried. If Mr. Pitt could have repealed the Catholic disabilities, if he could have endowed the Roman Catholic priesthood, if he could have abolished or commuted the tithe in Ireland, I have no doubt that all the troubles which have haunted

the connection between England and Ireland would have been a mere matter of imagination and never passed into history. It was one of the most terrible blows in our history that fate has dealt us the decree that at that moment there should be a Sovereign whose disease was too far progressed to allow him to judge soundly of the circumstances of the moment, and whose disease was not far enough advanced to allow the decision to be placed in other hands. It was a fearful, fearful calamity, and we have staggered under it ever since. But when you judge whether the Union has succeeded you must ask yourselves how long has the true experiment of the Union been in force. The union which Mr. Pitt dreamt of was a union from which the thorn of religious bitterness should have been extracted. The first, the essential step, was not taken till '29; the next step, the commutation of tithe, was not taken till '35; the last step was taken in a manner which, to my mind, was the worst manner, and was not the manner intended by Mr. Pitt; I mean the establishment of equality between Catholics and Protestants—it was not taken in the manner intended by Mr. Pitt, but by that time the Liberal Party had passed under the control of one of its most pitiless and exacting masters, the Nonconformist conscience. I heartily wish concurrent endowment could have been adopted, but it was too late. But at all events, badly or wisely, the full scheme which Mr. Pitt had in view was not carried out till 1870. Therefore, when you judge his work, you must judge it, not as it passed from his hand, not as he intended it to operate; you must judge it as it was affected by the lamentable disturbing influences of the time through which it must needs pass, and yet, with all that deduction, will you tell me that Union has not been a success? I listened very carefully and with very great interest to the noble Lord, Lord Playfair. I was very much interested at his efforts to prove that the Union had not been a success; for I knew that if any man could do it he could. If anybody could have proved that it was the noble Lord and with the figures and statistics and facts which he turned and waved in his hands he could produce any result or impression which he pleased,

according to the impulse which he gave them by his own deft manipulation. Yet all he proved was that Ireland had not improved so fast as England and Scotland, that is the whole proof he could give of the failure of the Union. I say, with national humiliation, that England has not improved so fast as Scotland during that period, but that is the result of that extreme superiority in respect of all money getting affairs which is shown by all those who are born north of the Tweed. So it is in Ireland, where undoubtedly nature has not gifted the people with those powers of rapid progress which are displayed both north and south of the Tweed; but the proof is this: Living is happier, houses are better, wages are higher, prosperity is greater, trade has risen, cultivation is more extended; and, if I may turn to the moral side, though we have dark spots like Clare, Kerry, and Limerick, there is no question that it is impossible to compare the Ireland of 1893 with the Ireland of 1801 in respect of order, of law, and of property. The Lord Chancellor himself admitted to-night that though much was said of the impossibility of landlords obtaining rent, and of the injury to landed property which has been caused, yet over five-sevenths of Ireland at this time, amid all the circumstances of depression which we know so well, amid falling markets and inclement skies, rent is better paid than it is in any part of England. Could you have said that at the beginning of the century, and if there is that change, have you not a right to say that the Union bears its part in the glory and the honour which that change demands? That being so, what reason have you for this experiment, whose details nobody will defend, whose results nobody can foresee? What reason have we for it? Lord Ribblesdale was very much struck with the fact that the result of our legislation was that all the Nationalist leaders did not at once fall into our arms. As far as I have read human history, I do not think that has been the way of insurrectionary leaders. My impression is that they have, generally speaking, stuck to their opinions, and that though facts may have left them, they have never left the facts. They have never given themselves up to their opponents so long as there was a shred to fight for. It is an utter blunder,

a blunder of the gravest character, to look at the contentment of the people as exhibited at the polls for a test of the success of your commercial, economical, or political legislation. It will be a test two generations hence. The grandsons will love you because you have been just to the grandfathers; but it takes long to change the opinion of a nation, of a people, or of a Party. Gladstonian Peers imagine that it takes only as long to change the opinions of a Party as it takes to change their own, but that is a lamentable error. The mass of mankind are much stauncher than that. Men hold to their beliefs and will not desert them, and a community changes its opinion not in any great degree by a change in the opinion of the individuals of which it is composed, as by the fact that the men who have grown up in one set of opinions and clung to them die off, and others who had no cause to form those opinions succeed and take their place. That is the history of a change in the opinion of a community; and to ask that within the limits of the Septennial Act results of a salutary policy shall be depicted in the change of opinion which local politicians may show, is to exhibit absolute ignorance of the working of human nature in the political world, whether in its highest or its lowest developments. Men do not change like that. I maintain, therefore, that the Union has not failed. It has had terrible difficulties to contend with. It has had the destruction of the food of the people, a destruction unparalleled in any nation, a destruction which has left in the mind of Lord Playfair the somewhat simple-minded wonder why there are not so many potatoes produced after the famine as there were before. He evidently thinks the *aphis vastator* was a mere agent of the British Government. Ireland has had to contend with a change of commercial policy. Free Trade has hit her very hard; yet in spite of these things, in spite of the utter destruction of the food of the people, in spite of the religious thorn which it has taken 70 years to extract, the Union is marked in all its progress in the moral, legal, social, economical, and commercial position of the people, which I should have thought would have warned the most careless and the most hasty from declaring that it was a failure. If it is not a failure,

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what rashness it is to shatter this structure in order to plunge into new experiments of which you know nothing, and the result of which you have no means of predicting. I heard again and again the demand on the other side for some policy of ours. I will repeat it, and I will give the policy which we recommend in the language of two great men. One shall be the language of Mr. Gladstone—"Patient continuance in well-doing," and the other shall be the language of President Lincoln—"Keep on pegging away." Those are the lines you have to follow, and you will follow them more safely than these rash experiments with machinery which you have never tried, with theories which you have never tested, and by placing weapons in the hands of men who have always hated you. I am told by the Colonial Secretary that the first object of government is the satisfaction and contentment of the governed. That is a fine copy-book formula, but, like all copy-book formulas, it requires to be corrected in accordance with particular circumstances. There may be cases in which other people besides the governed have an interest in the condition of the country to which reference is made. But my first objection to this valuable formula is that it is physically incapable of being applied in the case of Ireland. I will defy you to devise any system of government that shall be in the true and literal sense to the satisfaction of the governed, for three-fifths of the governed will like it and two-fifths of the governed will detest it. It is an absurdity, because it is impossible. The mere existence of the loyalist minority, the mere existence of Ulster, would condemn that copy-book formula and make it impossible of application to Ireland. Do not, I entreat you, dismiss as a mere figment of the imagination, or as the mere outcome of a heated brain, the apprehensions which the Ulster people have of the government which is to be established in Ireland under this Bill. I am told that those who will form the Government will be the elected of the people of Ireland, but I know they will be the men, if this Bill passes, who have achieved the victory to which the Government will be due. Go to Belgium, Italy, Greece, America. You will find that wherever there has been a revolution the men who have made the revolu-

tion have been the great men after the revolution has been effected ; they have been the men who have been placed in power. Well, do you really know who the men are who will be placed in power ? Our recollections disappear somewhat rapidly in these times ; but you know that a large number of them have had their connection with crime investigated by a Special Commission, and that the exact nature of that connection has been recorded by Judges of the highest capacity and undoubted integrity, and no shred of evidence had ever been produced to negative the decision that was pronounced. This is the Report of the Special Commission—

“ We find that the respondents did not denounce the system of intimidation which led to crime and outrage, but persisted in it with knowledge of its effects.”

That is the judicial decision, given after months of investigation, and you know that among the leading men who are urging forward this Bill a large number were respondents in this examination. There were 38 men, whose names I have here, and who are now Members of Parliament, upon whose brows that condemnation was stamped—38 men, and remember, this Bill passed the Third Reading by 34 majority. It is a Bill which has not only been passed by a South-Irish majority, not only been passed by men elected by the carefully-watched illiterates, not only passed under the orders of Archbishop Walsh, but passed by men on whom this criminal brand had been placed by three of the highest Judges. Is not Ulster right to be afraid ? Would you yourselves wish to submit to such domination ? Would you not struggle against it to the last ? Would you not make every effort in your power to prevent yourselves, your families, your fortunes, and your fame from being placed in such hands as these ? And yet this is what you are invited to do by passing this Bill. My Lords, my time is running short, and the only other point to which I would draw your attention is the large Imperial character of this question. The Lord Chancellor said that this Bill would reconcile to us the people, the statesmen, of America, and that if we went to war we should not have to reckon with so hostile an America as we might otherwise expect. But is there not another possible view of the matter ? Supposing

the effect of this Bill were to place Ireland in the hands of those who detested us, and that trouble arose with America, should we not then be in an infinitely worse position than any which a continuance of the present state of things could possibly put us into ? Remember the great privilege of the position of Great Britain. On some sides our coasts lie against those of Continental Powers. But against the great mass of our coasts on the west and north-west we have our own territory in our own possession, and we are practically safe from any attack, and especially in these days when the neighbourhood of harbours is essential for naval action, if one has cause to anticipate it. That is our present strategical position, and it is one of the finest strategical positions in the world. Give over Ireland to your enemies, to those who hate you. Let the ordinary government of Ireland be conducted by those who are hostile to you—I do not say it need ever reach the point of civil war, let it be simply hatred and hostility—then all those harbours of Ireland which lie over against the harbours of this country would be at the mercy of the enemy who attacked you, and unless you chose to undertake the task of reconquering Ireland and shattering by mere military force the structure you are now so painfully building up, you would have no security from the sympathy which the Irish in command of their own harbours could give to the Navies or privateers or cruisers by whom your trade might be threatened. I have seen a paper by a very distinguished naval officer, who knows his work very well, and who says that in any future war the trade route of England could no longer pass along the Channel—the batteries of torpedoes that line the opposite coast would be too dangerous ; that our trade route must be taken to the Western ports of England, to Liverpool and Glasgow and Bristol, and that as long as Ireland is ours and we can be sure that she will not join the enemy, so long will such transference be safe and right. I am not speaking of good will. I accept the proposition that we should in either case have Ireland's good will ; but if we leave things as they are we should have the control of our coasts. If we pass this measure the control of the coasts would pass to those who wish nothing so much as our suffer-

ing and downfall. It is surely very rash, nothing can be rasher, than for mere imaginary objects to run such a risk. Nothing could be rasher than to sacrifice that which we deem our secular strength and privilege and to expect that on the other side of the Channel we shall be exposed to the attack of no enemy. That you are asked to give up with no other security for your well-being and safety than this wretched optimist trust in the good will of the people upon whom you have to depend, a trust that would be madness if they were ordinary men, because the incitement and suggestion of making a profit out of it would be too great—a trust that is something more than madness when you are dealing with a race of people and an organisation that for centuries has hated you and longed to obtain your downfall. Those are great concessions. My time is passed. I will not urge you further, but I will ask before I conclude to call back to you what the opinion in this country used to be before these terrible changes took place, when the Liberal Party was still in the hands of Liberal politicians, and not in the hands of deserters who had traversed every zone of political opinion. When the Liberal Party was in the hands of Liberal politicians we might distrust them and disagree with them as to local and interior questions, but we felt sure that in all Imperial questions their heart beat as true to the Empire of England as ours. Let me read to you what was said by a man who was no Orangeman, by a man who lost his own seat at the most critical period of his political life because he would befriend the Roman Catholics, by a man who was armed with every instrument of historical knowledge, and whose opinion was deeply pledged on the side of the Liberal Party, and against those who sit on this side of the House. I will read to you what he said upon the maintenance of the Union, and I will ask you on which side he would be sitting if he had now to take part in politics. When he uttered these words he was sitting on the Liberal side, and Mr. Gladstone was sitting on the Conservative side. Lord Macaulay said—

“The repeal of the Union we regard as fatal to the Empire, and we will never consent to it—never, though the country should be surrounded by dangers as great as those which threatened her when her American Colonies and France and Spain and Holland were leagued

against her, or when the armed neutrality of the Baltic disputed her maritime rights—never, though another Buonaparte should pitch his camp in sight of Dover Castle, never till all has been staked and lost, never till the four quarters of the world have been convulsed by the last struggle of the great English people for their place among the nations.”

I read that as the motto which I hope the Unionist Party will adopt. If England withdraws her mandate; if England tells us she wishes that this horror should be consummated, I agree that a different state of things will have arisen. I believe that to be impossible, and that, as long as England is true to herself now or on any future occasion, if you allow this atrocious, this mean, this treacherous revolution to pass, you will be untrue to the duty which has descended to you from a splendid ancestry, you will be untrue to your highest traditions, you will be untrue to the trust that has been bequeathed to you from the past, you will be untrue to the Empire of England.

*THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (The Earl of KIMBERLEY): If the noble Marquess thought fit at the outset of his speech to make some apology to your Lordships for having to address you after so many speeches have been heard, not only here, but in the other House and all over the country, on this well-worn theme, I feel sure I shall have the sympathy of those whom I address in the task I have to perform. The noble Marquess commenced with some criticism of the speeches which have been delivered from this side of the House; and he, as was very natural, directed his principal observations to the brilliant speech of my noble Friend the Foreign Secretary. My noble Friend is like one of those actors who possess in the highest degree both a tragic and comic vein, and if he commenced with a number of witty observations which, I am sure, delighted the House, he did not forget to turn in the latter part of his speech to the graver aspect of the subject. I do not think it is possible that any more impressive appeal could have been addressed to this House than was addressed to it on the general policy of the question by my noble Friend. The noble Marquess taunted the noble Earl with not going into the details of the Bill, and I am glad, as it relieves me of a great many observations upon it; but

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the noble Marquess has followed his example, and he has confined himself almost exclusively to the question of the general policy on which this Bill is based. This is a question of principle. This House is about to divide on the question, Shall there be or shall there not be any measure of self-government for Ireland? [*Opposition cries of "No, no!"*] What do I hear? No, no! Is it, then, possible, after all, that the Conservative Party contemplates at some future time some system of self-government for Ireland? That is a precious cheer. The question which has been put to us in speech after speech is whether there shall be any measure of self-government for Ireland. The noble Marquess did not follow the example of the noble Duke who objected to the historical disquisitions of my noble Friend. I think historical disquisitions upon this Bill are not only useful and interesting, but are absolutely indispensable to the well understanding of the question before us. The noble Marquess referred to the taunts which have been addressed from this side of the House as to what we term the coquetting of the Conservative Party with the Home Rule Party in 1885. The noble Marquess said—and, of course, there is no higher authority—that it is an entire mistake to suppose that they gave up in principle what he objects to our terming the coercive policy. He said that circumstances created by the Government of Mr. Gladstone, of which I was a Member, rendered it impossible when he came into Office during that year to continue the Crimes Act. I will refer to what Lord Carnarvon said on the occasion when, as Lord Lieutenant, he took the unusual and inconvenient course of declaring the Irish policy of the Government instead of the Premier. Lord Carnarvon did not say one single word in his speech about the reason for not renewing the Crimes Act being the impossibility of passing it. He said—

"I believe for my part that special legislation of this kind is inexpedient."

That is a declaration of general policy and principle. The only other remark he made was curious when we remember what Lord Salisbury's Government actually did. He said—

"More than being undesirable, I hold that such legislation is practically impossible if it is to be continually and indefinitely enacted."

Could the policy of Lord Salisbury's Government be described in words more accurate or condemned in words more explicit? At that moment Lord Carnarvon was recognised as the exponent of the policy of the Conservative Government, and therefore his must be the view which the Government took. The noble Marquess finds it convenient to forget all that has passed. Of course, I accept the statements made from that Bench that there was no compact with the Irish Party. When men of honour tell me that I am bound to believe it. But I say that the course they took was an extremely unfortunate one, and one which must have led to much misconstruction, because there was a combination of circumstances which showed that a change of policy was singularly adapted to conciliate the Irish Party and to bring about that support which would no doubt be very convenient to them. I do not attach much importance to the words used by the noble Marquess at Newport. I have often studied those words, and I think that it was a very carefully-guarded speech. But, besides Lord Carnarvon's declaration, there was something much more significant. I have no wish to use very hard words, though very hard words are used against us. But there was the Maamtrasna affair, and a meaner action than the course taken by the Opposition in connection with that affair was never taken by any political Party. Their conduct then was the main indication of what their wishes and intentions were. Now, I will turn to more ancient but very instructive history—that of the Act of Union. I cannot mention the Union without remembering what was said by the Duke of Argyll. He used an argument which, if it had not proceeded from his lips, I should have called grotesque. When he spoke of the Union having been carried by bribery and corruption, he said that Mr. Pitt was merely "buying out corruption." Did anyone ever hear such a ridiculous contention? What a pitiful excuse for Mr. Pitt! To think that a great statesman should be defended by the argument that it was a morally defensible and accountable position to bribe for the purpose of buying out bribery! Then the noble

Duke said that we were just as corrupt, because whenever a Party offered measures which were likely to conciliate votes, that Party was corrupt. In the same way, therefore, the Irish Land Act, and the Congested Districts Act, and the Light Railways Act were all attempts to bribe the Irish Members. These arguments only require to be mentioned for it to be seen that they have no weight. But the argument of the noble Marquess is this—that the Union failed because it was not accompanied by the measures with which Mr. Pitt desired it to be accompanied. It is impossible to be certain in such a matter; but as a defence of Mr. Pitt, that is a complete argument. That great statesman had a great policy, and only a part of that policy was allowed to be adopted. But we have not to deal with what would have happened if something had been done which was not done. It is no good saying what would be the state of things if Mr. Pitt had been allowed to carry Catholic Emancipation, the redemption of tithes, the endowment of the Catholic religion, and other measures. None of these things were done; and now we have to deal with things as they are. What are the facts? The facts are these, that the Union, though passed 93 years ago, leaves us in the position of having to consider the condition of Ireland. What is the test of the success of a policy? The test is, "Have you a contented nation; have you subjects of the Crown who accept the system of government under which they live cheerfully and loyally?" By that test the Union must be tried; but instead of this being the condition of affairs we are told that you have two hostile nations in Ireland. One of them is steeped in the old doctrine of ascendancy. ["No!"] The noble Lord who says "No" has not studied the history and the condition of Ireland. The other nation, no doubt, has been frequently disloyal, always unquiet and frequently resorting to practices which we all condemn, because they do not respect the law, not looking upon the law as their defender but as their oppressor. Is that a satisfactory state of things, or a satisfactory result of the Union? How long are we to go on in this way? A noble Lord spoke of hope, but are we to go on listening to that flattering tale for the

next 100 years? I do not call that statesmanship; I call it an absolute neglect of the facts of the case, and a refusal to look at the facts as they are. What are our reasons for our change of policy? It is not pleasant, it is not agreeable, to stand up before your fellow-countrymen and say that you have changed your opinions; but I say that it requires much more courage to change your opinions than to remain consistent in your opinions; and frequently the truest statesmanship is not to persevere in that which experience has shown to be wrong, but to have the courage, as great statesmen have had the courage before, on looking at the facts as they are and to say—"No; we find that we were wrong, and we no longer can counsel our countrymen to go in a wrong direction, but we will tell you fairly and honourably what is the best for the nation." Everything that could possibly be held out to us would have persuaded us to take the opposite course. There was not only the loss of political friends, but great social dissensions were created in this country which place many men in a position of extreme unpleasantness. We have been told that we took this course because we sought Office; but if we did so we were not very successful in our efforts, because we passed six years in the cold shade of Opposition. Do noble Lords believe that instead of being actuated by motives to serve the nation to the best of our capacity we were actuated by a miserable petty feeling to get into some place in order to receive a salary. After long years of experience we saw that the system of Government had not succeeded in Ireland, and we saw, as we believed, new evidence that there is not contentment under our system. Election after election there was returned a very large majority of Members who held one opinion opposed to our system. In these circumstances, we thought it to be our duty to propose a change. But I may, perhaps, be permitted to say something based on my own experience. We are told that this change of policy is really impossible because of the character of the men to whom we should have to entrust the new system of government in Ireland. It is a long time ago, but when I was entrusted with the Government of Ireland I had to deal

The Earl of Kimberley

with the Fenian conspiracy. I do not suppose that noble Lords think I sympathise with attempts at rebellion. I put those attempts down sternly and without the smallest hesitation; and so I would, if need be, again. But if you ask me whether I regard all those Fenians as criminals in the ordinary sense of the word, I say that it never entered into my mind so to regard them. I knew there were many desperate men among them, and I also knew that many of them were true Irish patriots who, though mistaken in their views, were not criminals in the ordinary sense. They were conspirators, as there have been conspirators before, and in other and more favourable circumstances these men might have served their country and their Crown with honour and success. We are told that Irish Members have been branded by the Parnell Commission. I know what pleasure it gives noble Lords to cite the Parnell Commission. I say of all unjust proceedings to crush a political Party that was the most unconstitutional that was ever adopted. I have never had but one opinion on the subject. Over and over again the majority of the people in Ireland have been spoken of as our enemies. Enemies! They are our fellow-countrymen, subjects of the Queen, and they are to be regarded as our enemies! The word is frequently used. ["No, no!"] It is of no use to say "No"; they have often been described as such in this House and out of it. You know perfectly well that speech after speech has been made, in which the Irish people have been spoken of as our enemies. I will not say you used, although I believe I could quote words that were used in this Debate, but, at all events, you used such words that showed you regarded the Irish as your enemies. Is it likely you will govern Ireland with success if you have such feelings towards a large portion of the Irish people? The Irish have been branded with crime and spoken of as men who would rob landlords, and who were not fit to be trusted with free government. Then why did you trust them with it? Why did you give them equal votes with their fellow-subjects? I remember when the Ballot Act was passed I said that for the first time you would know what the true opinion of the Irish people was, and you would find out

how strong the national feeling was. You cannot now treat the Irish people as hostile without acknowledging that the government of Ireland is practically impossible except by force. Before referring to Ulster I wish to make an apology to the late Lord Chancellor of Ireland for referring to his speech as one of bluster and brag. On reflection, I am satisfied those words have no application to his speech, and I withdraw unreservedly what I said. When the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Londonderry) said that Ulster did not indulge in bluster and brag, I exclaimed "Oh!" which seemed to astonish him. I will read to the House one or two passages from the report of a meeting at Killyman, in the County of Tyrone. The Rev. Leslie Carter, of Armagh, said—

"They, the Protestants of the North, would march to the House of Commons and compel their enemies to be silent while their Representatives were speaking. If Barrett was executed for blowing up a prison the time might not be far distant when, for attempting to blow up our venerable Protestant Constitution, Gladstone and his co-conspirators might be hanging as high as Haman."

The Rev. H. Henderson said—

"The Government were driving the Protestants into civil war, and if they pursued their present policy they would have another Derry and another Boyne."

The Rev. R. C. Donnel said—

"He knew they were perfectly ready to stand by their colours, and that there were men on the platform who were ready to lead them forth against the enemy."

THE MARQUESS OF LONDON-
DERRY: Will the noble Earl give the date?

*THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: These words were uttered on the 1st of June, 1869, in relation to the Disestablishment Bill.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDON-
DERRY: When I said Ulster never blustered or bragged I was alluding to the Union.

*THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I have quoted this to show that on that occasion, at all events, Ulster did bluster, but did nothing whatever. I am not in the least dismayed by bluster, and I am certain that the noble Marquess (Londonderry) would be the first person to despise us if he thought we should be intimidated in the smallest degree in doing what we think is our duty by any threat that

100,000 or any other number of men were to meet together, although it may be unpleasant for the noble Marquess to be reminded of it. I think it was the Duke of Argyll who spoke of this measure as a revolutionary one. But I think the word revolutionary might be applied better in reference to another matter we have heard of. It is no doubt a very difficult and a very grave subject to speak of—the right of rebellion. Now, I am not one of those who will assert that in no circumstances whatever can there be a moral right to rebel, but it is a new thing to me at least that men who have been responsible Ministers of the Crown should use such language as that adopted by Mr. Arthur Balfour at Belfast on April 4 last, when he declared that no rational or sober-minded man would say that—

“What is justifiable against tyrannical kings may not under certain circumstances be justifiable against a tyrannical majority.”

Do you think that language of that kind is calculated to maintain the peace and the order of Ireland, especially when it is spoken by one who has been a Minister of the Crown? I do not say that Ireland ought to be governed as a Colony; Ireland is too close to this country, and it is for that reason we do not propose in this Bill to govern Ireland as a Colony. I was surprised to hear the noble and learned Lord (Lord Halsbury) speak of paper securities as perfectly worthless.

LORD HALSBURY: I think so, but I did not say so.

*THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: The Imperial supremacy may be called a paper security, but I maintain that it is the very foundation of the civil government of this country, and I say the supremacy over Ireland would be a real supremacy. Let me say one word about the much-contested question of the retention of the Irish Members. No doubt that is one of the great difficulties in the Bill, but the opinion of the country was clearly in favour of the proposal embodied in the Bill. The noble Duke who moved the rejection of the Bill has certainly changed his mind on this subject.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: I explained that the circumstances are different.

*THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I was rather surprised the noble Marquess said nothing as to the want of

sufficient discussion before the Bill came here, or as to what has been called the concealment of our policy during the last six years, before the Bill was brought in. I was astonished to hear a noble Lord make this statement, because in the Manifesto which the noble Marquess issued to the electors he plainly told them that the contest was to take place upon the question whether there was to be a domestic Legislature in Ireland. I maintain that the question was fully before the country, and fully discussed in the country. We are told that a Bill ought to have been before the country, but what Bill? Ought we to have circulated a Bill while we were in Opposition, or ought the Government to have circulated a Bill? The fact is these are new-fangled ideas invented for the occasion. I am surprised that the Conservative Party should try to introduce new principles into our Constitution. The first of those principles is nothing less than the *Referendum*, which, if adopted, would effect a complete revolution in our Constitution. The other principle is that every measure must have a majority of the people of Great Britain in its favour. But why a majority of the people of Great Britain? Why not a majority of the people of England, and of Scotland, and of Wales, and of Ireland? This is the federal principle which noble Lords opposite wish to introduce, and the reason is that it is not convenient for them to deal with this measure in the old constitutional way. The noble Marquess said that there are strategic reasons for refusing to assent to the policy embodied in this Bill. He thinks that Ireland will be dangerous because, he says, we are to surrender our controlling force. But he is in error, for all military and naval forces are to be absolutely under the control of the Imperial Government. How, therefore, are we placing ourselves at a disadvantage strategically? But these arguments are merely the means by which you try to veil your ineradicable distrust of the Irish people. I ask your Lordships to recollect, now that you are about to throw out this measure by an immense majority, what has occurred on previous occasions, in connection with similar action on your part. In 1880 you threw out the Compensation for Disturbance

Bill by 282 against 51, but the very next year you consented to pass a far more drastic and far-reaching measure—namely, the Land Act of 1881.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY : That was not the same Bill at all ; the other was much worse.

***THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY :** The noble Marquess considers it was much worse ; but I have heard him speak in terms of the strongest condemnation of the Act of 1881. Why cannot you bring yourselves to conceive that is a melancholy condition to have a country in the condition in which Ireland is after your vain attempts for a century to rule her on the present system ? Why cannot you see that you ought not to rest your government of Ireland upon the paper foundations on which it has hitherto been founded, and that you should make up your minds to rest it upon the far firmer foundations—as the experience of the whole world has shown them to be—of giving to a people who are desirous of it the management of their own domestic affairs, when you can do so, as this Bill has shown that it can be done, consistently with the maintenance of the unity of the Empire and the supremacy of Parliament ?

Leave having been given to the Lord Bishop of Bath and Wells to vote in the House, on question whether the word (“now”) shall stand part of the Motion. Their Lordships divided :—Contents 41 ; Not-Contents 419.

Resolved in the negative.

Bill to be read 2^a this day six months.

STATUTORY RULES PROCEDURE BILL.
(No. 237.)

Order of the Day for the Third Reading, read, and discharged.

PUBLIC HEALTH (LONDON) ACT, 1891,
AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 260.)

Read 3^a (according to Order), and passed.

House adjourned at a quarter before
One o'clock a.m., to Monday next,
half-past Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 8th September 1893.

QUESTIONS.

INOCULATION EXPERIMENTS IN INDIA.

MR. HOPWOOD (Lancashire, S.E., Middleton) : I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether he has received an answer to enable him to say by what authority Dr. Haffkine has been permitted to inoculate soldiers at Agra with cholera virus as an experimental precaution against cholera ; by what authority was he allowed to inoculate 250 school children in elementary schools, and were the children voluntary subjects of the experiment ; and if he has not yet received the answer, will he require the authorities to send the information at an early date ?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. G. RUSSELL, North. Beds.) : The reply to the Secretary of State's Despatch asking for information on this subject has not yet been received. The Government of India has been asked by telegraph to expedite their Report.

MR. HOPWOOD : I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether Surgeon Major King has been restored to the position from which he had been transferred for the use of lymph not now sanctioned by the Government ; is the Government aware that the lymph in question is recommended in the *Manual of Instruction on Vaccination*, published by the Government in India, as formerly by the authorities here ; and is the lymph in question variolous or small-pox in its origin, and how is it regarded by the medical advisers of the Indian Government ?

MR. G. RUSSELL : The question is the repetition of one which was asked me by my hon. Friend on the 11th July, when I informed him that the Government of India would be asked to furnish a Report. The Despatch was sent on the 27th July, and the answer has not yet been received.

DIPHTHERIA IN THE ISLAND OF LEWIS.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether inquiry has been made by the County Medical Officer of Health for Ross and Cromarty into the serious outbreak of diphtheria at the Port of Ness, Island of Lewis; and whether, should the Board of Supervision investigate into the cause of the outbreak, it will do so through the agency of a member who is a medical man and not entrust the inquiry to a lawyer?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Sir G. TREVELYAN, Glasgow, Bridgeton): Inquiry has been made into the recent outbreak of diphtheria at the Port of Ness by the Sanitary Medical Officer in charge of that part of the island—Dr. Ross, of Borve, a thoroughly competent official—and by the deputy Chief Medical Officer of the district, Dr. Macrae. They have notified to the County Medical Officer 18 cases of mild type at Ness and one at Barvas. The infected districts have been visited by Drs. Ross and Macrae, and reported on to Lewis District Committee, and instructions given to Sanitary Inspector as to necessary prompt action and precautions as to disinfection, &c. The Board of Supervision will be made aware of the outbreak at their next meeting on the 12th instant; but, in the circumstances above stated, it is improbable that they will think it necessary to make further investigations.

THE DEER FOREST COMMISSION.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether it is the fact that the crofters and other inhabitants of the country around Thurso were invited by the Deer Forest Commission to attend at Thurso, on Tuesday, 29th August, to give evidence at a sitting of the Commission; whether, on their arrival, they found that no sitting would be held that day in consequence of the absence of the Chairman and Secretary; and why no arrangements were made to furnish information to the persons who attended to give evidence as to when the sitting of the Commission would be held?

SIR G. TREVELYAN: It is the fact that notices were issued in common form for a sitting at Thurso on Tuesday, 29th August, to everyone whose name had

been sent in to the Secretary as desiring to attend such sitting and give evidence. In consequence of a necessary change of arrangements it was resolved on Saturday, the 26th, to postpone that sitting, and on the same day the Secretary sent notices of the postponement by post to everyone who had previously received an intimation to attend and give evidence. It is right to add that the postponed sitting was held on Monday, 4th September, and continued into the following day, when everyone interested who came forward was afforded a full opportunity of giving his evidence.

THE CASE OF HENRIETTA WARD.

MR. POWELL WILLIAMS (Birmingham, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the case of Henrietta Ward, a married woman with four children, who was convicted on her own confession at the Birmingham Petty Sessions on the 4th instant of stealing boots, and sentenced to six weeks' imprisonment with hard labour; whether he is aware that the woman had, up to the time of her conviction, borne a good character, and that the offence was the first of which she had been convicted; and whether, under all the circumstances, he will take the sentence into consideration, with a view of according to her the benefit of the First Offenders Act?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. ASQUITH, Fife, E.): I have carefully considered all the circumstances of this case, and I regret that I do not see my way to interfering with the sentence.

YORK CAVALRY BARRACKS.

MR. BUTCHER (York): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the Government contract for the painting of the Cavalry Barracks at York has been sub-let; whether the sub-contractor, to whom such contract has been sub-let, is paying his workmen employed in doing the work contracted for by such contract wages which in many cases are considerably below the wages generally accepted as current in the trade for competent workmen; and having regard to the Resolution of this House of the 13th February, 1891, what steps the Govern-

ment propose to take in regard to the matter?

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. WOODALL, Hanley): A Report was recently received from the local Trades Union authorities to the effect that some work of this kind was being carried out by a sub-contractor. The General Officer Commanding at York has been directed to inquire into the matter.

TRIAL BY JURY IN BENGAL.

MR. PAUL (Edinburgh, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether any steps have been taken to extend the system of trial by jury in Bengal to districts of that Province where it does not now prevail, and in cases where it does not now apply, as recommended by the native members of the Commission which recently reported on the subject?

MR. G. RUSSELL: No, Sir. The Despatch which I informed my hon. Friend on the 18th May the Secretary of State was expecting from the Government of India on the subject of the recommendations of the Bengal Jury Commission has not yet been received; and the Secretary of State is unable, therefore, to make any statement at present.

SCOTCH RAILWAY RATES.

MR. ANSTRUTHER (St. Andrew's, &c.): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works, as Chairman of the Select Committee on Railway Rates and Charges, whether any evidence has been taken by the Committee as to the rates in force for traders in the South and East of Scotland, especially between Edinburgh or Leith and Cupar Fife; whether the evidence already taken by the Committee will be circulated to hon. Members; and whether he can hold out any hope of a final Report, at an early date, on the question referred to the Committee?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE, Bradford, Central): Three witnesses have given evidence before the Railway Rates Committee as to the rates in the South and East of Scotland, but not with regard to Cupar Fife in particular. The evidence taken by the Committee has been reported to the House, and has

been ordered to be printed; but I cannot say how soon copies can be circulated to hon. Members. The Committee will meet to consider its final Report as soon as possible after the re-assembling of the House in November.

MARKING OF FOREIGN MEAT.

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture if the attention of the Government has been called to the evidence given before the Select Committee on the Marking of Foreign Meat, and particularly to the unanimous testimony of 44 witnesses, including several leading butchers, as to the frequent supply to consumers of cheap foreign meat as prime English, best Scotch, best Irish, or Welsh mutton, at prices genuine Home-produced articles command; and what steps it is proposed to take to carry out the recommendation of the Committee as to the registration of persons dealing in imported meat?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. MUNDELLA, Sheffield, Brightside): My right hon. Friend has desired me to answer this question. The evidence taken before the Committee has not yet been circulated, and we cannot make any statement on the subject until we have had an opportunity of fully considering it.

MAGAZINES OF HER MAJESTY'S SHIPS.

MR. HANBURY (Preston): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what information the Admiralty possess as to the temperature to which cordite can safely be submitted in the magazines of Her Majesty's ships; whether in any, and, if any, in what vessels the magazines are placed between the boilers; and in what vessels, by means of non-conducting materials or otherwise, adequate precautions have been taken against the magazines becoming so hot as to render it dangerous to store cordite in them?

*THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Sir U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH, Lancashire, Clitheroe): The answers to the three questions are:—(1.) Cordite can safely be submitted to a temperature of 100 degs. Fahrenheit in the magazines of Her Majesty's ships without any sensible deterioration. (2) In the *Sans Pareil*, *Nile*, *Trafalgar*, the seven vessels of *Royal Sovereign* class,

and the *Hood*. (3) In all vessels where magazine temperatures of 100 degs. or above have been noted proper precautions have been, or are being, taken to keep the magazines within that limit.

WEIGHING INSTRUMENTS IN GOVERNMENT ESTABLISHMENTS.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS (Birmingham, Bordesley): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether scales and other weighing instruments used in dockyards and other Government establishments are required to have the stamp of the Local Authority in which they are used in addition to the stamp of the Local Authority in which they were made; and, if not, whether such scales and weighing instruments are being used in violation of the provisions of the Act of 1889?

MR. MUNDELLA: I have no information that scales and other weighing instruments used in dockyards and other Government establishments are required to be re-stamped as referred to in the question of the right hon. Member; and the Board of Trade are advised that the Weights and Measures Acts do not require weighing instruments which are the property of the Crown to be stamped by the Inspectors of Weights and Measures appointed by the Local Authorities.

APPLICATION OF RATES TO PAYMENT OF PENSIONS.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether County Councils are entitled under the existing law to apply rates to the payment of pensions or grants?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR, Clackmannan, &c.): If I were to answer my hon. Friend's question in general terms, my reply would be in the negative, unless where such pensions are permitted by Statute; but if I were asked whether a County Council may, under special circumstances, and as part of an arrangement for the retirement of a deserving servant, make to him a superannuation allowance, I cannot say that this would be necessarily illegal.

GREENWICH AGE PENSIONS.

MR. E. J. C. MORTON (Devonport): I beg to ask the Civil Lord of

Sir U. Kay-Shuttleworth

the Admiralty if he is now able to state what steps the Admiralty will take to ensure that all those qualified to receive Greenwich Age Pensions shall receive them?

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. E. ROBERTSON, Dundee): The Treasury having assented to the recommendation of the Committee on Greenwich Hospital Age Pensions that a sum of £16,000 a year shall be added from Naval Funds to the amount previously available for these pensions, additional pensions to this amount will be granted from 1st October next. An explanatory statement on this subject will be laid on the Table in a few days.

AFFAIRS AT HARBOUR ISLAND, BAHAMAS.

MR. GODSON (Kidderminster): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the attention of the Secretary of State for the Colonies has been called to a letter from Mr. Julius Stafford Solomon, late Resident Justice at Harbour Island, Bahamas, to the Chief Justice of the Colony, in which Mr. Solomon intimates that he has been compelled by the Bahamian Government to reluctantly resign his position as a Resident Magistrate; whether any, and if any what, offence was alleged against Mr. Solomon; whether he is aware that, upon Mr. Solomon quitting office, the Resident Justice at Governors Harbour, Bahamas, was transferred to his post at Harbour Island, and a Mr. Austin Thompson, a brother-in-law of R. H. Sawyer, a member of the Executive Council, was provisionally appointed as Resident Justice at Governors Harbour; whether he is also aware that, after an inquiry recently held before the Executive Council of the Colony into some alleged misconduct of the Postmaster of the Colony, the said Postmaster was suspended from office and Mr. Austin Thompson appointed provisionally to fulfil the duties of Postmaster; and whether the Secretary of State will cause inquiry to be made both into the circumstances attending Mr. Solomon's quitting office and Mr. Austin Thompson's appointment as Resident Justice and acting Postmaster?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. S. BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): Mr.

Yelverton, the Chief Justice of the Bahamas, has in a Letter received to-day communicated to the Secretary of State a letter addressed to him by Mr. Solomon, late Resident Justice of Harbour Island, in which he implies that he has been compelled to resign his office. The Secretary of State is not aware that any offence has been alleged against Mr. Solomon. The Governor reported that Mr. Solomon had retired on a pension, but we have no information of the circumstances which led to his retirement; but, in view of Mr. Solomon's letter, further inquiries are being made. On the retirement of Mr. Solomon, Mr. O'Halloran, the Resident Justice of Governors Harbour, was provisionally appointed Resident Justice of Harbour Island, and Mr. Austin Thompson was provisionally appointed Resident Justice of Governor's Harbour. These provisional appointments have been duly reported to the Secretary of State, but have not yet been confirmed by him. The Postmaster of the Bahamas has been suspended from his office. Pending the appointment of a new Postmaster, the officer administering the Government has appointed Mr. Austin Thompson to be acting Postmaster.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E.): Was Mr. Solomon retired on account of his age?

MR. S. BUXTON: The only information received by the Colonial Office is that he retired on a pension.

THE BEHAR CADASTRAL SURVEY.

MR. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether, under the Bengal Tenancy Act of 1885, any limits are imposed as to the area within which the Government is empowered to make a compulsory survey at the expense of the landlords and tenants; and, if so, whether the Government of Bengal would be instructed to observe those limits in its operations in connection with the Behar Cadastral Survey?

MR. G. RUSSELL: Section 101 of the Bengal Tenancy Act of 1885 permits the Local Government to make a survey and record of rights in a local area without any limitation with the previous sanction of the Governor General in Council, and permits the local Government to do so without such previous sanction in four specified cases. Section 114 of the same

Act provides for the defrayal of the cost of such operation, in either case, by the landlords and tenants. The Secretary of State is confident that the Government of Bengal are duly observing the requirements of the law in this matter.

A CRIMEAN VETERAN.

VISCOUNT WOLMER (Edinburgh, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the case of David Gordon, late No. 6,024, who has served in the Crimea, and was discharged from the Grenadier Guards on January 26, 1861, with a good character, and with the record of 10 years' service in the Army certified on his parchment discharge certificate; and, if so, whether he will state the reason why Gordon has been informed in an Official Letter of May 20, 1893, that he is not eligible as an applicant for a special Crimean pension because he has only nine years and 364 days' service in the Army reckoning for pension?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. Woodall, Hanley): Private Gordon served from December 30, 1850, to January 26, 1861—i.e., 10 years and 28 days; but he forfeited 29 days' service, and consequently could only reckon nine years 364 days towards pension. As 10 years is the minimum qualifying service for the special campaign pension, he is not entitled thereto. It must not be forgotten that the number of these special campaign pensions is limited, and, though 10 years is the minimum service qualifying, there are very many of the unsuccessful applicants who have served a much longer time, and whose cases naturally have precedence.

VISCOUNT WOLMER: I wish to ask whether the hon. Member observes that the application made by this man is to be enrolled among the applicants; and whether, although this man's discharge certified that he had served 10 years, the Treasury refuses to hold him eligible because his term of service was one day short of the 10 years?

MR. WOODALL: I admit that it is a very hard case; and if the 10 years, instead of qualifying as an applicant, qualified for pension, we should, of course, press the claim upon the Treasury;

but, as a matter of fact, the man stands a long way behind other claimants.

VISCOUNT WOLMER: May the man not be allowed to be enrolled among the applicants, and then his application would take its chance among the rest?

MR. WOODALL: I will promise to go into the matter if I see the smallest chance of his obtaining a pension in the event of his title as an applicant being admitted.

FOREIGN NAVIES.

MR. HANBURY (Preston): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he can state what is the amount estimated for new construction during the present year in the Navies of Germany, Russia, France, and Italy respectively?

*SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: Germany, £947,725; Russia, £1,692,124; France, £2,918,120; Italy, £1,000,000. The corresponding estimated expenditure in cash and stores (including contract ships under Naval Defence Act) for this country is, for 1893-4, £2,982,086.

THE NATIONAL TELEPHONE COMPANY.

CAPTAIN BAGOT (Westmoreland, Kendal): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether, in view of the fact that the Report of the Select Committee on the Telegraphs Bill, on which the agreement between the Post Office and the National Telephone Company is to be founded, was arrived at without any evidence being taken either from any Municipal Corporation or from any representative of the telephone-using public, and that the Committee was appointed on the eve of the Dissolution, he will consider the advisability of the reappointment of the Committee to take further evidence in the interests of the public before concluding the agreement with the National Telephone Company?

MR. SAUNDERS (Newington, Walworth): I beg to ask the Postmaster General if he will give the London County Council an opportunity of considering the proposed agreement with the National Telephone Company before it is completed?

Mr. Woodall

SIR J. FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether, in view of the desire to that effect expressed in several large Provincial centres, he proposes to lay upon the Table the agreement in regard to telephones made with the National Telephone Company before its final conclusion; whether that agreement is in accordance with the heads of agreement signed by his predecessor and with the Report of the Select Committee of 1892; whether it leaves him at his discretion to grant licences to other Companies and to Municipalities; and whether it extends at all the present licence of the National Telephone Company?

MR. J. STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether, in the proposed agreement between the Post Office and the National Telephone Company, there is any clause which directly or indirectly interferes with the power of the London County Council to establish and carry on at any time hereafter, if licensed, Telephone Exchanges in the Metropolis?

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. A. MORLEY, Nottingham, E.): There appears to be some doubt as to what was intended by the Report of the Committee on the Telegraph Bill of 1892. I am informed that some Members of the Committee understood by the words used that the agreement should be laid on the Table before final ratification, while the right hon. Gentleman the late Postmaster General and the right hon. Gentleman the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, both of whom served on the Committee, and the latter of whom was its Chairman, understood and intended the words which were used to mean that Parliament should be informed of the terms of the agreement after it was concluded. My right hon. Friend is aware that the proposed agreement is intended to carry out the policy for which he became responsible, and, indeed, will be the document embodying in legal form the heads of agreement which he

settled with the Company, and which were signed by him on behalf of the late Government before he left Office. Under these circumstances, and as I understand he suggests that the document should be laid on the Table of the House before its final conclusion, and considering the difference of opinion which appears to exist as to what was intended by the Report of the Committee, I have decided to take the course suggested, and to lay the proposed agreement on the Table before it is signed. The draft of the agreement is now under the consideration of the Company. I am advised that it is in strict accordance with the heads of agreement, which were, as I have said, signed by my predecessor, and with the Report of the Select Committee, as well as with the Treasury Minute which was laid before Parliament. It in no way limits or affects the discretion of the Postmaster General to grant licences for telephone exchange business. It does not extend the term of the licence of the National Company. It restricts the operations of the Company to specified areas, and withdraws from them the right to establish and work trunk wires between these areas. But it confers on the Company the right to exercise the powers which are conferred on the Postmaster General himself by the Telegraph Acts of 1863 and 1878, and by the provisions in the Telegraph Act, 1892, relating to Provisional Orders. But this right is subjected in every case to the veto of the Local Authorities specified in Section 5 of the Telegraph Act of last Session.

SIR J. FERGUSSON : I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether power is given to take up streets without the consent of the Local Authorities?

MR. A. MORLEY : No; it is subject to the veto of the Local Authorities.

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston) : Will an opportunity be given to the House for discussing the agreement?

MR. A. MORLEY : As soon as the agreement is come to it will be laid on the Table of the House.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES : May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the agreement, though it does not give power to take up streets against the

wishes of the Local Authority, does exclude any other Body from doing so?

***MR. A. MORLEY :** The agreement does not give any special powers that would not be given to any other licencees.

***MR. PROVAND (Glasgow, Blackfriars) :** If the Telephone Company get these powers will it shut out any competing Company, or the Municipality itself, should it desire to establish telephones?

***MR. A. MORLEY :** That is a matter for the Local Governing Authority to decide.

MR. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough) : Will sufficient time be given to Local Authorities to consider the terms of the agreement?

***MR. HOZIER (Lanarkshire, S.) :** Will the right hon. Gentleman kindly arrange to have the agreement considered by the House during the Autumn Sitting, and not during the present Sitting?

***MR. A. MORLEY :** That will depend on when the agreement is made. In reply to the hon. Member for Peterborough, I have to say that there will be ample time for the Local Authorities to consider the agreement.

THE NIGER COMPANY.

MR. T. BAYLEY (Derbyshire, Chesterfield) : I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he will take steps to get at the truth of the report freely circulated in the papers, that natives who attempted to cross the territory of the Royal Chartered Niger Company from one region outside the Company's jurisdiction to another have been summarily shot?

***SIR E. GREY :** If any specific case, supported by trustworthy evidence, is reported to Her Majesty's Government, they will make inquiries, but they cannot do so on mere hearsay.

MR. T. BAYLEY : Do I understand the answer to indicate that Her Majesty's Government have no Representative in the territory of the Niger Company?

*SIR E. GREY : The Niger Company is primarily responsible for the administration of its own territory. The Government have no Representative in the territory.

PUBLIC HEALTH REPORTS.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS : I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, in view of the importance of the Reports of the Medical Officer of Health, he will cause such Reports to be sent to the officers of health of the Sanitary Authorities throughout the Kingdom, and also to free libraries and to village reading rooms ?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (MR. H. H. FOWLER, Wolverhampton, E.) : I may say that I sympathise to a great extent with the desire of the right hon. Gentleman. The Local Government Board are in the habit of forwarding Medical Reports to the Local Authorities and the Local Public Officers. I would point out that the Treasury did not agree with my predecessor, Mr. Ritchie, as to a further extension of this distribution. I have not had the opportunity yet of approaching the Treasury, but I mean to make a further effort in that direction, when, perhaps, I may meet with a better fate than Mr. Ritchie when he made a similar application.

MANCHESTER SHIP CANAL.

MR. KNOWLES (Salford, W.) : I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that the nuisance arising from the Manchester Ship Canal has become dangerous to the health of the inhabitants of the County Borough of Salford and the neighbourhood ; and whether, as suggested by the Council, he will direct a Government inquiry to be held as to the best means of dealing with the subject ?

MR. H. H. FOWLER : This question appeared on the Paper only this morning. It will require some communication to take place between the Local Government Board and the Salford authorities,

and I must, therefore, ask the hon. Member to postpone it.

DEER FOREST COMMISSION FEES.

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) : I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland how is it that Mr. Gordon, a Member of the Royal Commission on Deer Forests, is remunerated to the extent of five guineas a day for his services ; whether any other Member of the Commission is in receipt of any sum beyond an allowance of one guinea per day for expenses ; whether the payment to Mr. Gordon was made at the request of the Commissioners ; and is he aware that the exceptional treatment accorded to Mr. Gordon has caused great dissatisfaction both inside and outside of the ranks of the Commission ?

SIR G. TREVELYAN : Mr. Gordon is a land surveyor and valuator of great experience. As it is a usual custom in the case of professional men who serve on Commissions where their professional knowledge is made use of, the Treasury has granted Mr. Gordon professional remuneration. The other Members receive the usual subsistence allowance with their travelling expenses, and according to the regulations laid down by the Treasury they cannot receive more. The arrangement that Mr. Gordon should receive professional remuneration was made according to the usual practice, and not at the request of the Commissioners. I am aware that some of the Members of the Commission have been dissatisfied with the arrangement.

MR. DALZIEL : May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he is aware that of the seven Commissioners four voted against payment, and that the proposal was only adopted by Mr. Gordon voting for the payment for himself, and the Chairman exercising two votes ?

SIR G. TREVELYAN : I can only take cognisance of the resolutions that are communicated to me by the Secretary of the Commission as coming from the Commission, and I could not make any inquiries as to what passed within the Royal Commission, perfectly independent of the Scotch Office.

MR. WEIR : May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether Mr. Gordon attends

most regularly on these days on which he receives a fee, and on the other days he seldom puts in an appearance?

SIR H. MAXWELL (Wigton): I wish to ask whether it is true, as reported, that three Members of the Commission have sent in their resignation?

SIR G. TREVELYAN: No; it is not true.

MR. A. C. MORTON: I wish to ask whether it would not be advisable, in cases of this sort, that paid land surveyors should not be allowed to have a vote on the Commission?

[No answer was given.]

FATAL ACCIDENTS IN SCOTLAND.

MR. PAUL: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether as the Fatal Accidents Inquiry (Scotland) Bill is not a contentious measure, as it has passed through the Standing Committee on Law, and as it affects the whole industrial population of Scotland, the Government will give an opportunity for passing it, either before the Adjournment or during the Autumn Sitting? I also desire to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he is aware that the Bill was supported in the Grand Committee by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for St. Andrew's University, and also by the late Under Secretary of State for the Home Department?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I answered this question yesterday, when I gave, as a reason for not including that measure in the list of Bills which we hope to be able to pass, that I was informed that alterations had been made in the Bill which rendered it controversial. I have no personal knowledge of this matter, but I obtained all the information I could on the subject.

MR. PAUL: May I ask whether the right hon. Gentleman is aware that I moved in Committee an Amendment in favour of holding inquiries before a jury as well as before the Sheriff, and that I withdrew the Amendment because I was assured by the Representatives of the Government that that would make the measure controversial and prevent it passing?

MR. HENEAGE (Great Grimsby): I desire to ask whether the House is to take the list of measures announced by

the Chancellor of the Exchequer as the definite and final list?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I do not propose to add any other measures to that list. I got the fullest information I could upon the subject of the Bill, and I have given the House the result.

MR. PAUL: Will the Government not consider the possibility of taking the Bill in the Autumn Session?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I do not think I can add to the answer I gave.

SEA FISHERIES.

MR. ANSTRUTHER (St. Andrews, &c.): I beg to ask the Patronage Secretary, as Chairman of the Select Committee on Sea Fisheries, when the Evidence given before that Committee will be printed and distributed; and if he can state whether the Government intend during the present Session of Parliament to give effect by legislation to the recommendations contained in the Report of that Committee?

*THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. MARJORIBANKS, Berwickshire): I have made inquiries of the printers, and they promise that the evidence shall be in the hands of Members not later than the end of this month. The Government do not intend to introduce any new measure, but it is their intention to pass the Scotch Fisheries Bill. The only thing necessary to secure the realisation of that good intention is the support and co-operation of the hon. Member in passing this entirely non-contentious and non-Party measure into law.

MR. ANSTRUTHER: I desire to ask my right hon. Friend if it is not the case that between myself and the Secretary for Scotland there is no contention with regard to the Scotch Fisheries Bill, and that the Amendments which I have placed on the Paper are acceptable to the right hon. Gentleman?

SIR H. MAXWELL: I desire to ask if it is possible to treat as a non-contentious measure a Bill in regard to which there are no less than seven pages of Amendments?

*MR. MARJORIBANKS: I cannot undertake to decide what is the contention between the Secretary for Scotland and the hon. Member for St. Andrews. In reply to the hon. Gentleman opposite,

I have reason to believe that the greater portion of the Amendments to the Bill will be withdrawn.

POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK DEPOSITS

IN IRELAND.

MR. SEXTON (Kerry, N.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether the number and amount of deposits in the Post Office Savings Banks in Ireland for the half-year ended 30th June last exceeded the number and amount of deposits for the corresponding period of 1892; and, if so, to what extent; and whether since the beginning of the current half-year the deposits have exceeded the withdrawals in number and amount?

*MR. A. MORLEY: The number of deposits in the Post Office Savings Banks in Ireland during the half-year ending 30th June last was 195,969, or 2,537 more than during the corresponding period of 1892. The amount deposited in the same period was about £601,000, or about £12,000 more than in 1892. During the first two months of the current half-year, that is, July and August, the deposits exceeded the withdrawals by about 36,000 in number and about £24,000 in amount.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): I desire to ask whether the attention of the Postmaster General has been drawn to the Report just laid on the Table of the House, in which it is stated that the amount of deposits is £49,000 less than the amount estimated at the close of 1892; and whether this is the first occasion since the establishment of the Post Office Savings Banks in which the estimated balance was less by £49,000 than it was in the preceding half-year? I would also ask whether the Report stated that certain information is not favourable, and why this information is for the first time withheld; and whether the attention of the Postmaster General has been drawn to the paragraph which stated that for the first time in the history of these banks there was a decrease of £49,000?

*MR. A. MORLEY: That is a question which it is clearly impossible to answer without notice. My attention has been drawn to the Report, but not to the paragraph referred to. If the hon. Gentleman wishes for an answer I must ask him to put down a question.

Mr. Marjoribanks

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I will do so.

MR. SEXTON: I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he is aware that the period of heavy withdrawals extended only from March to June, within which time speeches and letters were published advising the public to withdraw, and whether there has been a great increase of deposits and a great falling off in withdrawals since the public became acquainted with the provisions of the Home Rule Bill?

*MR. A. MORLEY: I do not say how far the speeches and letters affected the result, but the fact is as stated by the hon. Member.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Was it not rather caused by the declaration that the House of Lords would throw out the Bill?

SIR T. LEA: I desire to ask the right hon. Gentleman was not the advice to which the hon. Member for Kerry referred given in a letter addressed to the editor of a paper?

*MR. A. MORLEY: The hon. Gentleman referred to newspaper letters.

THE RECENT DISASTER IN THE SHANNON.

MR. SEXTON: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he proposes to take any action on the subject of a resolution of a public meeting held on the 4th instant in the Court House, Tarbert, County Kerry, in connection with the recent loss of 17 lives by an accident in the River Shannon, in which the attention of the Board of Trade is directed to the way the traffic to and from the steamer plying to Tarbert Island is conducted, passengers having to embark and disembark in all weathers in an open boat at serious risk, in consequence of the Steamship Company declining to come alongside the pier, and expresses an earnest request that an immediate inquiry be held; and whether he will comply with this request?

MR. MUNDELLA: I have not seen the resolution to which the hon. Member refers; but I have requested the owners of the steamers which ply between Limerick and Tralee to furnish me with an explanation of the conditions under which passengers were embarked. The reply of the Steamship Company was that although the steamer itself has been surveyed and certified by the Board

of Trade, the method of receiving and discharging passengers is entirely under the control of the Local Authority.

MR. SEXTON: I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman what is the Local Authority, and also whether the Board of Trade has any power to hold an inquiry to ascertain whether the system of embarking and disembarking passengers is dangerous to life?

MR. MUNDELLA: The Local Authority would be the authority of the ports to which the vessel traded.

THE ALLEGED CASE OF CHOLERA AT THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MR. KNOWLES: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Local Government Board whether he can make any statement with regard to the inquiry into the cause of the death of a female cleaner of the House of Commons referred to in the answer of the President of the Local Government Board to my question yesterday; and whether the cause of death was Asiatic cholera?

***THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD** (Sir W. FOSTER, Derby, Ilkeston): Yes, Sir; a very careful inquiry has hitherto failed to discover any connection, direct or indirect, between this case and any choleraic infection. Nevertheless, the scientific investigation made since yesterday gives a very unfavourable aspect to the case. There is evidence that the woman has for some time past suffered from diarrhoea, and was in a weak and unsatisfactory condition of health, and, moreover, that her home was in some respects in an insanitary condition. I may also add that since the reply given yesterday, one of the Board's Inspectors, Dr. Sweeting, has been instructed to communicate at once with the officers of the Vestry as to the measures to be immediately taken with regard to the sanitary condition of the premises which the woman occupied. If these measures have not already been taken and the premises put into a satisfactory sanitary condition this will be done forthwith.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Has the hon. Gentleman observed a noxious

smell in the "Aye" Lobby at the present moment?

[No answer was given.]

COMPENSATION IN CASE OF RIOTS.

MR. H. J. WILSON (York, W.R., Holmfirth): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, in cases where disturbances take place, and property is damaged, and the Riot Act read, who is responsible for the compensation to be paid to the sufferers?

MR. ASQUITH: The Riot and Disturbance Act of 1886 provides that where property in a police district is injured by persons riotously and tumultuously assembled the compensation has to be paid out of the Police Rate of the district, and, therefore, the whole of the ratepayers suffer for the acts of a few.

SATURDAY SITTINGS.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (Manchester, E.): I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer a few questions with regard to Business. First, as to the Saturday Sittings. It was usual, in the time of the late Government, to make Saturday Sittings subject to the Wednesday Rule, and I wish the right hon. Gentleman to indicate whether or not it is the intention of the Government to prolong the Saturday Sitting to any important extent beyond the hour of adjournment on Wednesday? Then I would ask the right hon. Gentleman to take the Report on the Foreign Office Vote to-night at a rather earlier hour than usual to-night, as an important question about Armenia, which it was proposed to raise on that Vote, was shut out by the action of the right hon. Gentleman.

SIR W. HARCOURT: We propose to follow the precedent set by the late Government, and not continue the Saturday Sitting after 7 o'clock. With regard to the other question of the right hon. Gentleman, I should not have moved the Closure on the Foreign Office Vote if I had not thought that the question was practically settled. But, as I understand there was some misapprehension on that point, we will take the Report at 12 o'clock.

MOTION.

ADJOURNMENT.

COLLIERY DISTURBANCES.

MR. BRUNNER, Member for the North-wich Division of Cheshire, rose in his place, and asked leave to move the Adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance—namely, the disturbances in the colliery districts in Leeds, Pontefract, and Dewsbury; but the pleasure of the House not having been signified, Mr. SPEAKER called on those Members who supported the Motion to rise in their places, and not less than 40 Members having accordingly risen:—

MR. BRUNNER hoped that no Party advantage would be taken of his Motion. It needed no argument to prove to the House that this matter of the disturbances in the colliery districts was urgent and important. His most definite object in making the Motion was to urge upon the Government to press forward—and if need be for that purpose to suspend the Standing Orders—the three Bills providing for arbitration which were now before the House. It had been said that the Government Bill was not an effective Bill, because it did not provide for compulsion. The Bill might have its faults, and the other two Bills might have their faults; but he submitted that they could be amended and made good Bills, if put into the hands of a Select Committee of the House.

*MR. SPEAKER said, the hon. Member was not now discussing the question of the position of affairs in the colliery districts, but the nature of some Bills before the House. That would be quite irregular.

MR. BRUNNER said, that for the last three days news had appeared in the papers, which to his mind was deplorable in the extreme, of disturbances in various parts of the country. Three days ago these disturbances began in South Wales; yesterday they were repeated in other parts of the country, and to-day they had news that disastrous riots, accompanied by arson and bloodshed, had occurred in the three districts he had named in the North of England. It was

no doubt right the Local Authorities in these districts should claim the protection of extra police and the presence of Her Majesty's troops, but he did not think it would be right for the House to go on with its ordinary business, content with putting down these riots by force without giving an expression of opinion in favour of settling disputes by reason instead of by force. His opinion was that if the House discussed these disturbances in a spirit of sympathy with those who suffered, especially those who suffered innocently on account of them, the result would be a calming of the public mind, and especially—this was what he particularly desired—a calming of the spirit of anger which now possessed the people in those districts. It was no use, he admitted, preaching patience to hungry men, but he was satisfied that if the House, who was no party to the quarrel, should express sympathy with the sufferers, they would be inclined to accept a reasonable settlement at the hands of whoever might offer it. The hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) said yesterday, with a touch of austerity, that the working men had refused arbitration. They were perhaps to-day in consequence of those disturbances the less inclined to submit to arbitration.

*MR. SPEAKER said, he was sorry again to interfere; but the hon. Gentleman had obtained the leave of the House to move its Adjournment not for the purpose of discussing the general policy of arbitration, or any policy of that kind contained in Bills before the House, but for the purpose of discussing existing circumstances in the colliery districts.

MR. BRUNNER regretted that he should have trespassed on the good order of the House, but he had no doubt the Speaker would recognise that his intentions, at any rate, were respectful to the Chair and to the House. He trusted that the Government, represented as it was by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, would at any rate advise the House what it ought to do under the sad circumstances he had brought under its notice, and that the result of the discussion would tend to the peace and good order of the country.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—
(Mr. Brunner.)

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby): If there is a reasonable prospect of proceeding with the Arbitration Bills before the House, there are no Bills that the Government would be more glad to proceed with than these. I have already stated the reason why it was found impossible to deal with those Bills. With reference to the unhappy events in question, there is no doubt that great sympathy is felt by the House for those who have suffered by them, and deep regret that such circumstances should occur. The House will feel, however, that it would not be expedient or wise at this moment to discuss the position of affairs with the imperfect information they have, and, therefore, I hope the matter will not be further proceeded with, and that my hon. Friend, having stated his feelings on the subject, will kindly withdraw his Motion.

*MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet) wished to take the opportunity of addressing a question to the Home Secretary with regard to those most discreditable scenes which had been enacted during the last few days in different parts of the country. He could speak with more or less personal knowledge as to what was going on in the West Riding of Yorkshire. He was in that part of the country within the last two days, and in the very parish where he was resident a large mob, numbered literally by thousands, paraded the district to the terror of Her Majesty's peaceful subjects, brandishing formidable weapons, and conducting themselves in a manner which was absolutely inconsistent with a condition of civilised society. He had not been personally a witness of what occurred, but he was informed to that effect by persons upon whose word he could place the utmost reliance, and who had been witnesses of the scenes to which he referred. He certainly had no intention of making any attack upon the Home Secretary, who deserved the thanks of the community at large for the manner in which he had discharged his duty under circumstances like those he was alluding to, and had always placed at the disposal of the Local Authorities who had made application in due form such additional police force as, in his judgment, was necessitated by the requirements of the

case, while the Secretary of State for War had in like manner facilitated the despatch of troops to districts where their presence was required. He, however, asked the right hon. Gentleman to satisfy himself, before he gave his official sanction to the payment of the money of the British taxpayer to the Local Authorities, that they had been duly diligent in the discharge of the duty incumbent on them—namely, that of taking adequate steps for the preservation of the public peace. He wanted to know what steps the Local Authorities took to insure the termination of the disturbances and the prevention of the extension of the evils to neighbouring districts under their control, as he was informed the Chief Constable of the West Riding of Yorkshire, who either was, or should have been, perfectly cognisant of what was going on throughout the district, took no steps, or at any rate no adequate steps, to guard against the continuation and extension of the evils. It was 48 hours or more after those large crowds had been paraded in the manner to which he had referred that excesses took place in the same neighbourhood, and in adjoining parishes and other districts of the West Riding. He thought they were entitled to ask what the authorities of the West Riding were about to allow such a condition of affairs so long to prevail, and why they had not followed the example of the authorities in Wales and taken precautionary measures, by means of which such scandalous occurrences would have been averted. He hoped the Home Secretary would insist on a full inquiry into the conduct of the Chief Constable and of the local Magistracy.

MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston) said, the information given to the House by the right hon. Gentleman amounted to the fact that he saw, a few days ago, an enormous demonstration in one of the mining districts of the West Riding, and that the men were in a state of fierce excitement; but the right hon. Gentleman had not seen those men committing any turbulent or violent acts.

*MR. JAMES LOWTHER said, he had never said that he himself saw what he described, but he was credibly informed by persons on whose word he could rely that they saw the crowds who, he had further been informed, had

brutally assaulted men for no other crime than discharging an honest day's labour.

*MR. CREMER said, the right hon. Gentleman's information being of a secondhand character was still less reliable. He wished to ask the Home Secretary if the statement that a contingent of London police had been drafted into the mining districts was true, and if he was in a position to give the House any information which would lead it to conclude that the statements which had been made day by day by the public Press in regard to acts of violence and outrage committed by the miners were true, or whether he believed them to be exaggerated? He had seen it stated that the scenes of violence that were reported to have occurred had been grossly exaggerated.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. ASQUITH, Fife, E.): The House must have observed, after listening to the speeches of the right hon. Gentleman opposite and my right hon. Friend, that it is altogether premature to discuss this question. The right hon. Gentleman opposite suggested that the Local Authorities had shown apathy in the matter, and my hon. Friend suggested that the statements published in the newspapers were untrue. It is, therefore, obvious that the House is not in a position at this moment to form any opinion. The course the Government have to take is a simple one. The Local Authorities are the persons who are by law responsible for the maintenance of order and peace, and if they fail in their duty they are liable to be indicted. If they feel that the resources at their command are inadequate for the preservation of order no Government could refuse them assistance. How far there may have been exaggeration in the statements published, and how far there may have been apathy on the part of the Local Authorities, are matters the House cannot discuss at present. I trust the House will be satisfied with my assurance that the Government have put at the disposal of the Local Authorities the force that is necessary for the maintenance of public order. I deprecate strongly the necessity for the use of force, and I earnestly trust that those who have influence with the miners will seize this opportunity of

using it. A few words spoken with authority might have far more tranquillising effect than the use of physical force.

MR. WOOTTON ISAACSON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) said, he had just come from Wales. ["Order!"] Yesterday he addressed several bodies of miners with regard to their grievances. [*Renewed cries of "Order!"*]

*MR. SPEAKER called the hon. Member to Order, as the House was not discussing the position of affairs in Wales.

MR. BRUNNER asked leave to withdraw his Motion, and thanked the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Home Secretary for what they had said.

MR. WOOTTON ISAACSON said, that surely he might be permitted to state what he had been an eye-witness of. ["Order!"] He begged to say that men who were on strike in Wales were misled by those people of authority to whom the Home Secretary had referred [*"Cries of "Order!"*]

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) rose to Order. The hon. Member was referring to the strike in South Wales.

*MR. SPEAKER again called the hon. Member to Order.

MR. WOOTTON ISAACSON said, he bowed to the ruling of the Chair, but continued to refer to occurrences in Wales.

*MR. SPEAKER (interrupting): Is it your pleasure that the Motion be withdrawn?

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE (SATURDAY).

Resolved, That this House do meet To-morrow.—(*The Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—COMMITTEE.

SUPPLY—considered in Committee.

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE
DEPARTMENTS, 1893-4.

CLASS II.

1. £25,680, to complete the sum for Colonial Office.

SIR J. GORST (Cambridge University) desired to express the extreme

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pleasure with which he had heard the declaration of the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies that Her Majesty's Government had seen their way to stopping any forward movement against Lo Bengula for the present; that the South African Company had acquiesced in the advice; and that therefore the danger of a bloody war in South Africa between the European settlers and the natives was for the moment averted. He wished to impress upon Her Majesty's Government, however, that in order to preserve the peace in South Africa not only was great vigilance required on the part of the Colonial Office, but a most active and energetic policy was necessary. Nobody in this country knew the real cause of the quarrel between Lo Bengula and the British settlers. In all these quarrels between Europeans and natives one never heard more than one side of the question, and the natives' case was not stated. He was sorry to see signs of a desire in some quarters to get up a feeling in this country against Lo Bengula, and to hound the Government on and induce them to indulge in a disastrous war. Nobody knew what the causes of the quarrel with Lo Bengula were; but, reading between the lines and drawing upon one's experience in disputes of the kind, he felt sure that the Government would exercise the most wise and salutary influence if they turned a deaf ear to any proposal for an attack upon Lo Bengula. He could not help improving the occasion by pointing out the great dangers and difficulties of the policy which allowed of the existence of Chartered Companies. He had some right to speak on the subject, because he opposed most vehemently the first Charter of the kind ever granted, that to the North Borneo Company, and took the sense of the House against it. He had the support on that occasion of the present Leader of the Opposition (Mr. A. J. Balfour) and the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord R. Churchill). The affair in South Africa was an example of the serious dangers to which the granting of Charters to companies of this kind in uncivilised territories gave rise. The hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary had wisely refused to respond to a challenge thrown down by the right hon. Member for West Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain), and to state the general policy of the Govern-

ment with regard to Chartered Companies. He (Sir J. Gorst) did not believe the Government had any policy on the subject, or that any Government ever had. British Governments had drifted into one Charter after another, and he had no doubt the granting of such Charters would continue until it landed Great Britain in some national disaster, when the country would wake up and the reign of Chartered Companies would come to an end. If a Chartered Company could be left entirely to itself and allowed to suffer the consequences of any injustice or unwise attack made upon the native races, it might, perhaps, govern as wisely as Her Majesty's Government. Every Chartered Company, however, knew that it had the Government at its back. The South African Company knew very well that if it made an attack on Lo Bengula, and he in retaliation slaughtered British settlers, the Government would have to interfere. The policy of Chartered Companies seemed to be one of drifting into national responsibilities which were sure to involve this country in the greatest difficulties whenever the affairs of any Company arrived at a critical position. The position of things in South Africa was an object lesson to this country. If the present strained relations resulted in war, this country would have to lavish its blood and treasure in bringing to a successful conclusion affairs in the initiation of which it had no hand whatever. The Government had not sufficient control over the Companies to prevent them quarrelling with native Chiefs, but the Companies had sufficient control over the Government to force them to come to their assistance and to save themselves from the consequence of their injustice or bad policy. He hoped that vigorous action on the part of the Government might avert the danger at present threatened in South Africa. There was nothing more important to the British settlers there than the maintenance of peace. He hoped the Government would lay the present peril to heart, and that either this or the next Government would arrive at a definite policy about Chartered Companies before a national disaster occurred.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. S. Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): Per-

haps the right hon. Gentleman will allow me to thank him for the tone he has adopted in his speech. It compared very favourably with the big-drum beating we had from the hon. Member for Sheffield (Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett) last night, and I think it will tend, as far as a speech can tend, towards the result we all have at heart — namely, the maintenance of peace in South Africa. I am afraid, however, I must not take quite such a sanguine view as the right hon. Gentleman in regard to the possibility of averting a war. I hope and believe that war will be averted, but at the present moment it is impossible for me to make any strong statement on the subject. Both the Government and those who are responsible for the work of the Chartered Company are at the present moment working in accord for the maintenance of peace, and I think the result will be to maintain peace. I quite agree with the right hon. Gentleman that what must be deprecated at the present moment are the excited, warlike, and bloodthirsty letters and speeches emanating, I am sorry to say, to a large extent from those who ought not to preach war—I mean missionaries in some parts of Africa. The danger we run at the present moment is that those who are on the spot, many of them being naturally in an excited state of mind, many of them being hot-headed and perhaps not under the proper control of those in charge of the country, may by some indiscreet act get us into war. Unfortunately there always has been, especially in South Africa, a party which has been in favour of these native wars, because unhappily a large number of the people obtain very great pecuniary advantages from such wars. I think it was Sir C. Warren's army in 1884 which was called the "Salvation Army," because nearly everybody in South Africa made a good thing out of that war. There are some who speak as if these raids were a new thing, and as if it were the duty of the Government and of the Company to carry out a crusade against Lo Bengula and the Matabele on account of their recent action. The right hon. Gentleman (Sir J. Gorst) says we only hear one side of the question. I am glad to know that in this case we have received through Sir Henry Loch a great deal of information from Lo Bengula himself, and also from Mr.

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Collenbrander and others living at his kraal. I said last night, and repeat now, that the blame, as far as there is blame, is by no means all on one side, and that while I do not say there was justification for the raiding of Lo Bengula's impi, as far as Lo Bengula is personally concerned he is anxious to live in friendly terms with the whites, as far as we can judge, and that the officer in charge of the impi exceeded his orders in interfering with the white men. I say at present that there is no justification for an aggressive movement, and I am sure that those in charge for the Chartered Company are not in a position to make such a movement. The Government thought it their duty to step in and to say that, at the present moment at all events, they would prohibit any aggressive action likely to lead to war in South Africa. As the right hon. Gentleman has truly said, a war if it takes place cannot be necessarily confined to Matabeleland and Mashonaland. The right hon. Gentleman referred to the position of Chartered Companies and their relations with the Imperial Government. I declined last night to discuss the general policy respecting Chartered Companies, because I did not think this a happy or appropriate occasion on which to do so. I may say, however, I agree very much with the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman. I agree that we have very much in the past drifted into these Chartered Companies, and the experience we have now had of their action is not so encouraging that it is likely any Government will give further Charters. There is, however, this to be said in discussing the question, and it certainly was brought before the Government of the day with regard to the British South Africa Company—namely, that if that Company had not undertaken at the moment the administration and opening up of Mashonaland possibly the Government was not in a position to undertake that responsibility, and the territory might have been lost to the United Kingdom and absorbed in the Transvaal. That we shall all admit would have been under the circumstances a great mistake. I am bound to say that the present position in these days of Chartered Companies, whose responsibility, as the right hon. Gentleman has pointed out, breaks down just when we want it to be effective, is a great anomaly.

As far as the British South Africa Company are concerned, they informed me that they are prepared to carry out their responsibility. I can only trust that, thanks to the moderate desires and actions of those responsible for the proceedings of the Company, and thanks I must say to the action of the Government supported by this House, the great danger may be averted, and that a war which would be a very serious one for South Africa will not take place.

*MR. E. H. BAYLEY (Camberwell, N.) wished to refer to a question relating to Gibraltar. In the first place, he must protest against the mistake that was usually made in referring to the people of Gibraltar as inhabitants of a fortress. As a matter of fact, the guns were placed on the top of the Rock of Gibraltar, and the Colony was at the foot of the hill. It was as inaccurate to say that the people were living in a fortress as to say that the people of the City of London were living in the Tower of London. In the Colony of Gibraltar about £60,000 a year of local taxation was raised, and up to two years ago the ratepayers had a voting power over the expenditure of their own money. Local affairs were managed by a mixed Sanitary Board, consisting of Commissioners partly appointed by the Governor, and partly selected by him from a list of names submitted by the Grand Jury. The ratepayers now complained that two years ago, by a stroke of the pen, they were deprived of their representation on the Board, which was made to consist entirely of the officials nominated by the Governor. The reason why this action was taken was that the ratepayers' representatives on the Board declined to be parties to a flagrant job, which was being forced upon them by the official members—namely, the spending of £50,000 on a scheme for driving a tunnel through the rock in search of water. This scheme had now been dropped. It was said in opposition to the proposal that no water would be found, that the cost would be enormous, that a better supply would be obtained by surface collection, and that the tunnel would render the rock no longer impregnable. The Government had now to some extent retraced their steps by giving the ratepayers a representation of four members, the remaining five being nominated by

the Governor. As the ratepayers paid two-thirds of the taxation, they were entitled to two-thirds of the members, or six out of the nine. As it was, however, they were in a minority, whilst the official members consisted of men not necessarily taxpayers or persons holding any stake in the Colony, and who might be here to-day and gone to-morrow. He contended that the principle that taxation and representation should go together, which the Liberal Party upheld in the House of Commons, should be made to apply to all the Colonies of the Empire.

*MR. S. BUXTON: I am obliged to my hon. Friend for his speech, because I am sure he has the same desire as we have to meet the views of the ratepayers of Gibraltar as far as is possible. I must, however, point out to him that when we came into Office, and considered the questions dealing with Gibraltar, there were five subjects in which the ratepayers seemed to be interested. The first was the question of the restoration to the Grand Jury of the privilege of nominating the panel from which the unofficial Commissioners were selected. That privilege we granted with great pleasure. The second was that the Commissioners should have the power of appointing their own Chairman. That was also conceded. The third was the separation of the office of Colonial Engineer from that of Engineer to the Sanitary Board and other offices, and giving the Commissioners power to appoint their own Engineer. That was conceded, as was also the fourth request—namely, that the power of the Governor to veto the construction of a work by the Board and of requiring the Board to defray from the rates the cost of public works now executed by the Commissioners should cease. Finally, it was asked that in future the Colonial Secretary should cease to be a Member of the Board. On that, as on the other points, we were able to meet the ratepayers. There was a further point in which they considered they had a grievance, and I am bound to say I think it was a very serious one. It related to the question of the water and drainage scheme. That is very much a question of engineering, as to the details of which we ourselves are hardly in a position to speak; but the conclusion we have come to is that a Committee should be appointed to inquire into the question

of the sanitation, and the water supply of Gibraltar, and that on that Commission the ratepayers should be directly represented, not only by their own Chairman, but by one of their non-official members. Finally, there is the question of proportional representation on the Sanitary Board. At this point I must draw attention to one fact, which I think my hon. Friend omitted—namely, that in the original proposal of the deputation of ratepayers it was stated that the question of representation might easily be solved in a manner satisfactory to Her Majesty's Government if the other matters they referred to were conceded to them. We have met them as regards the other matters; but Her Majesty's Government cannot give them a majority on the Board. Rightly or wrongly, we have felt bound to treat Gibraltar as a fortress rather than as an ordinary Colony. I agree with the general principle as to taxation and representation, but we say that the principle cannot be carried out fully here, for we are bound to treat Gibraltar as a fortress. We have no desire and no intention to control the proceedings of the Sanitary Board by the official majority unless in matters which affect defence. There is perfect liberty in other matters—the official majority in all the cases can vote as they like, not being bound by any official view. The Police Magistrate the other day was put on to the Board temporarily to take the place of another official member on leave. This was done under a misapprehension of our desires. We certainly do not desire, in the case of a temporary absence of an official member, to show distrust of the Board by appointing another and a temporary member. I hope the hon. Gentleman will be satisfied that we have endeavoured to meet his views and those of the ratepayers on this question.

ADMIRAL FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne) said, he had nothing to say in reply to the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down. It was only right the Government should take care and look at the matter from the official point of view, but he did not think they would press their views further than were necessary. His object in rising was to know what steps had been taken to remedy the crying grievances existing in

the Crown Colony of St. Helena? He hoped something had been done in regard to these grievances. He did not think the decrease of the population was a matter for regret, but it had transpired that there was great disproportion in the number of women and children and that of men. His suggestion was that the Government should make use of the assistance of the Admiralty to carry off some of the surplus population to South Africa. There was another matter to which he wished to call the attention of the Under Secretary. It was with regard to the Bahamas, and the statements which had been made and circulated among Members by Chief Justice Yelverton, to the effect that the administration of justice was grossly corrupt, that the Members of the House of Assembly were influenced by bribes, and that only six out of the 29 Members in the House were not related to, or connected with, one another. He had had an interview with the Chief Justice, which he found to be extremely painful. He cared nothing for the Bahamas, but when such charges had been made by such a high legal officer it was right that a Commission of Inquiry should be appointed to investigate the accusations on the spot, as had been done in Jamaica in the case of Governor Eyre. The charges were certainly of a very grave character, and he need not recapitulate them, but they were certainly entitled to some reply on this question from the Government. He repeated, that the charges might be true or false; he did not know—he hoped they were false—but, at all events, there should be a proper inquiry into them. Either they were true or false—if true, then there should be a proper reform of administration; if false, then the Chief Justice should be dismissed. That, he thought, was a demand which the Government could not resist. The question was not a Party one; it was simply that it was alleged that a moral sewer existed; if that were the case, then they ought to cleanse it.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): We have all listened with great interest, I am sure, to the speech which we have just heard. This is, Sir, an advantage, at least, we shall have in this discussion those who take an

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interest in the circumstances. The matter would have come upon us by surprise. For some months past we have been deluged by letters, by questions, and by newspaper paragraphs with respect to the matters to which my hon. and gallant Friend has called attention. Although the questions came from different parts of the House, and the letters appeared under different signatures, and some with none, every one of them was due to the intervention of the person with whom my hon. and gallant Friend had that interview which he described as extremely painful. Unlike my hon. and gallant Friend, I feel a great interest in these Islands. A relative of mine happens to be there, and I have heard very much about them. Now, let me, in the first place, assure my hon. and gallant Friend that in spite of the insinuations which have been made there is no general discontent or dissatisfaction in the Bahamas. The feeling is general that the present Governor has performed his duty very much to the advantage of the islands. These are not charges, but very disgraceful calumnies and insinuations. A charge is made against the Legislative Council. Well, Sir, in the Legislative Council, which consists of nine Members, there is no such connection between the Members as has been alleged; but in the Legislative Assembly there are persons who are connected by relationship that did not lead to corruption. That, Sir, is natural. When the population is small it is not possible to obtain competent persons without taking some who may have some sort of relationship with one another. It is more likely that should occur in a place where the population is small than that it should happen here with us. There is a population of, I think, 45,000, only 12,000 of whom are whites. How can you select fit men for a Legislature in a community of this kind without running the risk of choosing from amongst those who are related? I say, Sir, it is not possible—we must take them as we find them, which is largely among those who have relationship one with another. It is only by cowardly insinuation that we are told that this relationship is a disadvantage. I say that the greatest advantage has accrued from the present system. What I complain especially of is the fact that

these cowardly insinuations should be made by a public officer—though on half-pay, he is that—at a time when the Governor was absent, at a time when no fair reply could be made. We have heard that this place is a moral sewer. I would like to read my hon. and gallant Friend the remarks made by Lord Herschell (Lord Chancellor of England) when these matters were before the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. Lord Herschell said—

“With regard to the documents which you are about to refer to, headed ‘Notes by the Chief Justice of the Colony.’ They consist in large part of a number of scandalous allegations about a great number of people in the Colony, and have no possible bearing on the questions of law which have been referred to this Board. They cannot be allowed to remain here on record in this case, because it is impossible to allow a reference of this sort from Her Majesty to be made the vehicle of disseminating scandalous matter of that description.”

I hope, at all events, to take my part in preventing the Committee of this House being made the vehicle of disseminating without contradiction that same scandalous matter which, of course, the Privy Council refused to entertain. I want to say a word or two about the Governor of the Colony, who, I think, is the chief victim of these abominable allegations. I have only recently made the acquaintance of Sir Ambrose Shea, but in consequence of the interest I have in the Islands I have been able to learn a good deal about him. These Islands were of a most God-forsaken character until quite recently. At the time of the Civil War many of the people made considerable fortunes, but, like other fortunes easily acquired, they were not properly spent, and I think very little really permanent benefit accrued to the Islanders by the profits then made. Since that time the Islands had been going down, and only two industries were carried on. One was the sponge industry, which is very laborious and brings very little profit to those who undertook it. The other was the fruit industry, the profits of which vary considerably according to the climate. The inhabitants consist largely of people of colour, who are very good-tempered and contented people, and deserve a much better fate than they have met with. But for years past they have almost been starving in consequence of the trifling amount of

employment they have been able to obtain. Sir Ambrose Shea, unlike other Colonial officials, was a man of business before he became an official, and he entered the Colonial Service late in life. As soon as he became Governor he set to work to improve the condition of the inhabitants. He was struck by a plant which was regarded as little better than a weed, but which he thought would produce a very good fibre. I do not say he discovered the plant, but it is certainly owing entirely to his individual energy and action that the help of a number of capitalists, some from America and some from this country, has been secured for the purpose of experimenting with this plant. Thousands and tens of thousands of pounds are being spent, and it is certain that the experiment will be carried out on an adequate scale and with every chance of success. I am not so sanguine as the Governor himself is as to the result that will be obtained. - The attempt is, in my opinion, a great speculation, but whatever its results, the benefit to the Islands of trying the experiment has been enormous. Even if the experiment fails large sums will have been spent and a large amount of employment given to the poor people, whereas if it succeeds much work will be provided, and no doubt the Colony will become one of the most prosperous in the West Indies. All this has been done by one man, and I say that, in the interests of the Public Service, when you find a man goes beyond the red tape of his office and initiates an industry for the purpose of benefiting the people he ought to have the sympathy and support of this House and the full confidence of his employers. He certainly ought not to be made the subject of scandalous and absolutely baseless insinuations.

ADMIRAL FIELD: I never mentioned his name.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I absolutely acquit my hon. and gallant friend of having acted unfairly. I am sure these circumstances were unknown to him, and I am certain that he will agree with me that a man who has done work of this kind deserves commendation and ought not to be made the subject of such attacks as Mr. Yelverton has published throughout the land. This Mr. Yelverton has made attacks on almost every person of position in the Colony.

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Mr. Yelverton is Chief Justice of the Bahamas—that Colony has been most unfortunate in its Chief Justices. They are appointed by the Home Government, and I cannot help wondering what genius of discord presides over the appointments of Chief Justices of these small Colonies. The late Chief Justice—the gentleman of the murder case—has been alluded to. He got into hot water in reference to that case, and so great was the feeling of the Colonial Office with regard to his action that he was retired on a pension, which this unfortunate little Colony has to pay to this day. Thus you have a Chief Justice; forced upon the Colony, or appointed without reference to the Colony, by this country, and when the Chief Justice misbehaves himself and the Colonial Office recognise that the appointment is a mistake, it is not this country which pays the cost, but the Colony. After this experience the Colony begged the Local Authorities to be very particular in the gentleman who was to succeed the late Chief Justice, and at the suggestion of the Colonial Office they raised the salary of the Chief Justice from £700 to £1,000, in order to have a really first-class man. Just a word about the title of Chief Justice. Chief Justice is a big word, but in the Bahamas it means a very small thing. The Chief Justice has no Judges sitting with him; he is the only Judge in the Colony, and not only is he Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, but he is the Supreme Court. There are a number of Magistrates who are paid astounding salaries, varying from £50 to £250 a year, and I believe they do justice quite as well as can be expected under the circumstances, and upon the whole their decisions have given satisfaction. The Chief Justice is required to review the decisions of these inferior Courts, and to take the more serious cases. I only regret that we should have to use the title of Chief Justice, because there are some people who are carried away and swelled out with the importance of the name that is given to them. I believe that if Mr. Yelverton had been called a Magistrate he never would have made such a fool of himself. It is only because this briefless barrister who was sent out there has been swaggering about ever since with the title of Chief Justice that he has been swelling

himself like the frog in the fable until he has gone very near to bursting. Mr. Yelverton was appointed by the late Government. When he went to the Colonies the first thing he did after being there 14 days was to ask for leave of absence, and he was absent for 4 months. Even the short period of 14 days was enough to show some of the peculiarities of this judicial authority. He is an eccentric person, and one of his eccentricities is that he has a terrible fear of anything in the nature of a contagious disorder. The mere report of a contagious disease within 100 miles of him fills his mind with terror. I do not say he fears for himself, but he is afraid because of his office. A Member of Parliament or any other ordinary person might die of disease; but if disease should attack a Chief Justice there is no knowing but that the constellations might fall. Accordingly during the 14 days of his first visit he wrote to the papers that there was going to be an exhibition in Jamaica, and that the passage of people to and fro might be the means of importing disease into the Colony. He therefore begged the authorities to take the utmost precautions against the importation of disease. I do not wonder that the colonials thought this was an extraordinary performance for this gentleman to indulge in. In 1891, the second year of his appointment, he again obtained leave of absence, and was absent for five months. I may say that the Colony does not object to his absence. What the Colony objects to is the presence of this gentleman, and I believe that, had he been away even longer, no complaints on that score would have come from the Colony. He returned, and again he exhibited a great number of peculiarities, which, in the opinion of the colonists, tended to lessen the dignity of the Bench he was supposed to adorn. He wrote letters to the newspapers, and engaged in controversy on every conceivable subject, and he took the opportunity given by his position to deliver allocutions from the Bench, which are extremely humorous performances. I must refer to two of them. On one occasion he delivered from the Bench a long speech, in which he said that on a recent occasion he had delivered a judgment in favour of a man of colour in the island; that thereupon the grateful

man of colour had attempted to corrupt the Bench by offering him a present of six pine-apples, and, with an expression of horror at the conception the man must have had of the character of the Chief Justice, he stated for the benefit of all whom it might concern that he had refused the gift, and he said it was necessary to call attention to the matter, so that the Resident Justices might understand that the Bench must be preserved pure and incorruptible. Well, this was thought to be a display of virtue which was quite unnecessary. It was thought that the Chief Justice might have refused six pine-apples without making such a fuss about it. Later on he wrote another letter to a newspaper. It appears that 500 tons of coal were being imported into the Bahamas for the use of the lighthouse service. The Chief Justice wrote to the local newspaper to say he had heard with alarm of the intention to import this coal. He had reason to believe that coal contained the germs of malarious disease. He did not think it beyond the bounds of possibility that this coal might contain the germs of yellow fever, and that the whole of the Colony might be affected. He therefore entered his solemn protest against the suggestion that 500 tons of coal should be stored at Nassau for the use of the lighthouse service. I do not know how my hon. Friend, if he had been living in the Colony, would have viewed these continual outbursts from this judicial authority. The colonists were not without a certain kind of rough humour, and after this display on the part of the Chief Justice there appeared an anonymous letter in a local paper signed "Colonist," of which I must read one or two paragraphs. The writer says—

"Search the annals of the Bench of every country, of every age, and I defy creation to produce a more noble, more self-denying, and more virtuous exhibition of a tender conscience than was afforded by our Chief Justice in refusing to accept a gift of pine-apples! Some cynic has said, 'Every man has his price.' It is assuring to this community to know that the 'Fount of Justice' in this Colony is above the price of even one dozen pine-apples. Mr. Yelverton's noble words of scornful renunciation should be graven in letters of gold upon the walls of every Magisterial office in this Colony; then, and not till then, will sweet potatoes, pigeon peas, &c., cease to exert their baneful influence on the administration of justice in this Colony. But should we be selfish

and confine the influence of such virtue to the limited area of this Colony? No, Mr. Editor; I and others cherish the hope that this beautiful incident will become historical, and the whole world be benefited by this last and greatest proof of the purity of English justice."

The letter goes on to say—

"A great many people of this city are mean enough to say that he should risk his valuable life to attend to the duties of his office in summer as well as winter—they contend that the day of non-resident officialdom is over, and that a man should reside in the Colony that pays him his salary—the law allows six weeks leave of absence, and Mr. Yelverton should be subservient to that law if to no other."

It goes on with the following ironical remark :—

"Fevers, like thunderstorms, have their uses in West Indian Colonies. Fever is regarded by the natives as a merciful provision of Providence to clear the atmosphere of the Civil Service of some officials who are exhaled and emanate from Downing Street."

By those of us who are well acquainted with the humours of political life in this country, I think it will be agreed that, although we may not necessarily approve the good taste of this communication, it does not go nearly as far as our newspaper editors go every day of their lives. On the publication of the letter, the Chief Justice summoned the editor of the paper, Mr. Moseley, to his Court. He demanded that the editor should give up the name of the colonist who had written such an abominable letter. The editor refused, and the Chief Justice proceeded to find him guilty of contempt of Court and to deliver the judgment of the Court. I could not possibly read the whole of the judgment, which fills several pages of the pamphlet I have before me, but really it is a most noble allocution. He says—

"You have grossly insulted this Court and the administration of justice. You talk of the combined wisdom of Governor Shea, Providence, the Board of Health, and the Chief Justice, whom you satirically describe in the second paragraph of your article, quoting from the judgment to which I have referred, as an 'English Barrister,' and to whom you mockingly allude as a 'luminary of the English Bar.'"

He goes on—

"This is your way of criticising the action of the Chief Justice with regard to the case for Eleuthera, to which I have referred. Comment is needless. Had it been the language of some idler from the Shambles I should not have been so astonished. And, then, in that language of mocking admiration which you demean yourself

into publishing, you go on to give the Chief Justice what you (or your vulgar correspondent) call words of warning."

Continuing, Mr. Yelverton says—

"Then comes a most horrible paragraph, the wish being evidently the father to the thought."

And he goes on to quote the remark about fevers being like thunderstorms, and adds—

"You go on to suggest that officials should be sent to live in unhealthy offices here, so as to expedite their deaths, and then, in a similar foul strain, in a Colony where it is essential that the law should be maintained and respected, and human life guarded, you wind up a letter which I forbear again to criticise by what you or your correspondents are evidently pleased to consider an insulting allusion to myself and others connected with the Government of the Colony. What is the universal opinion as to such a production? There is but one, and that is emphatic condemnation. This Court is glad to see that, notwithstanding insidious attempts (and the Court is alive to what goes on around it), the heart of the Colony as an integral part of the British Empire is sound."

After the explanation of the circumstances the Chief Justice proceeded to sentence the editor of the paper, for contempt of Court, to be imprisoned during his pleasure, and then to pay two separate fines, and he was to be detained in custody until the fines had been paid. The editor accordingly went to gaol. There was, as may well be supposed, the greatest indignation in the Colony, and a very near approach to a public riot. A deputation, consisting of all the principal inhabitants of the Colony, including five ministers of religion, and a number of Magistrates and Members of the Legislative Assembly, waited upon the Governor, and asked him to release the editor. The Governor very properly telegraphed home to ask whether he had the power to exercise the clemency of the Crown, and thereupon he released the prisoner. There was great rejoicing in the Colony at his action, and flags were displayed in the streets in honour of the occasion. The Chief Justice, furious at the interference of the Governor, not only came home to England to raise before the Privy Council the question whether the Governor had power to release the editor, but, as circumstances have shown, endeavoured to calumniate the Governor and every man of influence in the Colony on account of the view they took of his very extraordinary proceeding. The matter came

Mr. J. Chamberlain

before the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, and the view they took of it may be gathered from certain interlocutory observations made by some of the Members of that tribunal. The Lord Chancellor said—

“The point to be considered was whether it was contempt to suggest that an occupant of the Bench was wanting in wisdom or was foolish.”

Lord Watson said—

“He should be sorry if every person who happened to call him a fool, in respect of some judgment he had delivered, was to be held guilty of contempt. It would depend on the circumstances.”

The Lord Chancellor further said—

“If a Judge steps into the arena of newspaper criticism, you cannot regard a letter written in the course of a newspaper controversy in the same light as what I may call a volunteered attack.”

In conclusion, after having heard all the arguments, both for and against, the Court came to the conclusion, firstly, that the letter signed “Colonist” was not, in the circumstances, calculated to obstruct or interfere with the course of justice or the due administration of the law, and, therefore, did not constitute a contempt of Court, and that Mr. Moseley was not guilty of contempt of Court in refusing to give up the name of the writer; and, lastly, that the Royal prerogative did extend to such cases. Therefore, the Judicial Committee gave their decision against the Chief Justice. Well, I think I have said enough to justify the Governor of the Colony in the action he has taken, and also to show the Committee the character of the person who now constitutes himself his traducer. I want, in conclusion, to ask some questions of my hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies. I have not one word of criticism or complaint to make use of respecting the action of the Colonial Office in this matter. They have treated the Chief Justice with consideration, but they have meted out complete justice to the parties. But I wish to point out that the situation at present is intolerable. This man has now been absent from the Colony since June in last year. During the whole of that time he has been receiving half-pay from the Colony. Formerly this payment was voted by the Legislative Assembly. That Assembly has given the Government distinctly to

understand that, whatever the circumstances, they will not pay another farthing. But the Colonial Office, who have no money at their disposal, have, until the Chief Justice is disposed of, to find half-pay. They have found it by charging it to the Crown funds of the Colony, so that it is exactly the same thing as though it were paid by a Vote of the Legislative Assembly, as the Crown funds belong to the Colony, and not to this country. We have no right to pay out of their money a Chief Justice whom they would not have at any price. I must say I think the time has come when this interregnum ought to be closed, and the Colony should be told what is in future to be the position of the Chief Justice; whether he is to be sent back or not, and whether they are to be called upon, in meal or in malt, to pay his salary. The Chief Justice, who is at present a public official, is writing to the newspapers letters containing these calumnious assertions. I wish to know whether this is in accordance with the Regulations of the Public Service? Then, Sir, I ask my hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, as far as he is aware, there is any foundation whatever for these exceedingly dishonouring charges which the Chief Justice has brought against the Governor of the Colony and against other responsible and respectable persons? I would only say, in conclusion, that I hope my hon. Friend will confirm the opinion I have formed that these charges are groundless, and that they have only been made as an afterthought in consequence of the difficulty into which the Chief Justice has got himself. I will ask the Under Secretary whether, in such circumstances, it can be contended for a moment that a man who has behaved in this way, who has provoked and insulted and libelled so many of the chief persons in the Colony, can possibly be allowed to return to the Colony in the important position of Chief Justice, and whether, under these circumstances, he is in a position to announce that some change will be made in respect of him?

MR. LITTLE (Whitehaven) observed that there was a question of principle underlying this case. The first point he desired to touch upon was in regard to Judges in the Colonies having unlimited

power of committing for contempt of Court. That was considered a very grave power, even in England, and within the last quarter of a century, even in the Supreme Courts in England, there had been cases in which there had been grave doubts as to whether that power had been rightly exercised. When they came to these small Crown Colonies, when men were appointed Chief Justices or Justices, some of whom had never had the conduct of a civil action of any kind whatever in the course of their practice at the Bar, and when they gave to these men the same power of committal for contempt of Court that was given to the Judges of the Supreme Court in England, he need hardly point out that grave injustice had been frequently done. Let any lawyer in this House take the Privy Council cases for the last 20 years, and, on consideration of the cases in regard to committals for contempt of Court, he would come to two conclusions: first, that in many of these cases the Judges in these Crown Colonies had done substantial injustice in cases in which they had committed people for contempt of Court; and, secondly, that in some cases that substantial injustice could not be remedied. He mentioned the case of a newspaper editor, who was also a barrister, who was committed for contempt of Court, and imprisoned for a lengthened period, besides being fined. During the time of his imprisonment his wife died; and when he came out, having been imprisoned in this not too healthy climate, he himself died within a short time after he had received the decision of the Privy Council that he ought never to have been committed at all. He could mention other instances not so serious, but which, at any rate, went to show that such a power ought not to be placed in the hands of men appointed in this way. This matter about committal for contempt of Court had been the subject of dispute for years between the Colonial Office and some of the Crown Colonies. One of the Crown Colonies passed a legislative Act and sent it home to the Colonial Office. This Act contained a number of very valuable provisions, giving a man a right to trial by jury, and, among other things, it limited the power of imprisonment for contempt. The Colonial Office, however, was, he believed, still

squabbling with that Colony over the question of whether the Act should be passed in the form it was sent over or not. He suggested to the Under Secretary that the time had come when they ought to have a general Act with regard to every Crown Colony providing against this arbitrary power of committal for contempt of Court, and he hoped the Committee would receive an assurance that the subject should be considered. He believed that the right hon. Member for West Birmingham had perfectly satisfied the Committee that there were no grounds for the charges made by the Chief Justice. He (Mr. Little) had friends in a neighbouring Colony, and the information he had received in regard to this matter convinced him on this point. Again, he was satisfied that if the Chief Justice had had a case at all he would have been able to have found amongst his brethren of the Bar in that House one who would have taken up his case and placed it before the Committee, and the worst possible point against the Chief Justice was that among the innumerable lawyers that overcrowded the House he had not been able to find one to put his case before the Committee. Dealing with the position of a Chief Justice in the Colonies, he pointed out that while the Chief Justice in a number of cases investigated was outside the Legislative Council, yet in some of the Colonies he had a most extraordinary way of having representatives inside the Legislative Council. For instance, he had the power of appointing men to be Receivers in Bankruptcy whose accounts he had to supervise, and the moment these men were appointed they were simply and purely the servants of the Chief Justice in the Legislative Assembly. The Colonial Office ought to purify the administration in these Crown Colonies by putting an end to such a state of things, which had often resulted in transactions not creditable. The hon. and gallant Admiral had referred to the Jamaica Commission. Within the last 12 months the Colonial Office had sent out a Commission composed of Sir William Markby and Sir Frederick Pollock, and that Commission with regard to another of our Crown Colonies recommended the retirement of two of the Judges, and another was transferred; and if there had been any reason for anything of that sort in this instance, the Colonial Office would

Mr. Little

have acted in the same way. All who read the evidence given before the Commission to which he referred must come to the conclusion that more supervision was required in these Crown Colonies than the Colonial Office at present exercised in regard to Judges. In that case it was clear that the Chief Justice year after year had been acting in a way contrary to all ideas and all practice of justice, and that another Judge had acted in a way which made him practically the echo of the Chief Justice. But all this had gone on for years, and five years before the Commission was issued there had been complaints from the Chamber of Commerce of Tobago with regard to the administration of justice in that island. He would suggest that instead of having the expense of a Commission, with this long delay before these things could be properly investigated, it might be desirable to establish, in the case of these small Crown Colonies, something in the shape of a Judicial Visitor. That was to say, instead of the Colonial Office getting Reports at home, and endeavouring to form a judgment, a man of judicial experience should be sent out to the Colonies, not to investigate specific charges, but in order to supervise the administration of justice, by seeing that things were being conducted in a proper and orderly manner. From the Report of the Commission to which he had alluded, it was perfectly manifest that if anyone with the experience of the administration of justice had gone to the Colony and investigated the proceedings, the whole thing must at once have been put an end to, instead of having been a source of expense and trouble for a period of five years after the charges against the Chief Justice had been seriously made to the Foreign Office.

*MR. GODSON (Kidderminster), as one who had practised at the Bar for a good many years with Mr. Yelverton, desired to say a few words for him. His statements might be accurate or inaccurate, but everyone who knew Mr. Yelverton would recognise that he would not have made the statements he did if he did not himself believe in the truth of every word of the charges he made. He (Mr. Godson) was sorry to hear the tone in which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham took up the other side of the question. He himself

was not going to weary the Committee by going into either one side or the other. He took a very serious view of the whole case. Certain facts had been alleged on the one side, and certain facts had been alleged on the other. They were totally inconsistent and contradictory, and that was the very best argument for the appointment of a Committee of Inquiry perfectly independent of all parties, and framed upon the precedent of the Commission to which the last speaker had referred. He did not think there was any foundation for one of the attacks made by the right hon. Member for West Birmingham upon Mr. Yelverton—namely, that these facts were not laid before the public by him or on his behalf until he had had this adverse decision in the Privy Council. In fact, Mr. Yelverton had, soon after his arrival in the Colony, laid these facts before the Governor, who had referred the matter to the very Attorney General whose conduct was impugned. The right hon. Gentleman had stated that Mr. Yelverton could not return to the Colony. Possibly, practically not. Of course, as the right hon. Gentleman had stated, the question of his right to commit for contempt for acts committed outside the Courts having been decided against him, it would make his return unpleasant; but there was, theoretically and technically, nothing whatever to prevent Mr. Yelverton taking up his position again. He admitted that Mr. Yelverton made a foolish mistake; but there was no imputation whatever against Mr. Yelverton's character in any way, professional or private; therefore the assertion made by the Member for West Birmingham was not strictly supported by the fact. It was most important that in all the Colonies, and more especially in a poor one, the Legal Advisers of the Government should be perfectly independent men, and there was nothing more injurious and likely to bring about a miscarriage of justice than that a man in any way connected with the island should be appointed to a responsible legal position. That was the objection he had to the gentleman who occupied the position of Attorney General in this case. He should be free from bias and local prejudice. The Attorney General in this Colony was closely connected with the leading citizens. In one

case he had to prosecute his wife's nephew. He could not imagine a case in which a man would be more likely to go astray. Again, take the case in which he prosecuted a man for stabbing another man. It was clear that it was a case of either murder or manslaughter, but the Attorney General, to whom the prisoner appeared to be somewhat distantly related, took good care he should be tried for neither of these offences, and presented a bill from the Grand Jury—which in that island was the Attorney General for the time being—for a very minor charge. The then Chief Justice (Mr. Austin) must have felt that the offence was a very grave and serious one, or he would never have imposed the sentence of two years' imprisonment, the highest sentence the law allowed. He was glad to hear that a gentleman had been sent over by the Colonial Office to take up a judicial position in this Colony who would be independent of any local feeling. He thought that was a very wise and judicious proceeding on the part of the Colonial Office. He would urge that this Attorney General should be removed from the position he occupied, for it was perfectly clear he could not do justice as between the Crown and friends and relations of his who might be brought into trouble. He trusted the Government would grant this Commission, and that they would also give it power to report generally upon the manner in which legal proceedings were conducted in that Colony.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY (Longford, N.) said, it was not often his fortune to agree with the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, but on this occasion he fully concurred with almost everything the right hon. Gentleman had said. He did not intend to go into this long controversy as to the Chief Justice's conduct and the various legal questions connected with it; he only wanted to bear his personal testimony to the integrity and high character of Sir Ambrose Shea. He was the only Colonial Governor he knew of under whose influence and care a Colony had grown up from something like bankruptcy to a condition of actual and increasing prosperity. This result had been brought about in a great measure because of the watchfulness, foresight, and the close

and strict business management of Sir Ambrose Shea, who was entitled to every consideration and respect from that House. He only rose to offer his humble testimony to the character which Sir Ambrose Shea bore, and the opinion which all those who knew him had long formed of his integrity and abilities.

MR. S. BUXTON: In regard to the question of the distress in St. Helena, to which the hon. and gallant Admiral referred in his opening remarks, I cordially sympathise with the view he has laid before the Committee. We deplore the falling-off in the trade of St. Helena, and the unfortunate distress which exists in that island. The hon. Gentleman called my attention to what had been done by the Admiralty, and asked whether we intended to take further steps in that direction. I think I have shown already that we have taken steps, and he will be glad to hear that the other day one of Her Majesty's troopships did take off four families—in all 22 souls—from the island to South Africa. This, I hope, is only an instalment; and I may tell him that, as far as we have any control in the matter, we shall take care that these persons taken by the Admiralty shall not be just the able-bodied ones of the family, but the family as a whole. That was, I understand, the case with those taken the other day. With regard to the question as to the Bahamas, there are one or two points on which I should like to say a few words. My hon. Friend behind me (Mr. Little) spoke of the power which is given into the hands of Magistrates and of Judges in small Colonies of inflicting punishment for contempt of Court, and I am bound to say, from my short experience at the Colonial Office—quite apart from this particular case—it does seem to me there is often a monstrous abuse of this power on the part of the Judicial Authorities in our Colonies. If we can see our way to curtail that power—and we have already done something in that direction—I am sure it will meet with the approval of those who are interested in these matters. I quite agree with my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham when he said that it is a great mistake in this case—as in others—that these Judges—and they are gentlemen, after all, of no great authority or position—should be

endowed with the title of Chief Justice. In this particular case, as well as in others, the Chief Justice is a mere name. He has really no Judge under him, and he is the supreme and sole Judge of that particular Colony. I think that in this, and in other cases, it has tended to give an undue idea of their powers and authority, and tends, to that extent, to do some harm. I do not know that I can agree with my hon. Friend behind me (Mr. Little), who, I understand, wants a sort of Inspector of Judges to go round the different islands examining judicial grievances. I think that would lead to great difficulty, and would result in making matters worse than they are at the present moment. I am bound to say in regard not only to the case before us, but other cases, that I do think the Secretary of State ought to have much fuller power than he at present possesses of removing Judges on his own initiative if he thinks they have done anything wrong. It is quite right that in England the greatest possible sanctity and power should reside in the person of the Judge; but when it comes to the small Colonies and the class of men sent out there, I think there should be a much more expeditious way of getting rid of bad subjects than there is at the present moment. With reference to the particular case to which our attention has been called this afternoon, I cannot follow my right hon. Friend in regard to the position of Mr. Yelverton. He will easily understand that, his case being before the Privy Council at the present moment, it would not be right or expedient on my part to enter into the merits or demerits of Mr. Yelverton as a man or Chief Justice. In regard to one question he has raised in reference to his salary, I can only say I feel as much as he does, or as anyone interested in the Colonies can do, the very unfortunate position in which the Colony has been placed by the delay that has taken place in deciding this particular case of Mr. Yelverton. But I think he did give credit to the Colonial Office for having endeavoured to expedite matters. We were, however, confronted with difficulties; it was with the utmost possible difficulty we could make any progress; every step we have taken had to be taken under the advice of the Law Officers of the Crown, and such delay as

may have occurred has really been due to exceptional or necessary courses, and certainly in no sense has it been according to our desire or intention. I should like to see the question settled as soon as possible; but until it is settled I do not see how it can be taken otherwise than that the Colony should pay the salary. There is no fund from which it can be paid; but I hope the delay will not be long, and that the Privy Council will soon have come to a conclusion. As regards the speech of the hon. Member below the Gangway, he brought forward some cases of general administration. I am glad to be able to avail of this opportunity of paying tribute to the great ability which Sir Ambrose Shea has shown in the discharge of his duties as Governor of the Bahamas. I quite understand that the hon. and gallant Member (Admiral Field) has not fathered the charges which have been made, but it is greatly to be regretted that the charges have been made.

ADMIRAL FIELD said, he was most careful to guard against the possibility of fathering the charges. He only sought for information and inquiry.

MR. S. BUXTON: Yes; I understood that, as I have said; but it is a pity these charges should have been made without inquiry. The hon. and gallant Member asks that we should grant an inquiry. I am bound to say that the Colonial Office has given the matter attention for a considerable time past; and we ask the Committee to leave the responsibility in the hands of the Colonial Office. No case has been made out for so serious a measure as a Committee of Inquiry. I deplore, Sir, that in the past judicial posts in these small Colonies have been filled up by relatives of those in power in particular Colonies. It is impossible, however, to remedy that just now. What would be the advantage of a Committee of Inquiry in that case? For the purpose of dealing with these posts on account of relationship? We intend in future to put in outsiders rather than those in the island, and I do not think we can go further than that. There would, therefore, be no advantage to be gained by a Royal Commission or any Special Committee. Well, now, Sir, reference has been made to the late Postmaster General of the Bahamas.

That is a lamentable case, but the evidence against Mr. Smith for seduction and abduction has not been held to be conclusive, Mr. Smith was ultimately acquitted of the charges made against him; but, Sir, the circumstances of the case rendered it impossible that he could be reinstated. Then, Sir, there are the charges made in connection with relatives of the Attorney General of the island. It has been conclusively proved that there is no foundation for those charges. That is all I need say. I now ask the Committee to leave the responsibility of the government of this Colony in the hands of the Colonial Office. Any specific accusation will always receive careful attention, and, while I do not think there is any difficulty to call for this inquiry that has been asked for, I am sure the House will acknowledge that we are doing our best to prevent a recurrence of these scandals, and I hope that the matter will be allowed to remain in our hands.

ADMIRAL FIELD said, he must protest against the way in which the Under Secretary had censured him for not having inquired into the truth of the charges he had brought before the Committee. He had had no means of doing so. He had read the statements laid before him, and he had had an interview with the Chief Justice, and he only brought the matter before the House for the purpose of securing inquiry.

MR. S. BUXTON said, he did not censure the hon. and gallant Gentleman. He merely expressed a desire, if he recollected aright, that there should have been inquiry before such serious matters were brought before the Committee in this form. He thought it was somewhat hard that accusations of this kind should be brought before the House, and that not even a *prima facie* case should be made out in respect of them.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) said, a considerable time had elapsed without having this matter dealt with, and he would express a hope that the Colonial Office would not delay much longer.

MR. WADDY (Lincolnshire, Brigg) said, it was the bounden duty of the Chief Justice to have had those charges investigated at once by the Colonial

Office. Had he taken the proper steps they would not have remained over so long.

MR. HANBURY (Preston) said, he had just a few words to say about the large contribution for Imperial purposes of the Straits Settlements. These Settlements had to pay the whole of the cost of their defences, and he thought that was unjust. The contribution had recently been raised from £50,000 to £100,000. It seemed to him strange that because Singapore occupied a most important position it ought to have this exceptional charge thrown upon it. The Straits Settlements had recently spent £80,000 upon fortifications. They practically paid one-fifth of their revenue for these purposes, and in order to do so had to draw upon their fund which was reserved for sudden contingencies, and had also to stop public works. This was not fair treatment in the case of a Crown Colony. Even in proportion the Straits Settlements were not fairly treated. He fancied the War Office was the offender in the matter, and he should like to hear from the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any remonstrance had been addressed to the War Office in respect of the grievous burdens which had been imposed upon these Crown Colonies? They should be able to find a fair solution. The position as it stood was not fair, and he hoped they would have information on the subject.

*SIR C. W. DILKE said, he wished to say in a few words that, in his opinion, no case had been made out for exempting this wealthy Colony from paying for its own expenses.

SIR J. GORST replied, that the complaint of the hon. Member for Preston was that Singapore had not only to pay the cost of defending Singapore, but also to contribute a large portion of her Revenue to defending the British Empire.

MR. S. BUXTON said, that the delay in the case of the appeal of the Chief Justice of the Bahamas being heard before the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council was due to the length of the list of causes in that Court. The question as to the amount of the contribution of the Straits Settlements was under consideration. The contribution had been raised to £100,000, but it was

Mr. S. Buxton

only to run for three years. The Colonial Office was very anxious to deal liberally with the Colonies. However, all questions of this kind had to be considered by the Colonial Office in consultation with the War Office, and the Treasury and the Colonial Office had to abide by the decision come to by these Departments.

*SIR R. TEMPLE (Surrey, Kingston) said, the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies had not told the Committee what was the cost of the military charges against Singapore. It should be remembered that the troops were kept at Singapore not only to keep the native population in order, but to preserve a great Imperial strategical position. Nobody would deny that Singapore ought to pay her own military charges; but what the colonists complained of was that they should be made to pay also the cost of maintaining this strategical position, which was, of course, a purely Imperial matter. The real point was to ascertain what the amount of military charges at Singapore might be, including the coal-ing station, which must be Imperial. If the House knew this amount, then it could judge whether the sum of £100,000 imposed on Singapore was fair or not. This question was an extraordinary instance of the vicissitudes not only of human affairs, but of human sentiment. Singapore was once included in the Indian Empire, and it then had to pay no Imperial charges whatever. But the British merchants and traders residing there thought they ought to have the status of a Crown Colony. Their wishes were acceded to, and as a consequence they had to pay Crown Colony charges. They had now begun to lament the step they had taken, and with them it was a case of "out of the frying-pan into the fire," and they realised the proverb of King Stork and King Log. But that was no reason why they should not be protected and relieved of burdens which they were not justly called upon to bear.

SIR M. HICKS-BEACH (Bristol, W.): I find myself entirely unable to agree with the views expressed on this matter on this side of the House. I have had occasion to go carefully into this matter, and I would appeal to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies

not to listen too favourably to these views.

Vote agreed to.

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, that before the next Vote—the Vote for the Privy Council—was put, he wished to explain that it was the intention of the Government to move to reduce the Vote by £1,000 in respect of the salary of the Lord President of the Council. The full amount of the salary had been put down on the Votes, because it was impossible to say at the time they were prepared how long the present arrangement would last, or how long the present Government would remain in Office. But, as six months had now elapsed, the Government were able to reduce the Item for the salary of the Lord President of the Council by half.

MR. HENEAGE asked whether, if the Secretary to the Treasury moved this reduction, he would be precluded from moving the Amendment of which he had given notice—namely, the rejection of the entire salary of the Lord President of the Council?

THE CHAIRMAN: The Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman will be in Order.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £7,533, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Department of Her Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council and for Quarantine Expenses."

MR. HENEAGE (Great Grimsby) said, his object was to abolish altogether the salary of the Lord President of the Council. At the time the Minister for Agriculture had been constituted, he objected altogether to any fresh taxes being put on the Votes on account of the new Offices, because he held that there were some sinecures that might be abolished, and the money paid in salaries for these sinecures devoted to the Agricultural Department. He held the opinion that the Office of the Lord President of the Council had become a sinecure, just like the Office of Lord Privy Seal. It was stated by the Secretary to the Treasury that although £2,000 was asked as salary for the Office, the money was not drawn

by Lord Kimberley, and would not be drawn by him so long as he also held the Office of Secretary for India. If Lord Kimberley could perform the duties of the Secretary of State for India and President of the Council, anybody else could perform the duties of the two Offices also; and if Lord Kimberley did not want to draw the salary, nobody else would require to draw the salary. He therefore objected to the salary altogether. He held that the Lord President of the Council was not required at all. He thought the Office should be abolished, and the duties attached to it transferred to some other Office. The Lord President of the Council a few years back was not only an officer of a very high rank, but he had important duties to perform. He was responsible for everything connected with agriculture and education. Now he was responsible for neither, for there were two separate Offices and Ministers for Agriculture and Education. In fact, now the only duty attached to the Office of Lord President of the Council was a ceremonial duty. It might be said that the Office was a very ancient Office, and that on that account it ought to be continued. The same thing was said when he proposed the abolition of the salary of the Lord Privy Seal; but after a time that salary was abolished, and the Office of Lord Privy Seal was now held by the Prime Minister in addition to other Offices. The outcry had also been raised against the abolition of the Office of Judge Advocate General. It was said that it was a high and ancient Office, and that they could not possibly get on without it. But the Office was abolished, and they had got on without a Judge Advocate General for years—or, at least, there was no one in Parliament held the Office. He did not want to take away all the salary of the Lord President of the Council. He would like to see a rearrangement of the salaries attached to the various Offices of the Government in accordance with the duties discharged by each Office. He thought it was monstrous and ridiculous that Ministers like the President of the Board of Trade and President of the Local Government Board should have only the same salary as the Chief Commissioner of Works, the Postmaster General, the Secretary

Mr. Heneage

to the Admiralty, and the Secretary to the Treasury. He begged, in conclusion, to move the reduction of the Vote by £1,000 in respect of the salary of the Lord President of the Council.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A, Salaries, be reduced by £1,000" (Salary of the Lord President of the Council).—(*Mr. Heneage.*)

SIR W. HARCOURT: I very much sympathise with my right hon. Friend as to the abolition of sinecures. The Office of Lord Privy Seal is a sinecure, but the Office of Lord President of the Council is not. Orders in Council are extremely numerous, and require a responsible Minister to answer for them. The fact of one Minister discharging two Offices and only drawing the salary of one, as in Lord Kimberley's case, is not a sufficient ground for abolishing this ancient Office. If the argument of my right hon. Friend were to hold good, it would follow that the Office of First Lord of the Treasury ought to be abolished, because it has sometimes been held by a Minister who at the same time was Chancellor of the Exchequer. Under these circumstances, the arrangement which has just been indicated by the Secretary to the Treasury is solely of a temporary character.

*SIR C. W. DILKE said, he would like to see the Office of the Lord President abolished and its duties distributed among various Departments. Each Head of a Department should, moreover, be answerable for all Orders in Council which were issued in relation to his special Department.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES said, his sympathies were divided between the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the right hon. Member for Great Grimsby. On the one hand, he could not help recollecting that the Lord President of the Council held an Office that was of the highest antiquity and of great importance. There was a time when no act was done by the Crown except with the consent of the Privy Council. At that time the Lord President of the Council was a person of great importance, but at present the Lord President of the Council was but a mere shadow of his former glory. Under these circumstances, it seemed to him that the time had

arrived to put an end to the Office. The Lord President of the Council had nothing to do, and in doing that he was assisted by a large number of other persons. Restricting his observations to the Lord President, he was unable to see what duties he could possibly perform. He could see no reason for the President, or for such Office, or for the messengers; and unless a better case were made out for this shadow of a name than had been made up to the present moment, he thought the Committee would be inclined to carry out the policy the Government were pledged to by reducing the salary as proposed by the right hon. Member for Great Grimsby (Mr. Heneage).

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, that even if they took away the salary, they could not by that means abolish the Office of Lord President. They ought to look at the question in a broad spirit. The present Government had in its ranks the noble Lord who held the Office of Secretary of State for India, who had also undertaken the duties of Lord President of the Council, and who, therefore, did not require any salary in respect of the latter Office. But only six months of the present year had gone past, and supposing they reduced the salary as proposed, and then, before the other six months were over, another Government was to come into Office, or the present Government made a re-arrangement, it would create great difficulty in dealing with this question upon its own merits. To his mind, the chief objection to the proposal of his right hon. Friend was that it tied the hands of the present Government in case of a re-arrangement of Offices, and it also tied the hands of any other Government that might come into Office and might wish to have the Offices arranged in a different way. He thought there were strong reasons why the salary should not be taken away; and if the arrangement continued to the end of the next six months, of course the remainder of the salary would fall into the Exchequer. He did not say whether there should not be a general re-arrangement of Ministerial salaries. That was a large matter for the consideration of the Cabinet and, perhaps, for an inquiry by a Committee of that House; but he ventured to say they could not deal

with it on a Vote for the salary attaching to the Office.

SIR J. FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.) ventured to think that while economy was perfectly right in practice—and many small economies would, in the aggregate, provide funds for some very useful purpose—still that economy might be carried too far. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had told the Committee that there were many and important, if not laborious, functions attached to the Office of Lord President of the Council. This Minister had frequently to attend Her Majesty on business which could not be performed without the functions of the Sovereign. He had to explain to Her Majesty very many important matters of State, and, moreover, there had been many Lord Presidents who had taken a very considerable share of the work of their own Department and done good and useful work in the administration of education. He would put it to the Committee whether it was not desirable there should be an Office in which a statesman of long experience and high standing should be placed without his being charged with very onerous functions? He was quite sure the Office of Lord President had generally been filled by a statesman whose counsels could not well be dispensed with in the Government, and who, perhaps, would no longer have undertaken an Office which was charged with heavy Departmental duties such as belonged to the Post Office. The noble Lord who at present acted as Lord President of the Council had such great experience that no doubt he might be able to conduct the duties of both Departments without being too great a tax upon him. But it might not always be convenient to place in the Office of Secretary of State for India a Minister who could perform the Offices of both Departments; and it might be readily conceived that there might be times when the duties of the Secretary of State for India would be so absorbing that it would be impossible to perform the functions of President of the Council in addition. For his part, he recognised the appropriateness of the views expressed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and he thought it would be a great mistake to abolish the salary of the Office.

SIR W. HARCOURT said, he had been asked what was the business of the President of the Council. The President of the Council was still the head of the Education Department, and represented it in the House of Lords. He was supreme in the Department if he thought it right to interfere. To practically revolutionise the organisation of the head of the Department was a matter that ought to be done with full consideration. It was an extremely important question. They could not, after a five minutes' conversation, knock off the head of the Department.

SIR J. GORST (Cambridge University) said, it was quite clear, from what had been said by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that the post of Lord President of the Council was not a sinecure. He desired to call the attention of the Committee to quite a novel point, which he thought worthy the consideration of Committee of Supply. They had here a nobleman performing the functions of two important State officers—the Secretary of State for India and the Lord President of the Council. The salary of the Secretary of State for India was paid by the Indian taxpayer; the salary of the Lord President of the Council was paid by the British taxpayer. As the duties of the two Offices were discharged by the same individual, there was obviously an opening for economy. The whole of the economy was for the benefit of the English taxpayer, and no corresponding benefit whatever was to be derived from it by the Indian taxpayer.

*MR. A. C. MORTON said, if he rightly understood the matter, the Government were not going to pay any of this salary during the current year; and if they could get an assurance from the Chancellor of the Exchequer that during the Recess, or at any other reasonable time, the Government would re-consider the whole question, they ought to be satisfied for the present. It appeared to him that if a Minister who had to lead the House of Lords and take charge of the whole affairs of India, with its 280 millions of people, was also able to undertake the duties of Lord President of the Council, there could not be much to do in the latter capacity. He wanted to see this Office done away with, and the Minister of Education, or whatever

Minister did the work, should get the salary, if it was necessary to pay any salary. The Lord President of the Council was one of the Offices created years ago for the purpose of giving the money of the taxpayer to some nobleman or other person belonging to the West End of London. Such Offices should be abolished, and the salaries given to those Ministers who had to do the work, and who were responsible to Parliament. He gathered that, although the Government were not going to pay this money, they were going to keep it on the Vote. This was a dangerous thing to do, because if the Prime Minister or the Chancellor of the Exchequer were over-influenced by somebody who wanted a good salary and nothing to do, he might be led astray. Again, if the Department had got the money to spare on one item, they might spend it on another about which Parliament would then know nothing, because they would not be asked to vote it, which was a very objectionable practice.

MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS (Birmingham, S.) said, that as a reason for this Vote they had been told that the Lord President of the Council was really the head of the Education Department; but it would be interesting to know to what extent the Lord President of the Council had really, in later years, been accustomed to take upon himself any responsibility for the actual work of the Education Department, or had any active work in shaping its policy. All the real work was done by the Vice President.

SIR W. HARCOURT said, there was no doubt that the Lord President exercised a most active influence, and really he might say he was almost the principal factor in the Education Department. The Education Department was a Committee of which the Lord President was the head.

MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS asked, under the present Government, what part did the Lord President actually take in relation to the work of the Education Department? If he took little or no part in the work of the Education Department, it was evident that his services were not necessary. What would be the difficulty in making the Vice President President and giving him the full responsibility for the work of the Depart-

ment. The proposal of the Government was that the Committee, by its decision to-day, should leave attached to this Office a salary of at any rate £1,000 a year; but unless they could show more substantial reasons for this course, and could show that work was really performed in connection with the Office, the Committee would act wisely in declining to grant further salary to the Lord President.

MR. BARTLEY, who spoke from many years' service in the Department, said, it seemed to him that it would be altogether a mistake to leave the position of this matter as it was. The Lord President of the Council was nominally the head of the Department; but, as a rule, he did not take an active part in its administration, the educational work of the country being left to the Vice President under him, particularly if the Vice President happened to be a strong man. But the mischief came in here—the Lord President would want to interfere very often without knowing all the circumstances, and he very often did so interfere. The Vice President was the real head of the Education Department, to which his whole work was devoted; but instead of being, as he ought to be, the absolute head, he was only the second head, and the Lord President could now come down and interfere with the educational work as to the circumstances of which he might know nothing. This anomaly would have to be done away with, and the Vice President, who did the work, would have to be the head of the Education Department instead of having this sham head.

MR. HENEAGE said, he never intended to abolish the Office of Lord President, because it was absolutely necessary that there should be that Office, as its occupants had certain statutory duties to perform; but what he did contend was that these duties were so few and occupied so little time that the Office could very well be combined with another Office; and, therefore, there was no necessity for giving two salaries to two men to do the work. The Secretary to the Treasury had told them that the Government wanted this £1,000 in case the present holder of the Office declined any longer to keep it, and they had to appoint someone else. If this contingency should occur, the

Government had a Minister at the present moment with absolutely nothing to do—namely, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, who could hold the Office until the end of the year, so that the Government would not require the money. His idea had always been that the men who did the work should have the credit and also the power. If the Government did not want the money, why could they not accept his Motion? If they would not, then half a loaf was better than no bread; and if the Chancellor of the Exchequer would undertake to say the money should not be used, he would not put the Committee to the trouble of dividing.

*MR. NAOROJI (Finsbury, Central) pointed out that the Secretary of State for India performed certain other duties for which rich England saved £2,000, and made poor India pay him £5,000. What the Government ought to have done would have been to have given a corresponding relief to the people of India for utilising the Secretary of State for India, whose services belonged entirely to India. He hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would take care that such an injustice should not be done.

MR. A. C. MORTON asked for some pledge that the Government would consider this question.

SIR W. HARCOURT said, he regarded the present arrangement as altogether temporary; but he could not give a pledge that this money should not be used. It was not intended to be used; but, supposing there was such a catastrophe as a change of Government, he could not give any undertaking which would bind the succeeding Government. All he could say was that there were many circumstances connected with this Office which required consideration.

MR. HENEAGE said, he would not put the House to the trouble of a Division; but next Session he hoped to bring forward the question, with the view to having the whole of these subjects considered by a Committee.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES objected to the item of £1,623 for quarantine expenses, which he characterised as one of the most indefensible abuses which

existed in this country. On the Motherbank in the Solent there were four old battleships, with a superintendent, a mate, and a small staff of seamen who cost £1,153. There was never anybody in these ships but six or seven ancient moss-grown mariners who had nothing to do except keep the ships clean. Nobody used them, and people wondered why on earth they were there! They were there because 1,000 years or so ago some foolish person conceived the idea of quarantine. In these days such a relic of barbarism should not be kept up. Quarantine was not only useless, but it was positively mischievous and dangerous. It was useless because, if they were going to have yellow fever and the plague or other evil things imported into this country, they would not come by the Motherbank, but by the Dover and Calais boats which ran four, five, or six times a day, and carried thousands of passengers. Therefore, if quarantine was a proper method, it would be quite useless to keep up this establishment at Motherbank. Quarantine was only kept up by foreign nations in order to furnish them with a cheap method of taxing foreigners by requiring fees to be paid to their Consuls by ships for *visé-ing* Bills of Health. He did not think any gentleman would get up and defend the system of quarantine at all, or this form of it represented at Motherbank. If there was to be any form of quarantine at all it was not the Privy Council that should undertake it, but the Local Government Board. At the present time the Local Government Board was stirring in the matter, for they were going down to different ports and ordering certain things to be done in order to carry out the system of quarantine, the expenses for which had to be borne by the Local Authorities. These particular four ships with the superintendent and moss-grown mariners, together with expenses for the hire of boats, &c., cost £1,623. He believed nobody could defend such an outlay, or show that it had ever been of the slightest use. He believed it was a mere survival from the time of George IV., which had been allowed to go on until now, when he hoped the Secretary to the Treasury would consent to the reduction of the Vote by this sum. He begged to move the reduction of the Vote by £1,623 for the quarantine expenses.

Mr. Gibson Bowles

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That £5,910 be granted for the said Services."—(*Mr. Gibson Bowles.*)

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, that the quarantine establishment to which the hon. Member had referred was set up under an Act of Parliament passed a considerable time ago. He admitted that public opinion had changed very much of late years with respect to quarantine, but this system at Motherbank only applied to two very serious diseases—namely, to yellow fever and the plague, and affected no vessels except those coming from the West Indies and Central and South America. There were Conventions with Foreign Powers in respect of this station, and it would be necessary to consult them before they could abolish it, and, moreover, legislation would be necessary. His hon. Friend said these four vessels were never used. He was sorry to say that was not the case. Five ships had been in quarantine for yellow fever from the year 1889 to 1892—which was coming very near to the present time. One ship was in quarantine in May, 1889; two in April, 1891; one in January, 1892, and one in February, 1892. Then, again, with respect to the cost of maintaining these vessels, he was informed that the Customs had the service of the men when they were not engaged in quarantine duties, so that they were in continuous occupation. That being so, it was not such an extravagant and wasteful matter as the hon. Gentleman seemed to think. Again, there was a provision in this Vote for the inspection at Liverpool, Southampton, and certain other ports, under stated conditions, of vessels coming from the countries he had named by a medical officer, which acted as a prevention against the admission of the two diseases. The service was kept up by Statute, and it would be impossible to alter it without legislation. If the hon. Gentleman wished to raise the question he would suggest he should do so next Session by bringing forward a Motion for a Committee of Inquiry.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES was quite disposed to adopt the course suggested. The right hon. Gentleman spoke as if it was compulsory by the Act of George IV. to keep these four ships going, but as he read the Act there was nothing whatever

in it to prevent this reduction being made. Moreover, such a system could not be effectual as a prevention of disease, as the enormous passenger traffic was left untouched by these quarantine arrangements. He would, however, acting on the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman, withdraw his Amendment.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £108,090, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade and Subordinate Departments.

*CAPTAIN NAYLOR-LEYLAND (Colchester) said, he had one or two matters to bring before the Committee in relation to this Vote. He would like to address, first of all, some observations with regard to the new Labour Department of the Board of Trade. This Department ought to be of the greatest use to the workmen of the country. He appreciated what had been done. But there had been sins of commission and omission. They had heard at the last Election of the appointment of a Minister for Labour—a Minister for dealing with labour questions alone? That would be the natural outcome of the creation of a Labour Department. What had been done in this direction? Nothing. All that the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) had done was to change the name of the Commercial Department into that of the Department of Labour. After doing that the right hon. Gentleman came forward and said—"See what a good boy am I!" They ought to have a responsible Minister for Labour, but the right hon. Gentleman had practically done next to nothing. There was only one Department of State which was bound to look after labour as matters now stood, and, for his own part, he was grateful to the right hon. Gentleman for what had been done. There were four things which the Department did, and four things only, and it seemed to him that if nothing else was to be expected they had better not have such a Department. The first point was the issue of

The Labour Gazette, a monthly publication which no doubt contained a great deal of information, and which would be useful if circulated amongst trade centres. The other three points—and this was an extraordinary thing—were all matters of inquiry. It had been said that this was essentially "a Government of inquiry," and that was true. The Government forgot that the first duty of Parliament was to legislate, and whenever they were asked to do anything they always declined to legislate, and said—"We are going to inquire." The second point in the operations of the Department was to undertake special inquiries into important subjects bearing upon labour. It was not at all necessary to have a Department of the State to do that, for if there were subjects connected with labour that required inquiring into, a Select Committee, a Departmental Committee, or a Special Commission would be sufficient for the purpose. The third duty of the Department was to carry out such inquiries as might be ordered by Parliament from time to time, and the fourth duty was to issue a Report of its proceedings. If the President of the Board of Trade were to get up and tell the Committee that these four points covered all that the Department could do in the interest of the working classes, as a Member of the Opposition he was glad to hear it, but from the point of view of the labouring classes it was a circumstance to be regretted. If they wished to make this Department a reality and not a sham, they should take away whatever work connected with labour other Departments had to do, and place all the work under the jurisdiction of a responsible Minister. They should, for instance, take the factory legislation out of the hands of the Home Secretary, they should take the Board of Hygiene from the Local Government Board and the Labour Correspondence from the Board of Trade, and they should relieve the Colonial Office and the Foreign Office of all their labour business, and when they had done that they might be said to have a nucleus of the proper Labour Department. They would then have a Department which would have the confidence of the working class of the country, and that was one of the first things which a Minister for Labour ought to possess. He contended, there-

fore, that the right hon. Gentleman opposite was guilty of the sin of omission in not having set up a proper Department of Labour. All the right hon. Gentleman had done had been to take the Commercial and Statistical Department as it was and add to it four Inspectors. His next point against the right hon. Gentleman was his sin of commission. He had 25 Labour Correspondents, as to whose appointment he was to be congratulated, but he could not be congratulated on the method he had adopted of appointing these gentlemen. They were in every sense of the word Government officials, and they received Government pay of from £15 to £20 a year. The very first thing that ought to be demanded of them was that they should occupy the position of Government officials, and be non-political in every sense of the word. But what was the fact? Why, that 17 of them were without doubt Gladstonian Liberals. He could find out nothing about the other eight, but it was quite likely that they were of the same political complexion. In one case in his own district a man named Joseph Robinson took a van through the Harwich Division. He held meetings in every village, and said to the villagers—"You are going to have an election very soon. If you vote for the Gladstonian candidate you will get £1 a week wages, and a 3d. loaf for 1d. The rich will become poor, and the poor rich." Shortly after that—three days as a rule—the Radical candidate for the Division went into the village, and said—"Mr. Joseph Robinson was here a day or two ago, and told you about the Radical candidate, who was going to give you £1 a week in wages. I am the gentleman of whom he spoke." No doubt this was fair political warfare, but what he objected to was that after the General Election—directly the President of the Board of Trade came into Office—the first man he appointed as Local Labour Correspondent was this man Joseph Robinson. This was showing a regard for one's political friends, and an appreciation of their merits which was startling. But Mr. Joseph Robinson's case was only one out of 17. The abuse of which he complained had been 17 times repeated; and though he believed that Mr. Robinson had resigned, that did not get them away from the fact of his

Captain Naylor-Leyland

appointment. Perhaps the President of the Board of Trade would be able to say, in the first place, why Mr. Robinson had been appointed, and, in the second place, why he had resigned. He did not wish to be hard on the President of the Board of Trade, for he believed that "evil communications corrupt good manners." He was very much afraid that the right hon. Gentleman had been associating lately with the Chancellor of the Duchy. If that was so, he would tell the right hon. Gentleman that he had a most dangerous associate, because, if there ever were flagrant cases of the appointment of political allies to Government offices, they had been perpetrated recently by the Chancellor of the Duchy. He begged to move that Item A be reduced by a sum of £1,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A, Salaries, be reduced by £1,000."—(*Captain Naylor-Leyland.*)

MR. JESSE COLLINGS (Birmingham, Bordesley) said, he agreed with the hon. and gallant Member who had last spoken with regard to the appointment of Labour Correspondents. Of course, the right hon. Gentleman was responsible for the appointments whoever actually made them; and they reflected anything but credit on the Department. In Birmingham a gentleman of great ability had been appointed, but a gentleman distinguished by extreme partisanship, who had brought serious accusations against the Small Arms Factory, every one of which had been disproved. This gentleman's reports would be read in connection with the individuality of the writer. This gentleman's great merit no doubt was that he had the honour of doing his best to defeat him (Mr. Jesse Collings) at the General Election. A hundred men could have been selected in Birmingham, each perfectly qualified to furnish the necessary information, but the appointment had been made as a reward for services rendered to the Gladstonian Party. Then as to *The Labour Gazette*. People who understood these subjects must laugh when reading the monthly reports of some of the Labour Correspondents. He did not understand the majority of the Reports, but this was the sort of thing that was reported about Birmingham—

"Engineers and machinists are slack; there is an improved demand for bedsteads; galvanised iron makers are receiving good orders."

These contributions to *The Labour Gazette* were little jerky paragraphs, which did not contain as much information as the daily papers of Birmingham, the latter obtaining their facts from merchants, manufacturers, and others—sources of information to which the Labour Correspondents, as a rule, were not admitted. To his mind the Department had been lowered through the way it had lent itself to political partisanship.

MR. AUSTIN: What did your Party do?

MR. JESSE COLLINGS said, it was not a question of what their Party did. If the hon. Member referred to the Unionists he would challenge him to bring any charge against them.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Question before the Committee has reference to a reduction of Item A—the salary of the President of the Board of Trade.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS: The reduction touching the administration of the Department.

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes; but only so far as the present President of the Board of Trade is concerned.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS said, the right hon. Gentleman was responsible for all appointments made, and every branch of the Administration came under review. He now wished to raise a question of great importance to the shopkeepers of the United Kingdom; he referred to the administration of the Weights and Measures Act of 1889. This might appear, at first sight, to be a matter which did not affect the general public, but really great inconvenience was occasioned by this administration, and great annoyance was given to shopkeepers and manufacturers. No doubt the President of the Board of Trade and the Board of Trade generally were anxious to do the best they could for the administration of the Act, but the complaint was that they took too much of an official view of the grievances complained of. This was not a question of securing just weights and scales and measures, for they were all agreed as to the necessity of that. Parliament had interested itself in the matter from the earliest times, and there were 40 or 50

measures on the Statute Book dealing with it. The Act of 1889 said that—

"Weighing instruments shall be stamped and certified by an Inspector under this Act."

Now, the grievance was that when a weighing instrument was stamped—at the place at which it was made or anywhere else—if it was taken into another locality that stamp was no longer of any use. The local Inspector insisted that he should put a stamp on, and, therefore, the weighing instrument was stamped for the second time, whether or not the balance were just. He had read the Act of 1889 carefully, and he did not think it required this second stamping. The difficulty arose, he thought, from the model regulations which the Board of Trade had issued, and that, he believed, was the opinion of the hon. Member for North Hackney, who had spoken some time ago on this subject, and who had given it most careful attention. The Act of 1878, which had not been repealed, was, he believed, referred to in the Act of 1889 as the principal Act—

THE CHAIRMAN: The matter the right hon. Member is referring to comes under the Item I., K., or L., but the present reduction is moved on Item A.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS said, they had pursued this matter up to the point of the President of the Board of Trade saying "aye" or "no" to the remedy proposed. Therefore, they were concerned with a pure act of administration, for which the President of the Local Government Board was responsible. The Act of 1878 said that the stamping of any weight or measure by an Inspector would hold good in any part of the United Kingdom until such weight or measure was found to be unjust, and that the weight or measure should not be liable to be restamped. He was aware that that applied to weights and measures, but would the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade say whether the non-extension of that to scales and weighing instruments was not an oversight? Was it deliberately intended that scales and weighing instruments should be excluded? If so, that opened up another question. But seeing the frequent reference to the Act of 1878 as the principal Act, it seemed to him

that the omission was accidental. Beams and scales were made in Birmingham, London, Bristol, Liverpool, but principally in Birmingham. In these cities the beams and scales were sent to the Inspectors—who were trained men having staffs under them—and were duly stamped and certified as correct. That might be on a Monday. They were sent on the Tuesday, say, into Dorsetshire. The moment they arrived at their destination, the Inspector there said—

“I do not care whether they are just or unjust—they bear the stamp of the Inspector of the place of manufacture, a properly-qualified man, and therefore, presumably, the instruments are just, but I must put my stamp on them as well, and failing that being done you, the owner, are liable to fine and punishment.”

He would mention the two cases which happened near Birmingham. When the notice was sent out requiring tradesmen to have their scales seen to under the Act, one tradesman sent all his scales to the Birmingham Inspector to have them verified and stamped. That was done at the cost of 60s. Another tradesman sent his scales to a maker to have them adjusted who in his turn sent them to the Inspector's office to have them duly stamped. These two sets were returned and within a week the Inspector of Balsall Heath, just outside Birmingham, sent to these tradesmen to tell them they were liable to punishment unless he put his stamp on the instruments. That was the first case. The second occurred at a place called Sturchley, about three miles from the centre of Birmingham. A chemist desiring to have his scales accurately adjusted sent them to a manufacturer to get them put right and stamped at the Birmingham office. When they were returned he was told by the Inspector at King's Norton that he must send his scales there to be stamped, as the Birmingham stamp was no good. It was obvious that these tradespeople were subjected to serious delay, expense, and annoyance by the arbitrary action to which they were subjected. He had to-day asked a question as to whether the weighing instruments used in the Government offices, in the dockyards, and the Post Offices were liable to be stamped by local Inspectors, and the reply was no, they had an Inspector of their own. How would that work? If the dock-

yard authorities purchased goods in Portsmouth or Plymouth they would be weighed in scales bearing two stamps, but they would be weighed again in the dockyards to see if they were right in scales which did not bear a second stamp, and which, therefore, by the ordinary standard which applied to tradespeople, were illegal. The Act of 1889 aimed at doing away with anomalies, and he believed that to a large extent it did remove them, but the fault was with the administration.

MR. MUNDELLA (interrupting) said, he had been most unwilling to interrupt the right hon. Gentleman, but the matter in question was one the Board of Trade had nothing to do with. It was under Statute. He should be most happy to consider what the right hon. Gentleman had to say, and he could assure him that he (Mr. Mundella) was the last person to put any obstacle in the way of trade. The Local Authorities made the bye-laws under which this re-stamping was required, and without altering the Statute it was impossible to change those bye-laws. The County Councils in the country districts were responsible for the bye-laws.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS said, this statement brought him to the point. The bye-laws were revised by the Board of Trade, and rightly so, because the nearer they approached to uniformity in this matter of weights and scales the better it was for the trading community.

MR. MUNDELLA : Hear, hear !

MR. JESSE COLLINGS said, he complained that the right hon. Gentleman took an official view of the matter, and the object of this discussion was to try and induce him to look at it from a trader's point of view. When the right hon. Gentleman was convinced, he was sure no one would be more anxious to get rid of the difficulties which existed, and which referred not only to Birmingham manufacturers, but to the various trades in the United Kingdom. The right hon. Gentleman had pointed out on a previous occasion that scales and weighing machines were liable to injury in transit, and that, therefore, they should be examined and stamped in the district in which they were used as well as the district in which they were made. In reply to that it was only necessary to point

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out that the greatest care was taken in packing them, the work being entrusted to none but the most experienced and skilful packers. There was considerable liability to injury, however, in sending the machines in the carriers' carts from the tradesmen's premises to the places of business of the local Inspectors. Weigh-bridges and platforms it was, of course, necessary to adjust and stamp after they were fixed, for they were machines that had to be sent away from the manufacturers in parts, and that required to be built up afterwards. No doubt the local Inspector was the proper person to stamp machines of that kind. Some definition should be adopted to separate the two classes of scales. It was not for him (Mr. Jesse Collings) to suggest a definition. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade had got over greater difficulties than that, and no doubt he would be able to provide a satisfactory definition if he took the matter in hand. But, certainly, these were matters which carried great annoyance to the traders throughout the country. The powers of the Inspectors varied, and the lives of the shopkeepers in many districts were made a burden to them, for they had to submit to the harassing regulations rather than incur that which would almost mean ruin to them—namely, a report that their scales were unjust. In a letter he had received on this subject from Birmingham the writer said—

“Mr. Mundella does not appear to understand our grievance. Our contention is that there should be one fixed standard in testing weighing instruments, and that an instrument stamped by an Inspector in one district should not be rejected in another on account of its not having the local stamp.”

He went on to say—

“It is an extortion and an injustice.”

The tradesmen of the country had other grievances. For instance, it was complained that the Inspector in Plymouth had refused to verify balances, saying, in the first place, that all scales should have the borough number on them; and, secondly, that the balances registered the weight in two places. Well, to his knowledge, for the past 40 years balances had always registered the weight in two places. Some of the Inspectors did not know their business. He was aware that

they had to pass an examination—those employed after the passing of the Act—but they were not all acquainted with the properties of different kinds of weighing instruments. This question was thought of far more importance in Germany, France, and other Continental countries, where they had a Commission of scientific men to determine the qualities and properties of different weighing instruments as they were invented. But in this country it was all left to the Inspector. Take an instance. There was a scale used in nearly all Post Offices—a modern invention, which was extremely nice in registering called the “accelerative scale.” In some districts in Yorkshire and the North of England the Inspectors recommended that scale as being good; but there were other places in which the Inspectors warned the traders that if they used that sort of thing they would not stand it. His contention was that this matter should not be left to the Inspectors, or, at any rate, there should be some appeal to the Board of Trade. There was a scale borrowed from the French called the “vibrating scale,” which was still more nice and accurate; but this, like the others, was subject to the opinion of the Inspectors whether it was good or not. As to the remark of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, that this was a question of Statute and not of administration, he would remind him that the Board of Trade had already, in answer to an appeal made to it, issued regulations putting an end to a grievance. The same thing should be done in regard to inspection. The right hon. Gentleman admitted that he had power over all the bye-laws and regulations that any Local Authority might choose to make. First of all, these regulations must be submitted to the Board of Trade to be amended or rescinded. If the Board of Trade would insist upon the rules all over the country being made uniform, the traders would know what they had to put up with. Most of the existing rules had been passed directly after the Act came into force, and when there had been little experience of its operation. No doubt the rules were as good as could be passed at the time. But since then there had been an enormous amount of experience

of the working of the Act, and he thought it the duty of the President of the Board of Trade to frame the regulations in accordance with that experience. The big towns from which the scales were issued in the first place, all possessed capable Inspectors, and the weighing instruments were stamped by those officials. The Inspector in a small district should not be allowed, for the sake of the fee, to say—"I do not care whether your scale is just or unjust; and even though it has been verified by a capable Inspector, I will test it again, and put a second stamp on it, and if you do not submit I will summon you before the Borough Justices, and have you punished for using an unjust scale." The last time this subject was raised he was asked—"Do not you want scales to be examined by Local Authorities at all?" Yes; when a scale got old it should be examined locally, re-adjusted, and stamped. But this was not a matter of adjustment; it was one of pettifoggery and unnecessary interference with scales already adjusted and stamped.

SIR M. HICKS-BEACH (Bristol, W.): I can quite understand that the right hon. Gentleman, representing as he does a great centre of industry where these weighing machines are made, should have thought it his duty to bring the matter at some length before the Committee; but I would express the hope that the question may not be much further pursued, because it is one of a far wider character than is covered by the Vote now before the Committee, and there are many other points in the Vote to which hon. Members desire to call attention. What the right hon. Gentleman has really done in his speech this evening is to reiterate the principle which deputations from Birmingham brought before me when I was President of the Board of Trade, which may be a good principle in itself, but which is quite contrary to the Weights and Measures Act of 1878 and the amending Act of 1889. The principle which the trade of Birmingham desire now to establish is the principle of the central administration of the Weights and Measures Act as against local administration. [Mr. JESSE COLLINGS: Not at all.] The right hon. Gentleman desires there should be, as in Germany, a Com-

mission which shall inspect these different weights and measures and weighing machines.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS: When I referred to the Commission I referred only to the giving an opinion on any new invention, or new kind of scale which modern scientific and mechanical skill might have invented, and I argued that we should not leave it to these Inspectors to say—"This is a new thing; I do not want it." That is quite a different matter.

SIR M. HICKS-BEACH: I really know; I have had it all before me. They desire there should be a central and not a local administration of these Acts. [Mr. JESSE COLLINGS: Not at all.] At any rate, he wishes that the stamp of the Inspector at Birmingham, which is the centre of the trade, should run throughout England. He wishes that the Inspectors in other parts of England should perform their duties in the same way as the Inspectors of Birmingham, and that they should be as competent as the Inspectors of Birmingham. He complains they are not so. The whole of his speech, I will venture to say, pointed to the administration of these Acts under central control. That is contrary to the Acts themselves. It might be a very good change, and I am not arguing whether it is or not, because this is not the time to do so. When I brought in the Amendment Act of 1889 I deliberately determined to base that Act on the system which I found in existence, because I was quite sure that if I had attempted to take from the Local Authorities the powers they possessed under the original Act I should have had no chance of passing that amending Act. Take this point of stamping weighing machines. The right hon. Gentleman proposes practically to deprive the Local Authority, say of my County of Wiltshire, of the power to stamp weighing machines in their county, although under the Act they are responsible for the administration of the Act, and for seeing, through their Inspectors, that the weighing machines are correct. That is what is suggested, and that they should take in all cases the stamp of the Inspector at Birmingham, where the weights are made. That is depriving them of the authority they

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now possess. He wishes, as I have said, further control by a Central Authority over all these Local Authorities in the matter of their bye-laws—in the matter of their Inspectors and their qualifications. I do not desire to enter into this question of Central Authority, but I do hold very strongly that what the clients of the right hon. Gentleman really wish would not be attained; and even if it were possible to comply with their request as to stamping their machines, they would still press for a further approach towards central administration, and that could only be achieved by an entire alteration of the existing laws.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I may say I have been asked by my constituents to support my right hon. Friend in his application to the Board of Trade. I think my right hon. Friend who has just spoken has somewhat misapprehended the intention and object of the right hon. Member for Bordesley. Certainly we do not desire that this system should be centralised in its character. What we desire is that the practical working of the system should not be changed from what it has been for a very long course of years. Within very recent times—in fact, the period during which my right hon. Friend has been at the head of the Board of Trade, the working of the system—I am not saying the law—appears to have been changed.

MR. MUNDELLA: I can assure my right hon. Friend it has not been changed in the least. The regulations are just the same.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I did not say the regulations had been changed. Perhaps if the right hon. Gentleman listens to what I say he will understand me. I said the working of the system appears to have been changed. I am not now talking of the Board of Trade, or any interference by the Board of Trade. As a matter of fact, until very recently, scales which had been stamped in Birmingham were not required to be stamped a second time at Plymouth. But now, under the existing working of the system, Birmingham and Plymouth are just as far apart, just as far separated, as France and England, and the stamp which has been put upon the scales in Birmingham by a qualified official is treated as abso-

lutely of no value whatever by another qualified official in Plymouth. That is calculated in a most serious way to interfere with trade. My right hon. Friend says—and I quite believe him—that it is not the object of the Board of Trade to interfere with commerce. Of course it is not. It is their business to facilitate commerce, and whenever any difficulty of this kind arises to find some practical way to overcome it. I do not know whether it is due to a change of opinion among the Local Authorities, or what, but undoubtedly there has been a change in the practice. There is no pretence, as my right hon. Friend opposite appears to imagine, on the part of Birmingham to say that the Local Authority at Plymouth is not to be allowed to examine a scale, and is to take for granted the correctness of a scale because it has the Birmingham mark. They may test the scales as often as they like, and if found to be incorrect they may see that an alteration is made. What we complain of is, that without going into the question whether the scale is correct or not, they insist upon putting a second mark upon it and obtaining a second fee. And if you can suppose the same set of scales, as might happen to be the case, in the course of one month went from the North of England to the South they might pass through the jurisdiction of five different Local Authorities and every Local Authority would affix a separate stamp and take a fee. That is perfectly ridiculous and absurd. There is no objection to any one Local Authority ascertaining that the stamp of a previous Local Authority has been correctly affixed, but then they ought not to demand when they find the scales correct either a fee or the right to stamp a second time. I hope I have made it clear what is the contention of the Birmingham trade, and I think it will be found to be the contention of every other locality in which this particular article is manufactured. The difficulty has only arisen of late. I am not complaining of the Board of Trade. It may have arisen from local circumstances, a sudden excess of zeal on the part of Local Authorities on finding out a field where they might gather fees. But whatever be the reason, it is the business of the Board of Trade to find a remedy. When I went to the Board of

Trade the present Lord Farrer told me that, although the Board of Trade was not the first titular office, it was the proud boast that everything they did was done on commercial principles and the principles of common sense. I hope that has not changed. Here is a common-sense view of the situation. Under existing circumstances trade is being seriously hampered; it was not hampered before. I admit there has been no alteration of the law, and, so far as I know, no alteration of the regulations of the Board of Trade. But if under the law an interference with trade has arisen, owing to new circumstances which did not arise before, it is the business of the Board of Trade to remove it. We do not want to centralise the matter or interfere in any way with the right of the Local Authority to deal with matters within their own province; but it is perfectly ridiculous to treat every Local Authority as if it were an absolutely separate Kingdom in itself, and as though a Local Authority in one place was competent to take absolutely no notice of what was done by a Local Authority in another place, especially when each of these Local Authorities is working under statutory regulations, which insure that the work shall be done by qualified officials. I hope my right hon. Friend will not give anything like an official answer to this, but will promise to look into the matter with a view to finding some remedy for what really is a considerable grievance.

MR. MUNDELLA: I think I had better dispose of this matter at once, as there are other subjects which Members of the Committee are anxious to reach. I can only confirm what has been said by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir M. Hicks-Beach). When the Act of 1889 was passed it gave powers to the Local Authorities to make bye-laws regulating both the use of scales and weights and measures. Weights and measures need not be re-stamped, but scales were specially omitted. My right hon. Friend (Mr. Jesse Collings) says that if I was familiar with what was done at Birmingham I should know that a scale always arrived in an accurate condition at its destination. I would remind him of a letter of complaint which

he sent to me not long ago in which these words occur—

“Scales are made to such a nicety that they very easily get out of order.”

County Councils have almost invariably, under the Act passed by my right hon. Friend opposite, adopted this bye-law, which I am advised they have a statutory right to pass—

“In any district where there is a properly certified Inspector, and where the offices are open to the public every week-day, the Local Authority may require that any weighing instrument lawful to be used for trade in their district shall be treated and stamped by their Inspector, although such weighing instrument may have been stamped in the district of another Local Authority.”

When the right hon. Gentleman a few weeks ago brought this matter under my notice I referred to what was done by the Local Authorities. And do let me point out to the right hon. Gentleman that they have a right to protect the consumer, and a very important duty is incumbent upon them in that respect. I took up the last Report of the London County Council with respect to this question of the Weights and Measures Act. They say—

“The Acts require that all weights, measures, and weighing instruments shall, before being used in trade, be verified and stamped by an Inspector of Weights and Measures, and during the year the numbers of these appliances dealt with by the Council's staff were as follow:—
Number of weights verified and stamped, 228,628; number of measures verified and stamped, 456,280; number of weighing instruments verified and stamped, 22,684; number of weights rejected as unfit for stamping, 28,614; number of measures rejected as unfit for stamping, 171,913; number of weighing instruments rejected as unfit for stamping, 5,094.”

Twenty per cent. of the number, therefore, were rejected. Surely it is of the utmost importance to London that the County Council under this Act shall carry out that careful inspection which they have done hitherto, and which is so essential in the interests of the consumer. Let me point out to the right hon. Gentleman that even these figures I have quoted are much below the figures for the year before. Instead of being 22,000, as this year, the number last year was 53,577. The large number in the earlier year, as stated in the County Council's Report, was due to

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th fact that the requirement for verifying and stamping weighing instruments had only recently come into force ; and, as those appliances already in use are gradually verified and stamped, a reduction in the number must take place, as new scales only will require to be stamped. No doubt there has been some complaint, and I should be only too happy, if I could see my way without injuring the consumer, and without depriving the County Council of the duty they owe to their own constituents, to prevent, or relieve from, this necessity of re-stamping. I see some difficulties in the way, and I do not want to make promises I cannot fulfil. Suppose, for instance, that the Inspector examines a number of scales, say in an ordinary shop, and finds some accurate and some inaccurate, and gets the whole properly re-adjusted. What is the best way of testifying that they are re-adjusted so that when another Inspector comes round he may know they are in good condition? Why, that on such a date they were duly re-stamped by the Inspector, and surely there should be some mark upon them to show that they were accurate and in good condition. That is really what is practically being done. I am not in a position to break the law, however harsh it may be with respect to some of the manufacturers, but I am most anxious to relieve manufacturers of any difficulty in respect of the transmission of weighing instruments and scales, and, where accurate, to avoid the necessity and cost of having them re-stamped. I will submit the Act as it now stands to the Law Officers of the Crown, and ascertain whether the Local Authorities have the right to re-stamp or not. If they have, it will be my duty to inquire whether the re-stamping is considered by the Local Authority a matter of such importance that the Act must be adhered to or not. I respectfully say that, after all, this is not a matter of administration, but a matter of the construction of an Act of Parliament, and I do not think I can at once, on the demand of the right hon. Gentleman, reverse the practice of my predecessor in the working of the Act for the last four years. I can only promise my right hon. Friend to deal with the case in a reasonable

time, and after a proper investigation the whole matter shall receive attention.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS asked where in the Act two stamps were required?

MR. MUNDELLA : Two stamps are not required, but the Act gives power to make bye-laws requiring re-stamping.

MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS said, the President of the Board of Trade did not quite realise what the right hon. Member for the Bordesley Division asked for. The right hon. Gentleman had spoken of the testing which took place, say by the London County Council, with a view to ascertain whether a consignment of scales from Birmingham were accurate or not. But, supposing one of these scales was sent to Croydon, the person endeavouring to sell it without the stamp of the Croydon Authorities was apparently liable to a penalty. That appeared to him to be perfectly ridiculous, and it was doing the work twice over. The right hon. Gentleman said the law required this to be done, that the Local Authorities had power to insist on it. But the bye-laws and regulations under which the Local Authorities acted required the assent of the Board of Trade, and that being so, this was a matter of administration by the Board of Trade, because the Board of Trade ought to have the power to prevent obnoxious legislation, having no practical utility, being insisted on in their bye-laws. It was not sought to do anything which would diminish the protection the consumer received in relation to the accuracy of the scales, but what was contended was, that the necessity of insisting on these repeated tests was an unnecessary interference with the trade of the country, which the Board of Trade ought to stop.

MR. M. AUSTIN (Limerick, W.) wished to make a few observations in reply to the hon. and gallant Member for Colchester (Captain Naylor-Leyland), and the Member for the Bordesley Division (Mr. Jesse Collings), as to the appointment of local labour correspondents. These appointments had been persistently attacked during the Session, but he, as a representative of the working population, heartily endorsed the action taken by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, who had earned the gratitude of the workers

by appointing these correspondents to give an insight into the condition of the industrial population. He was inclined to think, if they went a little below the surface of this question, it would not be difficult to find the cause of the attacks on these appointments. He thought it was because there was not enough of the Birmingham mixture in them, rather than any desire to advocate the cause of the workers, which actuated the attacks of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen on these appointments. The right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Jesse Collings) had declared there was a good deal of political bias in these appointments, but he thought, if they only looked at the miserably small salaries of £15 or £20 a year paid to these men, that the House had little right to raise the question of politics with regard to them. There were 25 correspondents in the United Kingdom, and the total income of the whole of them was only £500 a year. He thought the best answer to the attacks of gentlemen in the House of Commons was the fact that not a single complaint had been made by any single Trade Society in the United Kingdom against a single one of the correspondents appointed. They had met with the general approbation of the workers, and he would therefore deprecate altogether the attacks which had been made upon them. The Member for Bordesley Division talked as if these appointments almost threatened the Empire. If the correspondents were all sound Tories, he wondered would so much be heard about them. He did not think so, and he would only hope that the number would be extended, and that the salaries would also be taken into consideration by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade. The Board of Trade, since the appointment of the right hon. Gentleman, and indeed all Departments of the Government, had done all in their power to further the interests of the workers in the United Kingdom, and he saw no cause for the complaints made by hon. Gentlemen in that House.

MR. MUNDELLA said, that he had nothing whatever to do with the selection of the labour correspondents. A Committee of the Board of Trade, of which the Comptroller was Chairman, and of

which Mr. Burnett was also a member, made that selection, and the names, irrespective of Party politics, were then submitted *en bloc* to him for his approval. He had never heard of Mr. Joseph Robinson until he heard of his resignation. He could not understand what ground of complaint could be made against the labour correspondent at Birmingham, for Mr. Burnett had himself gone down there and selected him. It was monstrous to say that these appointments were flagrant political appointments, and he was certain that if his predecessor came back to Office he would not interfere with one of them. As to the permanent officials, there had been three additional labour correspondents appointed. One was a very able lady, who had taken University honours; another was Mr. Drummond, a well-known working-class leader and a Conservative; and the third was a gentleman about whose politics he knew nothing whatever. It had been said that 17 out of the 25 labour correspondents were Gladstonians. That was very much the proportion of Gladstonians amongst working men generally; and he had no doubt that that proportion would go on increasing. But whatever the correspondents were, their appointments were due to no action on his part. He would challenge any Member to say that *The Labour Gazette* had shown any tinge of partiality in respect of political or labour questions. Under these circumstances, he thought hon. Gentlemen opposite had no cause of complaint.

ADMIRAL FIELD said, he thought the President of the Board of Trade had taken the criticisms about the payments of these labour correspondents somewhat too seriously. For his part, he would be the last to accuse the right hon. Gentleman of any Party feeling in the matter. He did not care twopence whether the labour correspondents were Radicals or Conservatives, so long as they were the best men for the posts, and he thought the right hon. Gentleman had used his patronage very well. He asked the right hon. Gentleman to turn his thoughts in another direction. The right hon. Gentleman was the father of the Mercantile Marine. The Mercantile Marine was not virtually under the guardianship

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of the right hon. Gentleman, and he thought the right hon. Gentleman and all concerned with the Board of Trade ought to give their consideration as to how far the Mercantile Marine could be made serviceable to the nation in the crisis of a great war. The right hon. Gentleman had some able advisers. Above all, he had a distinguished naval officer in his service, and he wanted the right hon. Gentleman to put that officer into the Intelligence Department of the Admiralty with the view of settling, as it was suggested by Lord Charles Beresford in a recent address, the question of trade routes, and forming a plan of action for the merchant ships in the event of war. He wanted the right hon. Gentleman to direct the naval officer to consider this question in concert with the Admiralty. There was another important question to which he desired to direct the attention of the right hon. Gentleman. Lord Charles Beresford, in the address already referred to, had stated the signalling in the Mercantile Marine was deplorable. In fact, there was hardly anyone in the Service instructed in signalling. Lord Charles said that, in order to test the signalling of a Mercantile Marine, he signalled 32 merchant ships in the course of a voyage, and only seven of the 32 took the signal in and answered. In a time of war, if a cruiser could not make itself understood by the merchant ship, the result might be deplorable. Signalling was, in his (Admiral Field's) opinion, bad enough in the Navy, but in the Mercantile Marine it was very bad. He thought that one officer at least in every merchant ship should be educated in signalling, and should be able to pass an examination in signalling—

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: So they are.

ADMIRAL FIELD said, he could not accept the hon. Member as an authority on the subject. He thought a distinguished naval officer like Lord Charles Beresford a more competent judge. There was a Report on lighthouses and the inspection of lighthouses furnished to the House, in which it stated that the light on the Deal Pier Head and the lights on the Dover Admiralty Pier were insufficient, and he hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would see that the recommendations of the Report were

carried out. He also wished to know whether anything had been done to carry out the recommendations of the Light Commission upon lighthouses and lightships with regard to establishing electric communication between lighthouses and lightships from the shore?

SIR M. HICKS-BEACH said there was no item in the Vote under consideration more important than the item relating to the inspection of ships' provisions under the Act of 1892. He wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether Inspectors had been appointed under the new Act, and what were the ports at which it was proposed to station them? He also wished to know what progress had been made with the building of the Patent Office?

MR. MUNDELLA said, he could assure the hon. and gallant Member for Eastbourne that there was a most perfect understanding between the Admiralty and the Board of Trade on the subject of trade routes for merchant ships. He could also assure the hon. and gallant Gentleman that instructions were given and examinations held in signalling in the Mercantile Marine, and that all merchant vessels ought to be in a position to respond to signals. But he intended to make further inquiries in the matter. On the subject of lighthouses and lightships, the whole of the lightships were attended by Trinity House, and there was nothing in the Vote for that Department, while, as he had stated the previous day in answer to the question, a good deal of work had been done in establishing electrical communication between the shore and the lighthouses. It was intended to lay on the Table a Supplementary Estimate for the work. In reply to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bristol, on the subject of the inspection of ships' provisions, he had to say that as soon as he came into Office he gave his immediate attention to the Act which had just been passed. Steps were at once taken to obtain a competent class of Inspector in order that the Act might be put into proper operation. A staff of 14 Inspectors had been appointed, and they were stationed at the five principal ports of the country—London, Liverpool, Glasgow, Cardiff, and Shields, and they had definite instructions

that the inspection of the provisions of all ships were to be carried out. Between July 17 and September 2 of the present year 273 ships had been inspected, and in 96 cases provisions were condemned, while 13 ships had some slight defect in their provisions. When these defects were pointed out to the shipowners they were at once remedied, and indeed he hoped to be able to carry out this most important matter in connection with the comfort and well-being of seamen without making it burdensome or oppressive to the shipowners. Only one vessel had been detained, and that only for a short time?

SIR M. HICKS-BEACH asked whether it was only proposed to appoint Inspectors for the ports mentioned?

MR. MUNDELLA said, it was found to be very easy to send an Inspector to any port when necessary, and it was believed that the 14 Inspectors would be able to carry out the whole work. With regard to the Patent Office he had not the information required, but he would obtain it, and give it to the right hon. Gentleman on Monday.

SIR M. HICKS-BEACH said he only wanted the right hon. Gentleman to give his attention to the matter.

*MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet) said, it was somewhat difficult to follow the course of the Government in this matter. After listening to the right hon. Gentleman he had come to the conclusion that, at any rate, the appointment of Labour Correspondents had been handed over to a Committee the political convictions of which were pretty well known, and behind which the right hon. Gentleman sheltered himself.

MR. MUNDELLA: It is very unfair to say that political opinions of the Government have never governed anything which they have had to do, and it is not fair to say that we have acted from political motives, or that I have endeavoured to screen myself behind them. As far as I am concerned, I do not know their political opinions. I am responsible for every officer in the Department, whatever his opinions may be.

*MR. JAMES LOWTHER said, he would refer the right hon. Gentleman to the case of Mr. Giffen. Did the right hon. Gentleman not know Mr. Giffen's politics? The right hon. Gentleman's

ignorance was sublime. He would not, however, pursue that subject, though he could not follow the gallant Admiral in dismissing so lightly the undoubtedly important question of the manner in which these Labour Correspondents had been appointed. He, however, desired to refer to the subject of electrical communication with lightships, and to the fact that in this matter a large number of the recommendations of the Royal Commission had not been acted upon. He would like to have an explanation of this. The right hon. Gentleman, not content with the Royal Commission appointed by the previous Government, nominated a Departmental Committee, apparently to whittle down, as far as possible, the recommendations of that Royal Commission. He did not think the subject had been properly considered. It was of the greatest importance that they should have proper facilities in every respect as to saving life. The whole subject relating to these lifeboats and lightships was of great importance, and he hoped the recommendations made on the subject would be thoroughly carried out. He need not refer to the well-known cases of the *Enterprize* and the *Sea King*, or to the many instances in which the absence of communication had led to lamentable loss of life and property. The Commissioners specified five vessels which they recommended should be immediately connected, but the Government proposed to ignore three-fifths of those recommendations.

MR. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.) said, he wished to call the attention of the President of the Board of Trade to the great advantage derived by the steamers of the most important Steam-Packet Companies from the telegraphic communication which had been established between Tory Island and the mainland. He asked the right hon. Gentleman to undertake that, until the Royal Commission reported, if any accident should happen to the cable he would not allow the telegraphic communication to suffer. He thought his request in this matter was very reasonable. There were many great advantages gained by what had been done; and he thought the right hon. Gentleman would recognise the importance of this communication in such a way that it would

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be possible for them to have it continued without possibility of interruption. He hoped the undertaking to which he referred would be carried out.

MAJOR DARWIN (Staffordshire, Lichfield) said, he would like to ask what were the difficulties which the Board of Trade experienced in bringing the Cheap Trains Act into operation? When he called the attention of the President of the Board of Trade to the fact that the fares on the underground railway between Earl's Court and the Mansion House were illegal, the right hon. Gentleman said he would have the case examined by a Committee of the House. That Committee never reported, and the illegal fares were still being charged. In reply to a second communication on the subject, he was told that the Board of Trade had no power to bring the matter before a Court of Law. He believed that the Board of Trade had the power, because the law declared that they "shall" undertake a prosecution in cases where it was needed. It was practically impossible for private persons to undertake these prosecutions. The first and second-class passengers were season-ticket holders, and the third-class passengers were not in a position to institute prosecutions of this sort, so that the Railway Companies could practically in the case of small fares defy the law unless the Board of Trade stepped in and saw that the law was properly enforced. Section 17 of the Act of 1844 provided that where a Railway Company was acting in excess of the power given by such Act, and if it should be to the public advantage that the Company should be restrained from so acting, the Board of Trade should certify the same to the Attorney General, who should take proceedings to restrain the Company from acting in an illegal manner. In 1864 certain maximum fares were laid down by the Company, but they were charging above these fares, and in all the correspondence no one had been able to point out under what powers the excess fares were being charged. The Company stated that in certain cases they were really charging under the fares, but that could not be an excuse for charging over the maximum in others, though it might be an excuse to come before a Committee and ask for a re-arrangement. He

thought it was evident it must be to the public advantage that the Board of Trade should interfere when illegal fares were being charged. Under the Act it was incumbent upon the Board of Trade to take action in such circumstances, and he should like to know why they had not done so?

*SIR A. ROLLIT (Islington, S.) desired to put a question to the President of the Board of Trade on a matter of some importance, and which the right hon. Gentleman would remember having been concerned with a short time ago, when a deputation waited upon the President of the Board of Trade in reference to an Amendment of the Trade Marks Department. The proper administration of that Department was a question of great moment to the trading community. He ventured to say that on the occasion of the visit of this deputation there was disclosed to the right hon. Gentleman an amount of delay, laxity, and confusion not altogether consistent with the proper management of the Department, and which was not completely explained by the head of the Department present at the time. The right hon. Gentleman gave his cordial assistance, and said he would take the earliest opportunity of going into the question. He hoped they might now receive the assurance that the Department had been put on a different and improved basis.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN desired to ask a question on this Vote. He thought he was right in saying that the expenses of the Patent Office, as shown by the published Estimate, were calculated for the year at £59,861, and the receipts were shown at £183,000. Then there was a note to the effect that the Patent Office publications would add another £6,000 to that. That meant that while the expenditure was, roughly speaking, £60,000, the receipts from patents were expected to reach £189,000, and the difference was the profit derived by the State from inventors, which amounted to £130,000 a year. It was perfectly certain that public opinion would not allow that profit to go continuously into the Exchequer, and the question was what way should it be disposed of? He did not know what view his right hon. Friend took, but when he (Mr. J. Chamberlain) was at the Board

of Trade, a Patent Act was passed by which the sum for initiating a patent was most considerably reduced, so that at the present time a provisional specification could be obtained for £1, and a patent for one year for £5. That he entirely approved of, but he held then, and he had always held since, that it would be most undesirable largely to reduce the fees upon the later terms of a patent. The late President of the Board of Trade took a different view of the matter, and the subsequent payments were, under his management, very considerably reduced. He was of opinion that such a course tended to allow a number of useless patents to remain and interfere with further invention; and his own view was that while they should allow an invention to be secured for a short time for a very small sum, and afterwards, unless the patent proved itself to be of sufficient value to justify considerable further payments, it was very much in the interest of the community at large that the patent should lapse, and he would continue the higher payment for the later period. His interest in the matter was this: Having got this balance of £130,000, he was afraid great demands would be made upon it to reduce the subsequent payments which he thought the Government would be unable to resist. He would much rather that some of that money, at all events, should be spent on what, he believed, would be a much more valuable policy — namely, in proceeding more rapidly with the publication of specifications and abstracts. He shared any blame there was to be borne for it; and although they did something in his time at the Board of Trade to accelerate matters, he did not contend they did all that might be done, and successive Governments were somewhat to blame; but it was something like a public scandal that such publications had been so long delayed. He thought, with the enormous profit in the hands of the Treasury, something might very easily be done to secure a much earlier publication of these specifications.

MR. MUNDELLA (who was very indistinctly heard in the Reporters' Gallery) was understood to say that he thought the change made by the Member for West Birmingham in the direction of reducing

the initial cost of a patent was extremely wise, as had been shown by the result. In consequence of that diminution of cost, there had been a great increase in the number of patents. He agreed, also, that the later patents were patents which ought to pay the full fees. This diminution had resulted in the receipts being something like £87,000 less last year. [MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: There is still a profit.] Yes, there was still a profit. Without pledging himself to any course, he might say he thought the patentees who had the advantage ought to pay some of the tax. He was quite anxious to facilitate as much as possible the use and introduction of inventions, but at the same time some benefit should go to the State. With regard to the early publication of specifications and abstracts he was entirely with his right hon. Friend. He also thought they should be a better quality of publication, those now issued having, in his opinion, become very shabby and quite unworthy of a country like England. He considered they ought to take steps to make the drawings and illustrations more creditable. With respect to the Royal Commission on Lighthouses they made certain recommendations, but it was impossible to carry out all these at once. The duty devolved on the Board of Trade and the Post Office to carry out these recommendations, and they appointed a small Committee to consider them and Report upon the best method of carrying them out. He had asked the members of the Committee not to wait for a formal Report in regard to the matter, but to make a Report as soon as possible, and then a decision would be at once arrived at. With respect to the question of illegal fares on the Metropolitan Railway, he had not been able to satisfy himself that the fares were illegal. Several Acts overlapped each other, and under these the Company claimed that the fares were legal. Care should be taken to look into the whole matter, so that it might be put on a satisfactory basis. His hon. and learned Friend the Member for South Islington (Sir A. Rollit) had asked as to the administration of the Trades Mark Department, and he could assure him that the matter was being vigorously taken in hand, and a searching inquiry made into

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it. He hoped they should now be able to take this Vote.

SIR M. HICKS-BEACH desired to say a few words on the question connected with the electric communication of the shore with lightships, because he was responsible for the appointment of the Royal Commission. He understood from the right hon. Gentleman that although he could not, of course, carry out all the recommendations of the Commission at once, yet he would do what the Member for Thanet desired, and carry out this particular recommendation connected with regard to lightships as soon as possible.

MR. MUNDELLA : Certainly.

SIR M. HICKS-BEACH : With reference to the question of his hon. Friend (Mr. Macartney) as to Tory Island, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would bear in mind that a great distinction existed between maintaining this communication for the purpose of light and for the purpose of sending messages. The cable on Tory Island was established by Lloyds purely for trade purposes, and he did not think the Government ought to impose on the general taxpayer the burden of retaining communication for trade purposes, and, therefore, as the Royal Commission was appointed merely to consider the question of communication of this kind for the saving of life and property, their Report on Tory Island would be from that point of view. Any communication for trade purposes should be paid for by the shipowners.

SIR W. HARCOURT was obliged to the right hon. Gentleman for the observations he had made on this subject. He could only say that as guardian of the public finances certainly there were circumstances at the present time which made him very unwilling to indulge in Supplementary Estimates, and one of the rare exceptions he had made had been in favour of these lightships. A Supplementary Estimate for £10,000 had been laid on the Table that day to establish communication with the lightship on the Goodwins. He would appeal to the Committee to allow the Vote which they had been discussing to pass, and he would then promise, at 12 o'clock, to report Progress and proceed with the Report of Supply.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.), said, he had set down on the Notice Paper a Motion for the reduction of the Vote. He only wanted to call the particular attention of the President of the Board of Trade to the repeated omission of the Railway Department of the Board of Trade to put pressure on the London, Tilbury, and Southend Railway Company, to obviate a danger which existed in consequence of which several deaths had occurred at Tilbury Docks, one fatal accident occurring only last week. The Railway Company ran four lines of railway through the dock, which lines were absolutely open, there being no guard or fence, gate or watchman, and accidents were continually occurring. He and his constituents had not only memorialised the Board of Trade, but they had written continuously and memorialised the Tilbury and Southend Railway Company but without result. He hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would take steps to compel the Company to obviate this scandalous danger.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES said, that as regarded signalling there was an admirable national code of signals which the Mercantile Marine used, and in the use of which they were fully competent. No doubt the electric communication with lighthouses was very advisable, but he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not fix his whole attention on that and divert it from the rule of the road at sea.

MR. MUNDELLA asked the hon. and gallant Member for South-East Essex to accept his assurance that the Board of Trade had again and again put pressure on the Tilbury Railway Company in respect to the matter he had mentioned, and they had done so only during the present week. He should be very happy to communicate the result to the hon. Member.

Question put, and negatived.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

4. £16, to complete the sum for Bankruptcy Department of the Board of Trade, agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported To-morrow ; Committee to sit again To-morrow.

SUPPLY—REPORT.

Resolution [7th September] reported :—

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE
DEPARTMENTS, 1893-4.

CLASS II.

"That a sum, not exceeding £45,471, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Department of Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs."

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (Manchester, E.) said it was understood that his hon. Friend the Member for Preston (Mr. Hanbury) would raise the question of Armenia, but, as the hon. Member was not here, he thought it was right he should raise the question, and that they might have some statement from the Government in regard to it. Her Majesty's Government, he thought, must have something to say upon a question of this kind. He had no doubt the facts relating to that country were in the possession of Her Majesty's Government, and he trusted they would have an assurance from Her Majesty's Government that the various questions involved would be dealt with in a proper manner, and, above all, that Papers would be laid on the Table without delay.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir E. GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): On this question, Sir, I should like to say I cannot promise that the Papers will be immediately laid on the Table of the House. They required much consideration. Very strong measures were taken by the Porte—not only strong, but somewhat indiscriminate, which culminated in the trial at Angora. The right hon. Gentleman is aware of the state of matters. The accused were not allowed to produce witnesses, and Her Majesty's Government considered whether they should not make representations to the Porte in the interests of justice and mercy. These representations were strictly limited to the case of persons as to whom there was no doubt in the mind of any reasonable man that they were innocent. In two cases the results, as is known, were eminently satisfactory. The practice of making representations at Constantinople under the

Treaty of Berlin does not invariably produce good results; and it is, I am sure it will be acknowledged, a practice which should be carefully guarded. Her Majesty's Government have taken care, as one of the Treaty Powers, to discharge their obligations. That is a fair statement of our position, and I hope the right hon. Gentleman and his friend will be satisfied that we have not been at fault.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said, he would point out that if Her Majesty's Government were required to interfere in Armenia by the Treaty of Berlin—the 61st Article—and he did not believe they were—if that was the case, however, surely they would be justified in interfering on the side of Turkey under the 11th Article. What had been done in that direction? He would like to know had anything been done? He had to complain that, with regard to the Pamirs, to Afghanistan, and to Siam they had not been able to obtain any information from Her Majesty's Government. He would like to point out that, in these matters, the strongest position this country could take up was to decline secret negotiations. He knew that was not the opinion all round; but it was his opinion, and he strongly urged it upon the Government. He was sorry they had not more information on these subjects—the subjects that had been mentioned—for it was his conviction that no Minister could carry on a worthy foreign policy unless he had the people of England behind him, and that could not happen unless the people were kept informed of what was going on. He would venture to express a hope that Papers on the various subjects would be laid on the Table without delay.

SIR T. LEA (Londonderry, S.) said, there was a strong feeling in Madagascar, as well as in England, that the Slave Trade was increasing in consequence of the laxity on the part of the French Government in putting a stop to it. He thought Her Majesty's Government should be in a position to deal with a question of such serious importance, and he ventured to intervene merely for the purpose of asking them to do so. The question was a serious one, and, for his part, he should be very glad to have something done in regard to it.

Resolution agreed to.

MADRAS AND BOMBAY ARMIES BILL.

[*Lords.*] (No. 413.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. G. RUSSELL, North Beds.): I rise to move the Second Reading of this Bill, and in view of the advanced period of the evening I will say as few words as possible in making the Motion. The measure is of the simplest possible character. Its object is to unite the Presidential Armies of India into one. To the civilian mind it seems obviously of enormous advantage that all those Armies should be commanded from one centre. The history of the Bill may be stated briefly thus: In the early days of our Empire in India three Armies sprang up in the course of nature. It was an almost inevitable growth—that there should be an Army in each Presidency. Bengal had a certain primacy, which was attributable to the fact that it was under the command of the head of the Bengal Army that the English troops in India served. This system of three Presidential Armies went on unimpaired until the Mutiny. It was then found in practical experience prejudicial to the military service that the three Armies should not be really as well as nominally under one control. After the Mutiny there was expressed on all hands a desire for a closer union of the three. The development of railways and telegraphs made that union easier and more natural. For years the history of the matter has been one long series of recommendations by the Government of India, met by successive concessions on the part of this country. In 1869 the three Military Accounts Departments were amalgamated; in 1876 the Remount Departments were amalgamated. Then came the Afghan War. In 1879 a Commission was appointed; in 1881 the Government of India reported in favour of the union of the three Armies, but it was refused on the ground of insufficient authority. In 1884 the three Ordnance Departments were amalgamated; in 1885 the Government of India reported again in favour of the

union, but it was declined, because of the difficulty of legislation; in 1886 the Punjab Frontier Force was transferred to the Commander-in-Chief. In 1888 the Government of India reported again, and then Lord Cross, at that time Secretary of State, though he said that the exigencies of Public Business would not enable him to propose legislation, suggested certain practical steps which conduced to the attainment of the end desired. In 1889-90 the Transport, Clothing, Military Works, Military Education, and the offices of Judge Advocate General were amalgamated. When that was done the amalgamation was practically complete. All that we now ask is that the House of Commons will join with the House of Lords in giving legislative sanction to an arrangement which by this time is pretty nearly established. We have by this time a vast amount of authority on our side. We have the authority of four Viceroy—Lord Lytton, Lord Ripon, Lord Dufferin, and Lord Lansdowne, and of the most distinguished Indian Generals, including Sir D. Stewart, Lord Roberts, and Sir G. White. In another place the illustrious Duke the Commander-in-Chief has expressed himself favourable to the change. The Bill has come here with the full sanction of everybody interested in Indian and military problems. I have said all that need be said about the essential parts of the Bill. There remains one question, accessory and ancillary—namely, whether or not the Commanders-in-Chief shall retain seats in Legislative Councils. On that point I am bound to say the authorities are not quite so unanimous as they are with regard to the main part of the change. The Government of India, reviewing all the circumstances and balancing the authorities were not in favour of these military officers retaining their seats, and my noble Friend the Secretary of State when he moved the Bill in another place moved it with the condition that the officers should lose their seats on the Legislative Councils. However, he found that military opinion was opposed to him, and he made a concession on the point which stands in the Bill. I am prepared to maintain that concession. It is not a light matter to disregard the wishes and advice of the Government of India on the point, but I feel that the main

purpose of the Bill is so important that it would be a pity to jeopardise it by making an alteration which would ensure the rejection of the measure in the House of Lords. I would ask the House to agree to the proposition I now make, with the added condition that the Generals commanding in Madras and Bombay shall retain their seats on the Legislative Councils.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. G. Russell.*)

MR. NAOROJI (Finsbury, Central): Will the Legislative Councils oppose this clause, and will the Generals be paid?

*MR. G. RUSSELL: The Generals are not paid extra salaries in respect of their services on the Legislative Councils; therefore, their removal, if brought about, would not of necessity involve a saving; but it might be held by the authorities in India that when these Generals are relieved of certain duties they might also be relieved of salaries. That, however, is speculative, and I cannot say that that view will be taken.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH (Bristol, W.): I only rise to say that I think my hon. Friend the Member for the Kingston Division of Surrey (Sir R. Temple) is very anxious to offer to the House some observations on the Bill. I think, in view of his great authority, the Committee stage might be postponed to Monday instead of being taken to-morrow.

MR. G. RUSSELL: Hear, hear!

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to,—Sheriff Courts Consignations (Scotland) Bill, without Amendment.

Burghs Gas Supply (Scotland) Act (1876) Amendment Bill, Elementary Education (School Attendance) Bill, with one Amendment to each Bill.

Mr. G. Russell

CONSOLIDATED FUND (No. 4) BILL.

Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; to be read the third time To-morrow.

PISTOLS BILL.—(No. 425.)

Read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

NAVAL DEFENCE AMENDMENT BILL. (No. 450.)

Read the third time, and passed.

LIGHT RAILWAYS (IRELAND) BILL. (No. 454.)

Read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

COUNTY SURVEYORS (IRELAND) BILL [Lords].—(No. 453.)

As amended, considered; read the third time, and passed, with an Amendment.

REFORMATORY SCHOOLS BILL [Lords]. (No. 457.)

Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; read the third time, and passed, without Amendment.

COLLEGE CHARTER ACT, 1871 (COLLEGE OF ORGANISTS).

Copy presented,—of a Petition of Sir Joseph Barnby and others praying Her Majesty in Council to grant a Charter of Incorporation to the College of Organists, together with a Copy of the Draft of the Charter [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 411.]

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."

MR. R. G. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.) asked at what hour to-morrow the Government proposed to take the Report stage of the Colonial Vote?

*THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. MARJORIBANKS, Berwickshire): After Supply—I suppose at about 7 o'clock.

House adjourned at a quarter before One o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Saturday, 9th September 1893.

The House met at Twelve of the clock.

QUESTIONS.

COAST LIGHT COMMUNICATION.

SIR M. HICKS-BEACH (Bristol, W.): I desire to ask the Secretary to the Treasury a question upon the Supplementary Estimate circulated this morning. On the Board of Trade Vote on the previous night the question of telegraphic communication with light-houses and lightships was discussed, and it was understood that a Supplementary Estimate would be taken for that purpose. I find that Supplementary Estimate proposed to be taken is for £10,000, which, it appears, is to be added to the grant towards the Mercantile Marine Fund. Of course that may be only a matter of form, but I hope it is not to be taken as an indication that the Government consider the cost of the telegraphic communication ought, in any case, to be a charge upon the Mercantile Marine Fund. That was not my intention, and I hope it will not be done, except, of course, where the communication is desired for Board of Trade purposes?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (SIR J. T. HIBBERT, Oldham): The Supplementary Estimate was put in the form in which it now appears for convenience of discussion. The £10,000 will be kept entirely separate from the Mercantile Marine Fund.

SIR M. HICKS-BEACH: It has really nothing whatever to do with that Fund.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (MR. MUNDELLA, Sheffield, Brightside): That is so. The Mercantile Marine Fund will not bear one farthing of the expense of the telegraphic communication. The Board of Trade intend to execute the work by degrees, and the Treasury will supply the money, for which the Board will account.

MR. HANBURY (Preston): If the Board of Trade is going to carry out this work, why not make it a Board of Trade Vote? I shall object to the Vote on that score.

SIR J. GORST (Cambridge University): Who will account for the expenditure of the Vote?

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: The Board of Trade.

MR. HANBURY: Then why not put it on their Vote?

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): I hope we shall get proper time to consider this Vote before the House rises.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: It is proposed that the Supplementary Estimates will be taken the same time as the Votes, which is the invariable practice.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): Is there not a deficiency in the Mercantile Marine Vote this year, and is this Estimate intended to meet it?

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: Certainly not.

THE MERCHANT SHIPPING BILL.

MR. BARTLEY: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, as a large number of shipping traders are anxious to have time to consider the new Amendments to the Merchant Shipping Bill, the right hon. Gentleman intends to push on the measure before the Adjournment, or whether he will postpone its further consideration until the Autumn Session?

SIR M. HICKS-BEACH: I hope that the right hon. Gentleman will take the Second Reading of the Bill before the House adjourns for the Autumn Sittings. The Bill is one more for consideration in Committee than on the Second Reading, and I know that many shipowners desire to look into its provisions.

MR. MUNDELLA: I agree with the right hon. Gentleman that it is of the utmost importance that the Bill should become law within a reasonable time. There is no intention on the part of the Government to hurry it on. What we propose is that the Second Reading shall be taken before the House adjourns for the Autumn Session, and that then it shall be referred to a Joint Committee of both Houses, who will go through the clauses to see that it is purely a consolidation measure.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I desire to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it is not the fact that the Bill consists of over 700 clauses, that it has only been in the hands of Members for a few days, and that there is absolutely no urgency for it; and whether, under these circumstances, the right hon. Gentleman does not think it advisable to defer the Second Reading, which would affirm a principle involving, amongst other things, new penalties, until such time as the shipping community can consider the Bill?

[No answer was given.]

CHOLERA.

MR. A. CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Local Government Board whether he can give any further information as to the reported case of cholera in the House?

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Sir W. FOSTER, Derbyshire, Ilkeston): No, Sir. I have nothing to add to what I said yesterday.

SCIENCE AND ART VOTES.

SIR R. TEMPLE (Surrey, Kingston): I beg to ask my right hon. Friend the Vice President of the Council whether there are not some Votes for Science and Art to be taken?

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Mr. ACLAND, York, W.R., Rotherham): Yes, Sir.

SIR R. TEMPLE: When will they be taken?

MR. ACLAND: In their Class order.

THE BOARD OF TRADE VOTE.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet): I desire to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, having regard to the fact that some questions connected with the Board of Trade have been left undiscussed, he will allow the Report on that Vote to come on at some hour this evening when it can be properly discussed?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby): As we have all undergone tremendous inconvenience by meeting on a Saturday, I hope we will make the best progress with business we can. The Vote for the Board of Trade was taken with the general consent of the House.

MR. T. H. BOLTON (St. Pancras, N.): I desire to raise a question on the Bankruptcy Vote last night, but refrained in deference to the understanding that the Vote would be agreed to at 12 o'clock. I therefore hope that the Report of the Vote will be brought on at a time to enable me very briefly to raise this question.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I can only again express the hope that this unfortunate Saturday Sitting will be availed of to expedite business as much as possible.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—COMMITTEE.

SUPPLY,—considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS, 1893-4.

CLASS II.

1. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £36,059, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Board of Agriculture, and to defray the repayable Expenses to be incurred in matters of Inclosure and Land Improvement."

*MR. J. LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet) said, there were a number of matters in this Vote on which it would be desirable to dwell; but he would not now touch upon them, as he was anxious not to interpose any obstacle in the way of a business-like despatch of Supply. He wished, however, to call attention to the position occupied in connection with agriculture by the Department for which the Committee were now asked to vote Supplies. He had not been one of those who went into ecstasies at the prospect of the appointment of a Minister of Agriculture. He never could bring himself to believe that the mere change of the designation of the official whose duty it was to represent in Parliament the Agricultural Department would do any practical service to those engaged in agriculture; and he never shared in the expectation, which had been entertained by many agriculturists, that the establishment of a Department of Agri-

culture would relieve the difficulties under which agriculturists had so long suffered. He was bound, however, to admit that the Department had been very fortunate in securing as its first President one so thoroughly conversant with agricultural matters as his right hon. Friend the Member for Sleaford, and he thought the agricultural community had also every reason to be satisfied with the arrangements made by the present Government for the representation of the Department. As the Representative of the Associated Chambers of Agriculture, he was bound to give expression to their sense of the unswerving courtesy with which their representations had been received by the right hon. Gentleman the present President of the Board of Agriculture. But that brought them to the question — what had the right hon. Gentleman done? The Government announced at the commencement of the Session that they intended, for the purpose of inquiring into the widespread and universally admitted agricultural depression, to appoint a Select Committee of the House. He ventured to put down a notice distinctly challenging the wisdom of that decision. His main ground of objection was that the appointment of such a Committee was calculated to produce unnecessary delay in the way of the adoption of practical measures of relief. Since then the Government had so far changed their plan as to substitute for the Select Committee a Royal Commission. He did not object to a Royal Commission to the same extent as he objected to a Select Committee. On a Royal Commission the services could be secured of able, competent, and recognised agricultural authorities, whose views and opinions would command weight amongst all sections of the community, whilst he could conceive of no tribunal under the sun less competent to conduct such an inquiry, or whose judgment would carry less weight, than a Select Committee of the House. There were extremely few Members of the House, taking the House as a whole, and including the Front Bench at which he was standing, whose opinions on agricultural topics would possess any intrinsic value, and the number of those Members who possessed the technical knowledge adequate for a Committee of the kind, and at the same

time retained a free and independent judgment on the subject, was still fewer. It was notorious that the exigencies of electoral requirements had compelled many Members of the House to smother the opinions which it was well known they possessed. Therefore, while there were few Members of the House who could be classified as agricultural authorities, fewer still dared to state their own views on the subject. He would ask why the Government needed the assistance of either a Royal Commission or a Committee in this matter? A very able staff was at the disposal of the Minister of Agriculture in his Department—a staff containing several gentlemen to whose opinions on agriculture the country would attach far greater weight than to the opinions of any Select Committee. Where, then, was the need for this inquiry?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (MR. H. GARDNER, Essex, Saffron Walden) : To inquire into bimetallism.

*MR. J. LOWTHER said, he would not declare himself on one side or the other of the violent controversy about bimetallism. He desired to keep a perfectly open mind for the arguments advanced on the subject. He thought that upon every subject which could be profitably gone into by the Commission the right hon. Gentleman had advisers at his disposal in his Office.

SIR W. HARCOURT : There is the question of the relief of local taxation.

MR. J. LOWTHER asked, was the Royal Commission to advise also on the subject of bimetallism?

SIR W. HARCOURT : No.

*MR. J. LOWTHER said, the Chancellor of the Exchequer seemed to take a view of the Commission distinctly opposite to the view of the Minister for Agriculture. It now seemed that the Minister for Agriculture would derive from the Royal Commission no assistance on the question of bimetallism, which apparently vexed the soul of the right hon. Gentleman. He admitted that the question of local taxation was very important; but anybody who imagined that prosperity would be restored to agriculture by peddling or tinkering with local rates were entirely on the wrong tack, though he had always contended

that relief from that source was equitably due to those engaged in the agricultural industry. At the National Agricultural Conference, which was held last winter, all these subjects were discussed; but the one point that really aroused interest at the gathering was the gross injustice under which the agricultural community laboured in having taxes, local and Imperial, placed upon their industry, whilst those against whom they had to compete abroad were exempt from their imposition. The resolution adopted by the Conference did not inevitably involve Protection—a question which he was prepared to argue out anywhere—though he admitted it led up to Protection, which was the only real solution of the difficulty. The resolution declared that the Conference was of opinion—

"That the unfair competition of untaxed foreign imports with home produce and manufactures which are subjected to heavy internal taxation is an anomaly and an injustice."

The Resolution further declared—

"That all competing imports should pay a duty not less than the rates and taxes levied on the home production."

That resolution was adopted by the most representative agricultural assembly that had ever gathered together in the country, and it called attention to an injustice which it was within the power of the Government to deal with, without infringing to any extent on the doctrine which they had so much at heart—the doctrine which by some strange misnomer was called by the term "Free Trade." There were set out in the resolution of the Conference two alternative plans by which the desires of those who passed the resolution could be carried out. Either taxes should be placed on imports, or home products should be relieved from all taxation, whether Imperial or local.

THE CHAIRMAN: That is a matter of policy which cannot be discussed on this Vote. The question of the appointment of a Royal Commission is in Order, but not the policy of the Government.

*MR. J. LOWTHER said, he would return to the question of the Royal Commission. A Royal Commission on Agriculture sat under the Duke of Richmond several years ago, and cost a large sum of money. He supposed the Committee would be asked to undertake a large expenditure also for the proposed

Royal Commission; and he would ask whether the able staff at the command of the Agricultural Department could not supply the Government with sufficient information to make some substantial and practical proposal to Parliament without undertaking this expense? He was quite aware that the views which he held in regard to the real cause of agricultural distress were not universally admitted even by those with whom he acted on most political questions; but there was no doubt that most of the agricultural community were with him, though they might not proclaim their views from the housetops.

THE CHAIRMAN: The right hon. Gentleman is now out of Order. He is dealing with a question of policy.

*MR. J. LOWTHER said, he quite recognised the strict justice of the Chairman's ruling; but it was difficult to separate the question of policy from the question technically before the Committee. The Government wanted to make a show of doing something for the agriculturists, beyond that which Parliament charged them to do under already existing Statutes, and they hoped to fulfil that something by appointing a Royal Commission. But he would point out to the Minister for Agriculture that though he might have 100 Reports from 100 Royal Commissions, he would never succeed in relieving agricultural distress unless he relieved the agricultural community of the very heavy disadvantages under which they laboured.

COMMANDER BETHELL (York, E.R., Holderness) said, he gathered from an observation made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the Commission about to be appointed to inquire into agricultural depression would be able to inquire also into the question of local taxation. It was quite true, as his right hon. Friend the Member for Thanet had said, that no relief could be given through local taxation which would make any material improvement in the position of agriculturists; but it was none the less true that if local taxation was placed on a footing so that the farmers would not feel that they were unjustly treated it would be a step in the right direction.

THE CHAIRMAN: I must point out to the hon. and gallant Gentleman that he is now discussing a question of policy.

Mr. J. Lowther

COMMANDER BETHELL said, he was rather drawn out of the proper course by the remark of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He suggested that the Board might follow the example of other countries, notably Germany, where experiments were carried on in the growth of cereals and other agricultural matters. He had no wish to belittle what had been done by Local Authorities, but some experiments were beyond the power or means of Local Authorities, and such experiments he considered should either be made by the Central Authority, or the Local Authorities should receive assistance in conducting them. No one would deny that if our agriculturists were to compete successfully with the agriculturists of other countries they must have the light of the best scientific research that was possible thrown upon their industry. He gladly recognised what the President of the Board of Agriculture had done during this Session to prevent and stop the disease among swine, and assured him that that part of the agricultural community which he represented were grateful to him for carrying out the policy of his predecessor.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) said, the agricultural constituencies of Scotland would, he was sure, thoroughly appreciate in the right way the so-called friendly attitude of hon. Gentlemen opposite, and would understand the way in which they had consistently blocked all the attempts of the Minister for Agriculture to do something for the agricultural community. He had paid a visit to the North not very long ago, and he knew that the farmers there looked forward with great interest to the appointment of this Committee; and, contrary to what was said by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. J. Lowther), there were Members in that House capable of giving an opinion on agricultural matters, and the farmers would willingly have entrusted their case to them. He thought a great deal of time had been lost which might have been judiciously occupied in the consideration of this question by a Committee. He was glad that the right hon. Gentleman was so far repentant that he had now given his blessing to the appointment of the Royal Commission, from the labours of which he anticipated great good. He would like to ask what the Government

were going to do to carry out the Resolution passed by the House in favour of an inquiry into the working of the Agricultural Holdings Act? That Act had not carried out the expectations formed with regard to it. It had undoubtedly broken down, and there was an intense desire on the part of the agriculturists of the North that this inquiry should be carried out. He wanted to know whether it was to be carried out by an independent inquiry, or whether it would be one of the matters that would be handed over for consideration by the Royal Commission? He represented, perhaps, the leading cattle feeding, if not cattle breeding, county in Scotland, and the Minister of Agriculture would probably not be surprised if he asked him to give some information as to the present position of the Canadian cattle question. Had he anything to tell the House in continuation of the very interesting Papers which he presented a short time ago? As to the present condition and as to the continued results of the investigation of the lungs of these animals, he presumed that the animals were being still scientifically investigated, and he should like to find out whether there had been any more cases of disease discovered in lungs which the right hon. Gentleman's advisers pronounced to be pleuro-pneumonia? A perusal of the Papers presented had not removed his doubts as to whether these cases were pleuro-pneumonia or not, or whether they were not cases of sporadic lung affection partly developed by the journey, and not absolutely of an infectious character. Was there any further evidence communicated to the right hon. Gentleman which would enable them to come to a more definite conclusion on that point? He regretted that the Minister of Agriculture had not seen his way to accept the invitation of the Canadian Government to send out two experts at the expense of that Government to investigate this question. The Canadian people considered that they were now on their trial in this respect, and they believed that such an investigation would, at all events, do no harm, and would satisfy not only the Canadians, but the people in this country. He hoped the door was not absolutely and finally closed against the acceptance of the Canadian offer. In this

matter Canada was placed between the devil and the deep sea, and she would be glad of the opportunity of clearing her character, and of showing that pleuropneumonia had not and did not now exist in Canada. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would consent to the Commission inquiring not only into that point, but also into the point whether the frontier regulations were sufficient to prevent the incursion of pleuro-pneumonia from the United States into Canada. Finally, he wished to ask how much longer the restriction on the importation of Canadian cattle into this country was likely to continue?

*MR. T. H. BOLTON (St. Pancras, N.) said, he did not propose to follow the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Thame in his observations with reference to the appointment of the Royal Commission. He did not suppose that any great result would follow from the labours of that Commission. No doubt something had to be done, and it was necessary for the Government that the Commission should be appointed; but how far it would realise the expectations of the Liberal County Members, who had made large promises of what might be expected from the Government, he was not prepared to say. Allusion had very properly been made to the restrictions put upon the importation of cattle disease into this country from abroad, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not too hastily relax those very judicious restrictions. He was glad that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Agriculture had, under considerable pressure, displayed great firmness. He hoped that before they threw open the ports of this country to the unrestricted importation of live cattle, if there was the least suspicion of disease, they would cause every inquiry to be made, so that the breeders of this country should not run unnecessary risk. In the early part of the Session he called the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to the lamentable increase of glanders and farcy in London. The disease not only inflicted loss on the owners of horses, but it involved a serious danger to human life as regarded people brought in contact with horses and persons driving and travelling in hansom cabs; and it

Dr. Farquharson

was, therefore, of the greatest possible consequence that it should be grappled with. There were Orders providing for the slaughter of animals affected; but, unfortunately, the question of the compensation to be given rested with the Local Authorities, and in London the County Council had thought fit to refuse to give compensation out of the public funds to induce owners who suspected that the disease was incubating to give notice to the Public Authorities. The County Council relied on supervision and inspection to stamp out the disease. But the far more effective course would be to offer every possible inducement to the owners of horses to give notice of any suspicion of the existence of the disease, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would press the practical importance of that view upon the County Council.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.) said, that none of his constituents rode in hansom cabs except when they visited an English town, but, as Chairman of a Sanitary Board for some years, he was quite aware that sickness in animals was not reported unless proper compensation was given for the slaughter of those animals. If they wanted to stamp out glanders in London, they would have to compensate the owners, or they would have everyone against them. He hoped the Board of Agriculture would not be coaxed by the remarks of the hon. Member for Aberdeenshire (Dr. Farquharson). They had had immense trouble and expense in stamping out pleuro-pneumonia.

DR. FARQUHARSON said, that all he asked for was inquiry.

COLONEL NOLAN said, that if the hon. Member merely asked for inquiry, he did not think there could be too much inquiry into the subject. With regard to the Swine Fever Bill, or Act, he wanted to know whether it would be administered by the Central Authority in London or not?

MR. H. GARDNER: Its whole object is to transfer to the Central Authority the power now exercised by the Local Authorities.

COLONEL NOLAN pointed out that the Act had not been in use in Ireland before, and was a new one so far as they were concerned.

MR. HANBURY (Preston) wished to offer a complaint from the dairy farmer's point of view, in which he was personally interested, and he would confine himself principally to the point of the small protection the makers of butter got. He had no complaint to make personally against the right hon. Gentleman or his predecessor; his sole complaint was that the Board of Agriculture had not got sufficient powers for the protection of the makers of butter in this country. He would like to know if the matter was entirely in the hands of the Board of Trade? He believed the Board of Trade had very little authority. It had no power of classification as regarded the Customs. The only headings in the Customs statistics were butter and lard; but there were many articles which came between these two. Something should be done to inform them to what extent importers adulterated their butter with margarine; and when that adulteration exceeded, say, 15 per cent., they ought to be obliged to state the fact in their bills of lading, for adulterated butter did even more mischief than margarine itself. Then there was no protection against the adulteration of butter inland. The whole control rested with the Local Government Board, and under that Board was exercised by the Local Authorities, who administered their powers very loosely. The result was that the English dairy farmers had to encounter most unfair competition. It was monstrous that, with regard to a matter affecting so large a portion of the farming interest, the President of the Board of Agriculture should have no power to give protection against this very serious and unfair competition. In the few cases in which the retail dealers were prosecuted they very often escaped on the plea that the adulterated article was supplied by the wholesale dealer; and the prosecution was not carried further. Not only should these matters be placed under the control of the Board of Agriculture, but that Board ought to have an analyst of its own. At present, analyses were made at Somerset House, and everybody had complained with regard not only to butter, but to milk and other articles. Dr. Bell allowed a percentage of adulteration that was perfectly absurd. He believed that in milk Dr. Bell allowed from 15 to 20

per cent. of water; at any rate he was told so by the public analysts. That gentleman took the very worst kind of butter and milk, and said it was possible in the very worst cases for it to be pure butter or milk. Dairy farming was becoming more and more an important portion of the farming industry of this country, and all such matters ought to be under the control of the Board of Agriculture. France, Sweden, and other foreign countries were doing everything in their power to protect their dairy interests, and the large importation of Danish butter was especially due to the great interest shown in regard to dairy produce by the Board of Agriculture of Denmark. In regard to the importation of butter and articles of that description, the Minister for Agriculture should have power to protect the farming interests of this country quite independent of the Board of Trade.

*MR. JASPER MORE (Shropshire, Ludlow) said, the hon. Member for Aberdeenshire was not quite correct in attributing continued opposition to the Committee proposed by the Government on Agricultural Depression, as the right hon. Member for Sleaford, in reply to a question of his, said he would withdraw his opposition on the condition of a more restricted Reference, and he found that other Members who had blocked the Motion consented to do the same. He would ask if the term "depression" was not a misnomer, and if, after the speeches made in the House, the Commission should not be on agricultural distress? He wished to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture if he would give effect to the Report of the Committee of the House on uniformity of weight? That Committee had reported just when the agricultural meeting in London had come to a close, or he would have been troubled with a deputation. [Mr. H. GARDNER pointed out that this was a matter for the Board of Trade.] He thought it ought to be a matter for the Board of Agriculture, and he hoped the President of the Board of Trade knew that the Chairman of the London County Council had agreed to join a deputation, and he believed the President of the Board of Trade would find the subject congenial to his mind. He felt they owed an acknowledgment to the President of the Board of Agriculture for his

attempt to grapple with the fraudulent sales of artificial manures. He was placed in a difficult position between the trader and the farmer. He regretted, however, that the Treasury did not see their way to encourage the Board prosecuting fraudulent sellers, as it was well known the Board of Trade did under the Merchandise Marks Act. The cases might not be exactly similar, but they heard from the remarks on margarine how Acts passed with the best intentions failed, and he thought Bills passed by the House should not be inoperative. The journals of the Royal Agricultural Society were full of cases of fraudulent sales of artificial manures, and regrets that there had been no prosecution. He should like to ask what checks would be placed on the movement of swine under the Swine Fever Bill which came into operation in November? He felt they were indebted to the President of the Board for the interesting leaflets he issued following the precedent of the Board of the last century, and he would suggest the circulation should be increased amongst the members of the local Farmers' Clubs.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH (Bristol, W.): I am not disposed to complain of the President of the Board of Agriculture for having recommended the appointment of a Royal Commission on the question of the depression in agriculture. The right hon. Gentleman and I know how grave is that depression in some parts of England, and I confess myself I could not have discovered, without a great deal of preliminary inquiry, any adequate remedy. I now wish to direct the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to one of the burdens of agriculture, which has already been inquired into by a Royal Commission, and that is the question of tithe rent-charge. The President of the Local Government Board played a very useful and active part as a Member of the Royal Commission which inquired into that subject, and the Commission, which was carefully constituted, and well able to deal with the question, made a unanimous Report nearly two years ago. No one who is aware of the heavy burdens of tithe on agriculture will deny the great importance of the subject. Early in this Session I asked Her Majesty's Government whether they

were prepared to introduce a measure on the basis of that Report? I received a sympathetic answer from the First Lord of the Treasury, inviting me to present a Bill; but of course it is impossible for any private Member to attempt satisfactorily to deal with such a subject, and there was an end to the matter. I know the number of subjects which claim the attention of Her Majesty's Government, but this is a matter of real and pressing importance. The right hon. Gentleman has the Report of the Royal Commission signed by one of his own Colleagues, and I believe the Prime Minister himself is favourable to legislation. It is a moment in which legislation might be attempted with great advantage to the tithe-payers, because, the tithe being so low, better terms might be agreed to by the tithe-owners than on other occasions. I wish to press this matter as one which has already been inquired into, and which cannot be put off by referring to the new Commission. When I was President of the Board of Trade there was no one more persistent in his references to this subject than the right hon. Gentleman himself. He was continually insisting on the necessity of the redemption of the tithe rent-charge on fair terms, and continually urging the late Government to bring in a Bill for dealing with the subject. I do press him now to do something to carry out in Office the opinion he held when in Opposition, by taking an early opportunity of submitting to the House, and taking every means in his power of passing into law a measure based upon the Report of the Royal Commission.

MR. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire) said that, since the last Debate on the subject, the Papers which had been issued by the Board of Agriculture, so far from convincing them that the President of the Board was right and that they were wrong, seemed rather to strengthen their case. He rose to dispel an illusion which seemed to have got possession of the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan). The hon. and gallant Gentleman said that this was entirely a question of the ports. Of course, Canadian cattle must be landed at the ports, and the ports, no doubt, reaped the benefit of that; but, on the occasion of the former Debate on this subject, the gallant Gen-

Mr. Jasper More

tleman said that those who were against the exclusion of Canadian cattle were largely interested in Shipping Companies.

COLONEL NOLAN: I did not quite say that. On looking over the reports I saw I was so represented, but what I said was "shipping interests," which is quite a different thing.

MR. CROMBIE said, he was glad to obtain that statement from the hon. and gallant Gentleman, and perhaps he (Mr. Crombie) might say that those who were interested in this question—at any rate, he spoke for himself and his hon. Friend (Dr. Farquharson)—had no personal interest whatever in any shipping Company.

COLONEL NOLAN: But your constituents?

MR. CROMBIE: There is no Shipping Company in either of our constituencies, and we are simply advocating the views of our agricultural constituents, and I am perfectly certain we shall not misrepresent them.

*MR. EVERETT (Suffolk, Woodbridge) said, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol (Sir M. Hicks-Beach) had urged the extreme importance of passing a measure for the redemption of tithes. The tithe as it at present stood—as those acquainted with the subject knew—was based upon corn. If the tithe were redeemed, the redemption would have to be based upon gold—and that at a time when gold was steadily mounting up in value. It would be much better to keep tithes as they were at present, than to attempt their redemption under such circumstances. Some time ago some people were very anxious to have tithe fixed at par; but they had since learned that if they had taken that step, what appeared to them at that time to be likely to be a relief would really have added seriously to their burdens. Tithes were going down now continuously every year; and he hoped that until the currency question was put on a different footing no effort would be made to change the terms from corn to gold.

MR. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough) observed, that in view of the existence of glanders in London, there was a great objection to allow horses to drink at water troughs in the streets; and if the Board of Agriculture could do anything in the matter their action would be

welcome. With regard to the importation of Canadian cattle, the change seemed to be that our Canadian friends desired to relax the restrictions with regard to disease. That was not so. All that was asked was that there should be inquiry, and as many eminent medical men in Canada said that there was neither tuberculosis nor pleuro-pneumonia there, it was only right that all doubt on the subject should be removed by investigation. With regard to the dairy question, that was a matter for the Local Authorities; and if the law were carried out properly the Local Authorities and Magistrates ought to put a stop to adulteration, and we ought to encourage the production of these articles in this country. As to the delay in appointing a Committee to consider this depression in agriculture—it was due entirely to the opposition of the Tory Party.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think this matter is not in Order on this Vote.

MR. A. C. MORTON would not pursue the matter further. In regard to the Small Holdings Act and the Allotment Acts, the Liberal Party, at any rate, without regard to any Commission—

THE CHAIRMAN: I think the hon. Member will find that the Board of Agriculture has nothing to do with either Acts, and, that being so, of course it is not open on this Vote to discuss them.

MR. A. C. MORTON said, he should have liked to have obtained some information as to the working of these Acts. Another matter he should have wished to mention was the reclamation of slob lands in tidal rivers. He contended that the Department over which the right hon. Gentleman presided was of as much interest to towns or cities as to agricultural districts, and, indeed, more so, because the towns were being flooded with labourers who could not find work in the country because of the land not being properly cultivated. He would urge the President of the Board of Agriculture to obtain powers which would enable him to assist as much as possible the cultivation of the land of this country by the tillers of the soil.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. H. GARDNER, Essex, Saffron Walden): I have no reason to complain of the discussion which has taken place this afternoon, and

I must thank very warmly right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite for the kind words they have been good enough to say not only upon this but upon other occasions as to the administration of my Department since I came into Office. I can assure them and the Committee that it has been a great encouragement to me to receive these congratulations since I assumed an Office which I accepted with great diffidence. The right hon. Gentleman who initiated this Debate referred at some length to the appointment of the Agricultural Committee, which has since also been spoken of by other Members. But with all deference to the Committee, I think it is hardly necessary I should go into the disputed points in regard to it, because that Committee is defunct. We have appointed a Royal Commission, on which we shall have the assistance of right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite, so that the Royal Commission will certainly be a non-Party one, and ought to receive the confidence of every member of the agricultural community. The right hon. Member for Thanet was somewhat critical with regard to the Commission. He wished to know why it was we wished to appoint a Commission at all, and how it was that with the very valuable officers—whose advice I gladly recognise—at my disposal, the Government thought it necessary to propose a Royal Commission to the House? Sir, there are subjects—as I ventured to point out while the right hon. Gentleman was speaking—which the Royal Commission no doubt will inquire into with the assent of the agricultural interest of the country which do not come under the purview of my Department. Though we trust there may be no great discussion in that Commission on such subjects as bimetallism and Preferential Duties, still by our terms of Reference we have not excluded any discussion of these subjects. I was asked a question as to the burdens on land. The questions of local taxation and of burdens on land are, I know, subjects of interest to the agricultural community; but they do not lie absolutely in my Department, and I am certain it will be to the advantage of the agricultural interest generally that these subjects should be discussed by a Commission which, I venture to think, has the thorough confidence of the country in its composition, and which contains

amongst its members some experts of the very highest rank, and which will be able to report to the country on this much-vexed and interesting subject generally. Then there was a question put to me, which I may answer at once, with regard to the Agricultural Holdings Act. I had the honour in the Debate on the Address, on behalf of the Government, to say that though we were very favourable to legislation to reform the Agricultural Holdings Act, we did not wish to take that responsibility until the subject had received preliminary inquiry. That view had the approval of the right hon. Member for Sleaford and the Conservative Party generally, and it is to the Royal Commission, which is so admirably constituted to inquire into this matter, that we look for some advice on the subject. I do not think it necessary for me to go very much further into the subject of the Royal Commission, and I will endeavour to answer as briefly as possible the questions put to me from various quarters of the House. The hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite (Commander Bethell) drew the attention of the Committee—and I think very rightly—to the great value of scientific education in agriculture, and he referred to what foreign countries did in that respect. I have often said that I thoroughly recognise the advantage of scientific education as bearing on the prosperity of the farming interest, but I do not, on the other hand, quite lend myself so much to centralisation, as I fancy the hon. and gallant Gentleman seems to wish. It has always been the boast of this country, and especially with regard to the agricultural interest, that private enterprise has done wonders with regard to the farming interests generally in all parts of it. I need only refer to the experimental work done by Sir John Lawes at Rochester, by Sir John Gilbey, and by the Duke of Bedford at Rothamstead. I am happy to say that by permission of the Treasury the Department has been able to buy a number of copies of the records of the excellent work at Rothamstead, which will be distributed to the various Bodies having to do with agricultural education. That is a good step on our part in the right direction, and that, I think, in some way answers the hon. and gallant Gentleman. The vexed question of closing the ports to Canadian cattle and kindred

Mr. H. Gardner

other questions have occupied the attention of the House at some length during this Session. I can only say that while I thoroughly recognise that the desire of those hon. Members who wish to see the present restrictions removed is to benefit Scotch farmers by the introduction of Canadian store cattle, at the same time, I am bound to say I feel it necessary to adhere to the decision I announced on a previous occasion. I am bound to rely on those three eminent men given me by the country as veterinary advisers to the Board of Agriculture, and to their opinion I am certainly resolved to adhere. I should be absolutely rash if on such technical subjects as these I were to over-ride the opinions of three of the best experts this country can produce. Indeed, if I adopted such a course I should not be fit to hold the Office I have the honour to hold. My hon. Friend talks about an inquiry, which I admit, as put forward by him and others, has a plausible appearance. I remind the Committee that I have in no way shut the door with regard to this question of Canadian cattle. The whole question turns upon the difficulty of examination. That is as far as I can go; but I will, of course, be glad to have any communication from the Canadian Government on the subject. Now I come to the question of glanders. In answer to the hon. Member for North St. Pancras (Mr. T. H. Bolton), there are only two courses open to us—either to go to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, or else allow the County Council to take the matter into their own hands and pay compensation. The hon. Member is aware that the disease is one chiefly confined to the Metropolitan area, and I think will see that it would hardly be fair to impose general charges in reference to a matter which is purely local. On the other hand, how are we to compel the County Council to pay for putting down the disease when they, as the representatives of the rate-payers, do not feel called upon to act for this purpose? At the same time, I am glad to say the number of outbreaks has been less in the present year than last year, and, so far as I can see, there is a distinct improvement in the last two years. The cases reported—the fresh outbreaks—are 973, whereas the number last year was 1,106. He will be glad to know that in comparison with other years

there is a decrease in the number of cases of glanders. Well, as to the question of the hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel Nolan), I have to say that the Act is about to receive assent, and it will be administered by the Local Bodies in the same way as the Pleuro-Pneumonia Act is carried out. I do not know how the authorities in Ireland are guided in that respect, but I presume they will act on the same principle. With regard to the observations of the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Hanbury), the question is not one for my Department; it is one of general administration—of general policy—upon which I do not feel justified in expressing an opinion.

MR. HANBURY asked, was it a fact that the hon. Gentleman had no power to protect them in the way indicated?

MR. H. GARDNER: I think I may say that I am always glad to use my influence to the best advantage in dealing with these matters. I have, at any rate, tried to use my influence in the past as best I could. As to the question of weights and measures, it is a question for the Board of Trade. I am glad to hear the testimony paid by the hon. Member to the value of the pamphlets published by the Department, and the answers to questions in connection with Secretaries of Agricultural Societies and labourers throughout the country. In answer to the right hon. Gentleman (Sir M. Hicks-Beach), who put a question with regard to tithe-rent charge, I refer him to a previous reply on the matter, in which it was stated that there was no hope of bringing in any legislation this Session. Speaking, so far as I am concerned with the Department, I think I may say that we are most anxious to deal with this matter as speedily as possible. Well, Sir, I think I have answered all the questions put to me, and, thanking the Committee once more for the attention with which I have been listened to, I venture to ask the Committee now to allow this Vote to pass.

*SIR R. TEMPLE (Surrey, Kingston) said, he would ask whether there were any Returns as to small holdings under the Act passed last year, also as to labourers' allotments, which are understood to be increasing fast? They had an item on the Paper for a salary of £700 for a Director of Statistical Intelligence. They should have some information regarding

that. Also there were three items under sub-heads of this Vote for agricultural education. He presumed it did not relate to the higher branches of instruction, but dealt with elementary branches, which were very backward.

MR. H. GARDNER said, the Department was specially debarred from dealing with education in those schools. If the hon. Baronet would refer to the Paper, he would see that this had nothing to do with elementary schools. The Returns asked for by the hon. Baronet had reached him, and he would have them laid before the House.

*SIR R. TEMPLE said, they should have more information as to the duty done for a salary of £700.

SIR M. HICKS-BEACH said, he did not expect the right hon. Gentleman to say much in reply to his question as to tithe-rent. On the question of Returns, he would point out that it was very difficult to get such Returns in adequate time, and he thought they should have some remedy for that state of things.

MAJOR JONES (Carmarthen, &c.), who was very indistinctly heard, was understood to ask a question in relation to an expenditure of £300, and also as to what had been done in relation to Welsh claims on the Department?

MR. H. GARDNER said he would be glad to give his consideration to the matter raised by the right hon. Gentleman (Sir M. Hicks-Beach). He would also be glad to consider Welsh claims, as he recognised the good work done by the College at Aberystwith.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said, he thought it was distinctly incumbent upon him to say a few words dealing with this question, and he was all the more ready to do so since, as having no practical knowledge of agriculture, he was on an exact par with the President of the Board of Agriculture himself. The right hon. Gentleman had told them that he had no power to deal with some of the most important matters in relation to agriculture—adulteration, for instance, which he said he had no power to prevent—

The Chancellor of the Exchequer rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

Sir R. Temple

The Committee divided :—Ayes 110 ; Noes 24.—(Division List, No. 299.)

Question put accordingly, and agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £21,674, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Charity Commission for England and Wales, including the Endowed Schools Department."

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present ; Committee counted, and 40 Members being found present,

*MR. LOGAN (Leicester, Harborough) moved to reduce the salary of the Chief Commissioner by £500, in order to draw attention to the administration of the Department. The traditional policy seemed to him to be that in the event of anyone going to the Department with a complaint of what he regarded as mal-administration of justice, they endeavoured, if possible, to choke him off, and utterly disregarded any complaints he might make. He complained that there was no adequate supervision exercised by the Charity Commissioners over the Trustees of the various Charities of the country, or over the accounts which they presented. In one case in the Harborough Division the Charity Commissioners had permitted the Trustees of a Charity to neglect sending in an account for two years, and then the account was of the most meagre character. Another case was the following : In March, 1892, a meeting was held in the village in which he resided relating to the administration of a Charity known as the Hanbury Charity. At a public meeting a resolution was passed asking the Charity Commissioners to inquire into the system of education provided under this Charity ; and although an inquiry was held in May, 1892, the draft scheme was not published until June, 1893. When they would get the scheme into operation Heaven only knew ! Meantime, the children in the village were suffering. Moreover, the Charity Commissioners were out of sympathy with the masses of the people in the villages. They did not act in accordance with the spirit of the age. In the new scheme to which he had alluded there was a clause to the

effect that the new Trustees should be elected at a Vestry meeting held under the monstrous system of the old cumulative vote instead of "One Man One Vote," the principle which had been adopted in the Local Government Bill. It was high time there was an inquiry into the administration of the Charity Commissioners. He claimed that the poor people in our villages were entitled to at least as great consideration as regarded the time of the House as were the inhabitants of Siam, the Bahamas, or other places.

*SIR F. S. POWELL (Wigan) said, he believed that there was no body of men who did their duty with more entire self-devotion or with a more enlightened view than the Charity Commissioners did. He served some years ago upon a Committee which inquired carefully into these matters, and the result was eminently satisfactory to those who had confidence—as he had—in their action. He did not believe that any persons were strangled with red tape. He did not know what was the nature of the case to which reference had been made; but he did know that sometimes when schemes had been delayed it was from the desire of the Commissioners to meet the wishes of all parties interested, and so to devise a scheme which would be generally acceptable. He congratulated the Commissioners upon the fact that there was no claim this year for the City Parochial Charities. If the Commissioners had done no other work than that of carrying out the Parochial Charities Act for London they would have deserved well of their country. He was sure that all who took an interest in the cause of technical education, and desired to see the advance of useful education in the Metropolis, would be deeply grateful to the Commissioners for the part which they had taken. He rejoiced that they had seen their way to modify the scheme for St. Paul's School. He saw the first scheme with great regret, and was glad that such a modification had been made as would at once continue the work of that great school, and at the same time found another school to supply a want. It would be satisfactory to the Committee, he thought, if some account were given of the present position of Christ's Hospital. That was a scheme of the most gigantic character, and it was a great achievement to carry it into law;

but they had not heard much of the operation of the scheme during the last 12 months. He felt great regret on reading the scheme of the Commissioners respecting Merionethshire, believing that some portions of it were not in accordance with the enlightened feeling of the age as regarded religious instruction. He thought that the restrictions imposed upon Welsh boarding schools, under the Welsh schemes, in respect of religious education by the Commissioners were not in accordance with the spirit of the times, and he was sure they were contrary to the general principles of religious freedom. He hoped that in any future scheme a more liberal and enlightened view would be taken of the matter, and that the pupils in these schools would be permitted to receive instruction according to the principles of the denomination in the faith of which their parents desired them to be brought up. He was grateful to the Commissioners for the action they had taken in respect of the large endowed schools, but thought they might with advantage abstain from interfering with some of the minor schools, which were doing good work in their way, and whose operations were acceptable to the inhabitants of the villages in which they were situated. He felt reluctant to make remarks of an adverse character concerning the action of the Commissioners in some particulars, and had only done so because he believed that thereby their popularity and efficiency would be increased.

*MR. BENSON (Oxfordshire, Woodstock) said, he would like to know whether the Commissioners had done anything to remedy the insufficiency of their staff to deal with accounts sent in from Endowed Charities? It seemed to him it would be well if the Charity Commission would insist that proper accounts were sent in from every Endowed Charity. It would be a useful check on Trustees who were inclined to be careless, and it would help the Commissioners to see how their schemes were being carried out. He could confirm what had been said by his hon. Friend the Member for Leicestershire, that in some cases the accounts were not sent in at all, and in others they were of the slightest and most unsatisfactory character; and he wished, in conclusion, to bear testimony to the invariable courtesy with which the Commissioners furnished information, or con-

sidered any matter brought before them.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS (Birmingham, Bordesley), said, he was as opposed as ever to the policy of the Charity Commissioners, which policy, he believed, bore heavily on the poorer classes of the country. He was not forgetful of the good work the Commissioners were doing, but Trustees of Charities in a large number of cases were afraid to go to the Commissioners for advice and assistance in carrying out reforms, because they at once took the endowments out of the hands of the Trustees, and would only accept a cut-and-dried scheme in respect of such Charities. In the matter of accounts, he believed the Charity Commissioners during the time they had been in existence had been the means of saving hundreds of Charities that would otherwise have been lost. He agreed that in many cases they were not as strict as they ought to be; but seeing the thousands of accounts they had throughout the country, some allowance ought to be made. Those most concerned were the children of the gutter, and it was for them he (Mr. Jesse Collings) would plead. The Charity Commission was a Department of State, dealing with enormous interests and an enormous amount of money. He believed there was no instance outside Russia of a Department of the State so much beyond the control of the Legislature as the Charity Commissioners. They did what they liked, and were practically irresponsible to this House. But the discussion of their policy in the House created public opinion, which was reflected on the recent schemes of the Charity Commissioners, which of recent years had been more what they ought to be. Besides having charge of the administration of Charities they were a Judicial Body. By this fact great expense to the Charities was saved, but their proceedings should be made public and their decisions open to appeal of some kind. Every one of the schemes of the Commissioners should be laid on the Table of the House, and be available for reference in the Library. During the past year 209 schemes were dealt with by the Commissioners, and the House knew nothing about them—certainly not 5 per cent. of them had been laid on the Table. They should also,

Mr. Benson

every Session, be referred to a Select Committee of the House, which might examine them, hear objections, and modify the schemes, or send them back to the Commissioners for modification. Questions as to the enclosure of commons had been dealt with in this way, and he hoped they would have an assurance on the point. With regard to the last Report of the Commissioners, there was a great improvement on the tone of the last 30 years. It was more humane in character, recognising that there were human beings with human wants and sufferings, and was not the high and mighty falutin document the Report of the Commissioners used to be. For this reason,—for the reason that the Commissioners were beginning to realise what was owing to the poor—he was glad to welcome this Report. They acknowledged that there was no point to which their attention was more constantly devoted than the improved application of funds distributed in precarious and isolated gifts to the poor, whether in money or in kind—in other words, in “doles.” This was a point upon which it was said public opinion was unanimous. The Charities left to the poor might be changed in form, but they should be kept sacredly the property of the poor as much as any other property. Doles were included in the list of purposes enumerated in Section 30 of the Endowed Schools Act of 1869, and it was to them that the Act of 1882 applied. But some people appeared to think that, because elementary education was now being given, the poorer classes ought to be deprived of all their endowments. In his view those endowments still belonged to the poor, and ought to be applied for their benefit. The truth was, that the country owed millions to the poor; and if all the endowments for their benefit were applied according to the wishes of the donors, the fund that would be obtained would go a long way towards solving the question of old-age pensions in rural districts. They spoke of a few cases in the Report. The Charity Commissioners seemed to think that because since 1870 public elementary education had been supported out of the rates the poor in the rural districts did not need further educational facilities, and Charities were diverted to the purpose of higher education, of which

the classes higher in the social scale reaped the benefit. But he reminded them that the poor paid their share of the cost of public elementary education. He also complained of the unwise interference of the Charity Commissioners in other matters. He must protest against the action of the Commissioners. There was no distinction between doles and education, and it was not fair that there should be any distinction where the interests of the poorer classes were concerned. He took the case of the Craddock Wills Charity at Cardiff, bequest dating back to 1710, and he would refer the Government to the terms of the bequest. They had it shown them that the advantages were to go to the "poor boys of Cardiff." In the year 1821 the Master of the Rolls solemnly re-dedicated the property to the poor children of the borough—reading and writing books, &c., and to the sending forth of these poor children in life either by apprenticing, purchasing clothing, or otherwise. In 1889 the Commission brought in another scheme which at one sweep took away the property of the poor, converting the endowments to the purpose of higher education. The income was £1,500 per annum; about half was to go for the general purposes of University College, Cardiff, and in return the College was to give 15 Exhibitions of £20 each, and Scholarships in elementary schools amounting to £200, the remainder to accumulate for the purpose of middle-class education. For years past the £200 had been provided, and 104 Scholarships had been provided. Of these, about seven might be regarded as going to children of the poor, the remainder being taken by children of skilled artizans, sea captains, tradesmen, engineers, and accountants. That was a scheme that they could not endorse.

*THE CHAIRMAN: I do not think the right hon. Gentleman is in Order in entering into these details.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS said, his observations were intended to show the character of the schemes to which he objected. His contention was that the result of the schemes of the Charity Commissioners was to deprive the poor of their means of education in order to endow the middle and wealthier classes. He did not desire to say a word against high or middle-class education. He

only objected to the endowment of high and middle-class education being carried out on the heritage of the poor. The Charity Commissioners had now before them a scheme dealing with the Blue Coat School at Birmingham. That school had been in existence for generations. When the authorities of the school wished to enlarge their work they laid a scheme before the Charity Commissioners; but the Charity Commissioners took the whole matter in hand, and sent down a new scheme, the effect of which was to put an end to the beneficent education in the school. In their scheme the Charity Commissioners said that the number of children in the Blue Coat School should not exceed the number of children then in the school, and that the surplus income should be devoted to higher education. He could not conceive a more unwarrantable interference with the rights of the poor. With a great struggle and fight the people of Birmingham had got their concession; but if this injustice had been attempted in a village where there were no men to take it up and conquer the Charity Commissioners, and make them ashamed of what they were doing, the scheme would have been adopted, and the poor would have been deprived for all time of that which was as much their property as his property belonged to him. There was another scheme of the Charity Commissioners of which he had to complain, that of Sutton Coldfield. There was a Charity for nursing and clothing sick men of £40,000 capitalised value. By the scheme which had been forced on the people the Charity Commissioners took at one swoop £15,000 in order to endow a grammar school.

*THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! I must call the right hon. Gentleman's attention to the fact that this has nothing to do with this Vote.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS said, that with all respect to the Chairman it would be seen that his observations were in Order. There was another scheme by which the Charity Commissioners proposed to take £17,000 more in order to establish a high school for girls. In Birmingham lawyers and other benevolent men had taken the side of the poor, and called themselves the Poor Defence Committee, and by their exertions they had got the Charity Commissioners to sus-

pend this second scheme. He would ask his hon. Friend whether they were to consider that that scheme had been definitely abandoned? It had been hanging like a nightmare over the poor of Sutton Coldfield for several years, and as there was a doubt as to what had become of it, he hoped his hon. Friend would give him some information about it. It was said that Scholarships had been established for full equivalent for privileges and advantages which had been taken from the poor people. He considered that the only thing done by these schools was to swell the ranks of the so-called educated unemployed. The result of the work of the Charity Commissioners was that if an advertisement for a position of £150 a year was published, there would be hundreds of applications from University men, Exhibition holders, and men who had gained Scholarships. The effect of such education was to degrade labour, because it taught the child to escape out of the ranks of labour and get a black coat for itself. The old idea of culture and the development of personal qualities, the old idea of making a man develop up to the full end of his capacity, would never be obtained by this machine sort of education as laid down in these schemes. He was quite willing that advantages should be given to clever children; but under any scheme clever children would come to the front, and he believed that if they were to do away with all these Exhibitions, education would benefit, society would benefit, and a large amount of misery would be avoided. He saw an article in a newspaper the other day on advertisements which appeared in *The Lancet*, from which it appeared that well qualified doctors could be got for £40 to £50 a year, or at any price. There was also a small article in *The Saturday Review* a short time ago which illustrated the policy of the Charity Commissioners more than anything he could say. It stated that the unhappy crowding of the market for brain labourers, and the thousands of miserable, hopeless failures, were due to the system pursued by the Charity Commissioners. He had very little hope of getting any reformation in the present system of education from the Members of the present Government. When he brought the subject on some time ago he was accused by the Presi-

dent of the Board of Trade as an old Tory wasting the time of the House, and he was told that there was nothing like Scholarships. He had also little trust in the Vice President of the Council, as he was a Charity Commissioner.

MR. ACLAND: I am not.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS said, the right hon. Gentleman, if he was not, ought to be a Charity Commissioner. His point was, that if there was to be higher and middle-class education—and he had no objection to it—the cost of it should not be taken out of the heritage of the poor.

*THE PARLIAMENTARY CHARITY COMMISSIONER (Mr. T. E. ELLIS, Merionethshire) said, he could not follow the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bordesley over the wide field he had traversed. The right hon. Gentleman had brought charges against the Charity Commissioners, and had delivered what was, no doubt, a very interesting impeachment of the National system of education. But that was not the time for entering into the merits or demerits of the system of National Education, and he would simply deal with the specific points relating to the working of the Charity Commission which had been brought under his notice. Three points had been made clear in the Debate: The first was that the Commissioners were always willing and anxious to give any information which anyone entitled to it desired to obtain. It had also been acknowledged that there had been a distinct improvement in the schemes of the last few years in the way of giving larger representation to the ratepayers and the Local Authorities; thirdly, that the Reports of the Commissioners were increasing in importance and interest every year; and that the Report of this year was worthy of the highest commendation. The chief practical criticism passed upon this Vote to-day related directly and indirectly to the production of Reports of Accounts. But he would like to point out that the Reports of Charities numbered close on 50,000, and that it must be apparent how difficult it was for any Central Authority to direct attention to and supervise the details of these 50,000 Reports. He thought it was the duty, and certainly the interest, of every Local Authority in each case to direct attention to the Accounts of Charities.

Mr. Jesse Collings

If a Report was not made of a particular Charity any inhabitant in the parish might apply to the Charity Commission to produce one. If in the course of the year the Local Government Bill passed, the complaints that had been made that afternoon would become practically impossible. He trusted that as soon as Councils in parishes and rural districts were set up one of the very first results would be that a direct interest would be taken in these Reports and in the administration of Charities. The Commissioners were doing their utmost to meet the demands made with regard to the publication of the Reports. In the County of Denbigh a most admirable volume of Reports for each parish was now published, and the London County Council and the County Council of the West Riding had applied for a similar publication. Not merely would the old Reports be reprinted, but additions would be made bringing all the information up to date, and he trusted that in a few years' time the work would be done for every county in England and Wales. The delay in the publication of the schemes in regard to the local Charities to which his hon. Friend the Member for the Harborough Division had referred was due to the simple reason that there were two sides to every question, and contending views and methods required consideration. The first duty of the Charity Commissioners was to consider the representations made by parties interested in these Trusts; and they dealt with the matter with the greatest care, which was far better than rushing a scheme through without giving it full and ample consideration. With regard to the complaint of his hon. Friend, that the poorer residents in a parish had little voice in the election of the representatives of the ratepayers, he was glad to say that in the scheme to which his hon. Friend had referred, and he trusted that, for the future, practically in all the schemes of the Charity Commissioners, the representatives of the ratepayers would be elected on the popular principle of One Man One Vote. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bordesley had entered at considerable length into the policy of the endowed schools. This policy had been pursued by the Charity Commissioners under Statutes passed by

the House. He should, on another occasion, be happy to argue the matter out with the right hon. Gentleman. This alone he would say with regard to the Craddock Wells Charity to which the right hon. Gentleman had referred—that the Exhibitions were largely, or almost altogether, enjoyed by the children of the working classes. He was sure that there were not more than 15 out of the 150 Scholarships which were not enjoyed by the sons and daughters of the working classes. He would point out that under the very scheme to which the right hon. Gentleman referred some of the very poorest boys were receiving not merely an admirable education given by the Board schools, but also a higher grade education. There was one case, that of the son of a Roman Catholic, who had obtained a Scholarship, and he was now one of the brightest scholars in the higher grade school. Another boy, the son of a poor man at work at the docks, won a Scholarship, and he was now in training for the ministry of the English Presbyterian Church. Under the scheme some of the poorest boys and girls in the parish obtained an equal education with the children of the wealthiest capitalist.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS: There are only seven of them.

*MR. T. E. ELLIS said, the right hon. Gentleman said there were only seven of them, and he should like the Committee to know the occupations of the parents of these children. From a list he had, he found the parents of some of these children were employed as printers, painters, carpenters, shipwrights, furniture dealers, hawkers—

MR. JESSE COLLINGS: I said they were skilled artizans.

*MR. T. E. ELLIS said, that was so; but, still, these men belonged to the working classes, persons who were too poor to give their children a higher education, and some of them were amongst the poorest parents in the whole of Cardiff. The right hon. Gentleman made a further suggestion with regard to the Endowed Schools Schemes, and suggested that every scheme should be placed in the Library and submitted to a

Select Committee of this House. Under the Act of 1869 all Endowed Schools Schemes were laid on the Table of the House, but that caused so much delay that under the recommendation of the Committee of 1873 it was modified. If all these schemes were to go before a Select Committee of the House it would very materially add to the work of any Committee, as from 200 to 300 schemes were passed every year, but, of course, it was a matter for Parliament to determine. With regard to placing the schemes in the Library, he might say that this Session a fortnightly list of every published scheme had been placed in the Library, and any scheme could be obtained by any Member on application to the Charity Commissioners. Considering the different Acts of Parliament affecting Charities, and the varied conditions attached to the schemes, he thought that, on the whole, the Charity Commissioners were doing their work to the satisfaction of the House, and he hoped that now, after the varied criticisms that had been made, the Committee would allow them to take the Vote.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.) thought his hon. Friend had omitted to reply to one question asked by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bordesley (Mr. Jesse Collings)—namely, what was to be done with the suspended scheme for Sutton Coldfield?

*MR. T. E. ELLIS said, that scheme, so far as he understood, was disallowed by the right hon. Gentleman who was Vice President of the Committee of Council in the last Government, and it therefore could not be proceeded with by the Charity Commissioners.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: That scheme then, at all events, is dead?

MR. T. E. ELLIS: Certainly.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN said, that was satisfactory; but there was another point his right hon. Friend raised. The hon. Gentleman told them a list of the schemes was put in the Library, but would there be any objection to putting the schemes themselves in the Library? He himself had a great difficulty in finding out what was being done in a great number of the cases, and schemes had

been passed simply because the House and the locality was ignorant of what was being done. He admitted that was the fault of the locality; but the hon. Gentleman knew perfectly well that when they were dealing with very small Charities it was almost certain they would pass unperceived unless some interested persons brought their minds to bear upon them. He hoped they would have an assurance that the schemes in future would be placed in the Library so that they might examine them. His right hon. Friend had given notice of a reduction of the Vote; and he understood that his right hon. Friend intended to move it, and take a Division upon it, as it was only by an accidental omission that he had failed to move it up to now. Though their numbers were small, it was important to ascertain the views of those present upon the issue raised by his right hon. Friend. They admitted that in some cases great sums, and even the value of the Charity, had been lost owing to the want of supervision, and they therefore thought it was quite right these matters should come under review. They thanked the Commissioners for the way they had saved considerable sums of money that might otherwise be frittered away; but the point was, after they had saved the money, how was the money to be disposed of? He and his friends said it was the private property of the poor of the country, and they said, therefore, if they could show that one single farthing of these Charities, left for the poor, was taken and applied to other purposes than for the benefit of those for whom they were left, it was a robbery of the poor. That was the position which they took up. The hon. Gentleman told them that a certain number of the Scholarships given had been obtained by the poor. He did not deny it, and, so far as that was the case, it was a good answer; but would the hon. Gentleman pretend to say that of the £1,500 that belonged to the poor in connection with Craddock Wells Charity the whole of that now belonged to the poor? If anyone outside the class for whom the Foundation was intended received any benefit, to that extent the poor had been deprived of benefit. In the case of the Craddock Wells Charity, half of it was taken to establish a higher class school, so that there was only a partial recognition of the claims of the

Mr. T. E. Ellis

poor; and what they wanted to establish, and what they asked the House to vote for to-day, was that the property of the poor should be as sacred as if it were the property of the rich. The answer of the hon. Gentleman was that it was a question of Statute. He quite admitted that new legislation was required in order to effect completely what they desired; but did the hon. Member deny that if to-day, by a considerable majority, they could establish that, so far as the wishes and desires of the Committee were concerned, the property of the poor should be sacred, that that would not have the greatest effect on the proceedings of the Charity Commissioners? It was true the Charity Commissioners were an independent Body, who, time after time and year after year, went on confiscating the property of the poor, and until he and his friends got a majority in the House to support them it would continue. If this afternoon they could get a majority to give a decision in favour of that principle he was certain they would find that future schemes would be very different.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby) said, that on the point of principle he did not differ from the right hon. Gentleman. His opinion was that if the Charities left to the poor were not applicable to the present state of things, then any change that was made ought to have entire regard to the class of the community for whom the Charity was left. That was the principle he had held for many years; and though he had no doubt the Charity Commissioners had acted from the best of motives, he thought it was a mistaken policy; that very often these donations, intended for the poorer classes, had been diverted to other, and what were considered more elevated, objects; but that was undoubtedly a social and political mistake. He entirely concurred with that view of the subject, and he believed that the right hon. Gentleman and others, in calling attention to this matter, had had a very great effect on the Charity Commissioners in leading their mind to regard the question from that point of view. If, for instance, doles had been left for bread and beer, that was not the best way of using the Charity; but the

Charity ought to go to those for whom the bread and beer was intended, and not to other classes—for the teaching of the globes and such purposes. That was a principle on which they would all agree; but what he asked his right hon. Friend to consider was that the cases that had been alluded to were not recent cases.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Yes, they are.

SIR W. HARCOURT was assured that not one of them came within the present Administration.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN said, the Blue Coat School and Sutton Coldfield School were recent, and the Blue Coat School was still open.

*MR. T. E. ELLIS said, that the Blue Coat School would be, as before, for necessitous orphans.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS said, the scheme was a living scheme, though it had been modified.

MR. POWELL WILLIAMS (Birmingham, S.) said, that even the modified scheme took away from the poor inhabitants some of the advantages the Charity conferred.

SIR W. HARCOURT said, he was informed that that was not the case, but, at all events, he hoped his right hon. Friend and others would be satisfied with the declaration he had made. They accepted the principle altogether, and, according to his observation and knowledge, recent schemes had accommodated themselves to that principle much more than they did some years ago, and, therefore, he hoped the Committee would be satisfied with the discussion that had taken place. The principle was one that was accepted by the Government, and they were prepared to act upon it so far as they had any influence in the matter.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS: I beg to move the reduction of the Vote by the sum of £5,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That £16,674 be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Jesse Collings.*)

MR. POWELL WILLIAMS rose, when—

The Chancellor of the Exchequer rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

MR. A. CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E.): I rise to Order. Is the right hon. Gentleman entitled to move that Motion at the conclusion of a speech from a Minister?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: On the point of Order, I ask whether it has not already been ruled from the Chair that a Minister of the Crown is not entitled to move the Closure after the speech of a Minister?

THE CHAIRMAN: I heard what was said—that a long speech before the Closure was moved ought to be deprecated, but that is not the case here. The Motion is perfectly in Order.

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided:—Ayes 113; Noes 29.—(Division List, No. 300.)

Question put accordingly, "That £16,674 be granted for the said Service."

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): I rise to Order, Sir; the doors are open.

THE CHAIRMAN then directed strangers to withdraw, and, after the usual interval, the Question was again put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 32; Noes 110.—(Division List, No. 301.)

The Chancellor of the Exchequer claimed, "That the Original Question be now put."

Original Question put accordingly, and agreed to.

3. £25,853, to complete the sum for Civil Service Commission.

MR. HANBURY (Preston) had only a few words to say on this Vote, principally in connection with an officer called the Senior Assistant Examiner. This gentleman was drawing an excellent salary of £900 a year; but, according to a note in the Estimates, he was to receive an additional sum, the amount of which would be stated in the Appropriation

Account. That in itself was objectionable, but he had a further objection to urge with regard to this official, who was an Army examiner. The complaint made against these Army examiners was that, in the first place, the papers set varied so much from year to year that a candidate had no idea of the scope of the examination to which he had to submit himself. This complaint arose principally in regard to mathematics. The papers varied so much, and were set on such totally different principles, that it was absolutely impossible for candidates or those who trained them to have even a general knowledge of the paper that would be set; therefore, it became a mere chance. It was not the most meritorious person who succeeded, as it depended entirely on the kind of paper the particular examiner chose to set. The difficulty about it was this—that the Committee never knew who these examiners were, and, therefore, those who were subjected to this kind of examination were unable to obtain any kind of redress, and it was difficult to attack them upon this Vote because the Civil Service Commissioners, afforded them no idea who these gentlemen were. He thought the Secretary of State for War would agree with him that this was a real grievance. Again, it was technically wrong to say of a Senior Assistant Examiner—"We cannot tell you beforehand what is to be paid to this gentleman, but it will all come in the Appropriation Account." These things ought to be stated plainly on the Estimates, and they ought to know what was going to be paid. It was also grossly unfair that these examination papers and the manner in which the examination was conducted varied entirely year by year.

*SIR R. TEMPLE (Surrey, Kingston), in continuation of what had been said by the Member for Preston, said, he also had received several letters complaining about the examination papers, particularly the mathematical papers. The letters went into detail to such an extent that he thought the Committee would hardly be able to cope with them, but he wished to state in general terms there was very great dissatisfaction at the manner in which the examinations were conducted, especially with regard to the uncertain

character of the papers : one set of questions one year and a very different set another year ; one set very difficult and another year very much easier, introducing an element of uncertainty into the competition. He presumed the Civil Service Commission exercised a general supervision over the examiners ; but when complaints were publicly and generally made, it became the duty of Members of this House to draw the attention of Her Majesty's Government to them.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (Manchester, E.) said, he rose to make an observation on this Vote, mainly because he thought he should have one sympathetic auditor in the person of the Secretary of State for the Home Department. The right hon. Gentleman gave them the other day an account of certain alterations he was making in the examinations of Factory Inspectors under the Home Office. The whole tendency and course of his administration apparently was to diminish the weight which was at present unfortunately given in our public examinations to special subjects. He recollected that in the course of his speech the right hon. Gentleman said the weight attached to correct spelling in all our public examinations was wholly ridiculous and wholly indefensible. The system of selection by public examination was one that was absolutely necessary ; it was the necessary alternative of the other system of patronage which used to prevail, and which had one objection that was overwhelming. It made the life of the Minister who had to give the patronage absolutely intolerable ; therefore, out of pity to unfortunate gentlemen sitting on the Front Bench, he should never advocate even the smallest return to the ancient system under which places of trust were filled up. But they must all admit that while examination was a capable machinery for selecting men to fill appointments in the Public Service and removed any suspicion of jobbery, he did not believe that examination did much in excluding unfit men or including the fit men. He had come across, during his experience, numberless examples of men who would have made excellent soldiers and have done excellent service to the country, but who, through some defect more of the eye than anything else, had not acquired the art of

spelling. As everyone knew, the English language was supplied with no rule, and spelling supplied no test of intellectual capacity whatever, nevertheless the Civil Service Commissioners had constantly kept out these unfortunate men, and made them go through hours of dictation in order to get through the examination, a process which must have been a sheer waste of time. He did not know what Army coaches thought about it, but he was certain there was nothing that so disgusted pupils or degraded the whole subject of examination as the habit of teaching perfectly arbitrary symbols of unusual words. He hoped that so far as the Government could exercise any influence they would exercise it in the direction of broadening the scope of the examination—that they would not make it more difficult, but would make it a better test of intellectual ability and capacity.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling, &c.) was not disposed to follow the right hon. Gentleman, who, as he understood, did not view with any favour the system of competitive examinations for entrance into the Public Service, and did not desire it should be a test of the accuracy of the education which the candidates had received. They must have competitive examination in some way, the object, so far as the Army was concerned, being to test those who appeared as candidates to ascertain whether they had received the ordinary average education of a young man of their age, but whether they followed the best course in applying that test he could not say. He was not sure that it was the best course so far as the Army was concerned, and within the last couple of months he had appointed a Committee, on which several Members of Parliament and one of the Civil Service Commissioners had a seat, to inquire into the examinations now held for admission to the Army. Undoubtedly the system had been allowed, if he might say so, to stumble along for many years without any fixed principle being laid down. As at present conducted, he did not say whether it was open to objection or whether it was not, but he thought it was time to have an

examination into the subject to see how far these examinations could be made to fulfil, better perhaps than they did now, their proper functions, which were, as he had said, to test the education of young men who offered themselves as candidates. The right hon. Gentleman said he had met many a young man who would have made a splendid soldier, but was excluded for defective spelling. But no doubt the right hon. Gentleman had met many young men equally likely to make splendid soldiers who were able at the age of 17 or 18 years of age to spell correctly, and, notwithstanding the authority of the right hon. Gentleman, he would prefer the one who could spell to the one who could not. He believed it was a decided advantage to spell correctly, and he could go further and say that he thought reading and writing a useful accomplishment. He joined issue with the right hon. Gentleman, and believed they could combine the highest soldierly qualities, or any other, with a thorough, sound, and general education. Now he came to the point raised by the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Hanbury) and the hon. Member for Kingston (Sir R. Temple), who stated that the papers set for the examination varied so much, especially in mathematics, that no one knew what sort of questions were going to be asked. The Committee would hardly believe that all the correspondence received by the hon. Member had reference to one particular case for entrance to the Staff College not long ago. The gentleman who had been in the habit of examining in mathematics died, and it was necessary to appoint a successor. The successor had a different system of examination, and set papers a good deal higher than had been the case in previous years. For his part he differed from the hon. Member, for he did not think it was desirable that the papers should be almost identical; if they were to act as a test at all a little variety might perhaps be admitted. In this case he had satisfied himself there was a very substantial grievance on the part of those who entered as candidates, especially as it was a subject on which they had to obtain a certain number of marks to qualify. This was the crux of the complaint, and with the view of meeting this the Civil Service Commissioners very generously

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reduced the number of qualifying marks, so that in reality the difficulty of obtaining qualifying marks on that occasion was the same as that which prevailed in previous years, and in that way any grievance that existed had been removed. With regard to the question raised as to the salary of the Senior Assistant Examiner he must say he was not aware of it, and the attention of the Secretary to the Treasury, he believed, had not before been called to it; but now that attention had been called to it his right hon. Friend would ascertain if there was any substantial reason for so apparently anomalous a way of recompensing a public servant, and if there was no such reason it would be rectified for the future.

MR. HANBURY said, the right hon. Gentleman had misunderstood him if he thought, as he seemed to have thought from his remarks, that he (Mr. Hanbury) objected to the examination papers varying from year to year. Of course, they must vary, but what he objected to was that last year a much higher paper was set in mathematics than had been set in previous years, and the right hon. Gentleman admitted that that constituted a real grievance. What he was contending for was that the same standard should be adopted from year to year—that there should not be a great jump upwards in any particular year as was the case last year, especially as these were qualifying examinations. When this happened it was hard on the candidates, and what he wanted to secure was that when the Civil Service Commissioners appointed a new examiner they should have some guarantee that the standard should not be raised. He should like to get from the right hon. Gentleman whether the gentleman who had occasioned all this trouble was to be the examiner in future; and, if so, whether the Civil Service Commissioners would see that the papers were more fairly set. He understood this man was at the beginning of his career as an Army Examiner, and unless some check was put on they would have the same kind of grievance another year.

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN admitted that the standard was a little

high, but perhaps the examiner had an entire misconception of the power of these candidates to answer questions. There was no reason to suppose he would repeat the incident.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) trusted the Committee would not be drawn by the answer of the right hon. Gentleman into a prolonged discussion as to the merits of competitive examinations. His opinion was that spelling had been created into a fetish, and though no one could object to competitive examinations, they did object to their being so purely, so entirely, and so exclusively literary. An examination in horsemanship and swordsmanship he thought would be far more effective. But he rose in order to follow up and reinforce the remarks of his hon. Friend the Member for Preston (Mr. Hanbury), as to the Senior Assistant Examiner. This was one of his traditional foes. He was a pluralist, and they did not know what his second salary was, though he understood the matter would be looked into by the Secretary to the Treasury. But there was a much larger matter arising out of the Vote. The whole Vote was for £40,000, and he found that a third of the Vote—represented by the sum of £13,800, with trimmings that were not stated—was paid to assistant examiners. Now, who these assistant examiners were, what their names were, what were their numbers, or what were their duties they were not told; there was not a word mentioned about any one of them. How could the Committee be justified in voting so large a sum to purely anonymous persons? In a former part of the Vote the name of a humble charwoman was given, and he could not understand the justification of voting £13,000 without knowing who was to get it. There was a danger in omitting names. It was a reproach, he believed, justly addressed to the system of competitive examination that it had bred a number of "crammers," whose business it was to fill young men with a certain amount of knowledge which they immediately afterwards lost altogether. In order to avoid the very great danger of these crammers coming into undesirable contact with the examiners, it was essential that the latter should be

men of character, and men whose names were published. The Committee ought to know who the examiners were, or, at least, how many of them there were, and what salaries they got. Another objection he had to the Vote was that part of it went in grants to existing public servants, not one of whom was named. What a vista of pluralism this opened up. He trusted that the Secretary to the Treasury would, at least, state how the Vote was allocated, and what each salary amounted to.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool Scotland) remarked that the manner in which Civil Service examinations were conducted was a subject which interested tens of thousands of young men who had no capital and no means or position except those which were awarded to them by their ability and knowledge. He thought the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. A. J. Balfour) had been right in putting in a general objection to the too prudent superstition, which was borrowed, to a certain extent, from the example of China, that competitive examination was to be regarded as the best means of finding out the talents of those who were examined. He thought, however, that the right hon. Gentleman had not been quite happy in the subject he had selected. It was quite evident that men in all classes of life had shown an incurable incapacity to spell correctly. M. Thiers was never able to spell the word *academie*, and always insisted on putting in two c's. There had been instances in military history of some of the ablest Generals being unable to spell the commonest words, and he believed the Duke of Wellington was never strong in his orthography. He thought the present method of conducting Civil Service examinations was open to much graver charges. He felt some difficulty in saying it in the presence of the gentleman who was then acting as Chairman, [Mr. ROBY was temporarily occupying the Chair] and who was the author of the best Latin Grammar ever published; but the Civil Service examinations set the seal on the superstition that Latin and Greek were necessary for every man and every class. He was glad to

say we had got a little beyond the time when Greek and Latin scholarship was the only form of scholarly reputation that was recognised, and was the best means of getting as high as the Episcopal Bench. The superstition, however, still remained, and he thought the Civil Service examinations set the seal upon it. A further objection to them was that they trained the memory to the detriment of any intellectual faculty. In his early days he intended to go in for a Civil Service examination, and he used to read very carefully the Civil Service papers, so that he knew something about them. He agreed with the criticism that had been passed upon the examinations by many eminent men, that questions which really were test of memory some of the most highly educated literary men were unable to answer. In his opinion, a good deal more attention ought to be paid by the Civil Service Commissioners to the training of habits of observation. He agreed with the Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) that a soldier was not a worse soldier for being unable to spell correctly. At the same time, the right hon. Gentleman knew very well that in these days war was a matter of science, and that intellectual powers were of far greater importance than physical capacity. He agreed with the hon. Member for Lynn Regis (Mr. Gibson Bowles) that the "crammer" was to a large extent an abnormal growth of the present system of Civil Service examinations. One of the reasons why the "crammer," or "grinder," had succeeded so well was that his methods of education were so unconventional and so scientific that people could learn more from him in a year than they could learn in a public school in three or four years. A former Member of the House of Commons, Mr. Walter Wren, one of the ablest men he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) ever met, and one of the most successful grinders, was an admirable teacher. At the same time, the system of stuffing men in much the manner as a Strasburg goose was stuffed for the market was a very bad form of intellectual training. He rather disagreed with the hon. Gentleman who raised the question, as he (Mr. O'Connor) thought it most desirable that the examination papers should, as far as possible, be different from year to year, so that the

Mr. T. P. O'Connor

idiosyncracies of the examiners might not become familiar to the "grinders." His great point, however, was the desirability of disestablishing Greek and Latin from the absurd supremacy which they at present held in the education of the country. He hoped that the Secretary to the Treasury, before the Vote came on in another Session, would devote some consideration to the question whether it would be possible to make the Civil Service Examiners bring the examination more into accord with modern ideas.

MR. THEOBALD (Essex, Romford) asked whether, as the Civil Service Examiners examined for the Indian as well as the British Service, they got any pay from the Indian Government? He further wished to know who received the £5,000 that was down for bonuses?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Sir J. T. HIBBERT, Oldham): In reply to the question that has just been put to me, I have to say that the India Office pays its proportion of the cost of the examinations. I am not now in a position to reply as to the bonuses; but I shall be happy to do so upon the Report. The hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) has made a most interesting speech on the general question; but I am sure that at this late hour, and in view of the great pressure to which we are subjected, he will not expect me to reply at any length. I can only promise to consider what he has said, and to see whether any of the proposals he has made can be adopted with advantage to the country. I rose principally to answer my hon. Friend the Member for Lynn Regis (Mr. Gibson Bowles). As to the money voted in a lump sum, it is impossible to give the details of the expenditure, because the amount is put on the Estimates long before the examiners have been chosen. The assistant examiners vary from year to year, and even during the year, so that it is quite impossible to put down the names and the amounts received by each person. With respect to those who are officers in Public Departments, their names will appear in the Appropriation Accounts, and it is not possible to give them in the Estimates. With respect to the names of all

the examiners, they appear in the Annual Reports of the Civil Service Commissioners, being, however, published after the event. That is all the information I can give in reply to the questions put to me.

GENERAL GOLDSWORTHY (Hammersmith) said, he agreed with most that had fallen from the hon. Member for the Scotland Division (Mr. T. P. O'Connor), and urged that the examinations should be of a practical character. Many of the questions put were of an absolutely useless character. They could not show whether the person examined had any practical knowledge of the subject, but were merely catch questions to see whether he had learnt certain things by rote. The conduct of the examinations was a matter which deserved attention. On a recent occasion, in an Army examination, one of the examiners had a very bad cold; and, as he was the person who had to conduct the dictation, very few of the young men present, except those who were close to him, were able to hear what was read out. Some attention should be given to physical as well as intellectual qualifications for a position in the Army; and he thought the candidates ought not to have to learn a lot of subjects which would be of no use to them. He could not conceive what was the use of higher mathematics to the general run of Staff officers. The Jesuits, who were the best teachers in the world, studied the capabilities of their students, and trained them to excel in one thing or another. The Army authorities, on the other hand, said that unless the candidates excelled in everything they were of no use. It would be far better, in his opinion, to adopt the system of the Jesuits, and employ men some of whom excelled in one thing and some in another.

MR. POWELL WILLIAMS (Birmingham, S.) said, his attention had been called to a practical point, in regard to which candidates for minor appointments in the Post Office were subjected to considerable hardship. A short time ago he received a letter from a man who desired to compete for an appointment in the Leicester Post Office, and who wrote

one of the best hands he ever saw. This man obtained a nomination, but he subsequently wrote to say he had been rejected in handwriting. He (Mr. Powell Williams) thought that a man who rejected that handwriting would have rejected the "handwriting on the wall." On asking why the handwriting was objected to, the candidate was told that the style was not good, and that the Post Office Authorities required a more commercial style. If there was any particular style of handwriting which the Civil Service Commissioners required for such appointments, effective steps ought to be taken in order to bring to the notice of those who sought the appointments what kind of handwriting was likely to satisfy the examiners. He should like to know whether it was the fact that literary examinations were imposed upon persons who were employed as charwomen in the House of Commons; and, if so, what kind of examinations they were? Were they examined in the broom or what? As to the subject referred to by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. A. J. Balfour), and about which a very interesting speech had been delivered by the Member for the Scotland Division, he thought a great deal too much stress had been laid on these examinations. Unquestionably, the great defect was that they never tested the judgment and tact of the person who was subject to them. He thought that if the examinations were better addressed to the objects which the Public Departments set before them—that of obtaining men of capacity, and not simply men of knowledge—it would be better for the Public Service.

MR. J. LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet) wished to understand whether not only the Army examinations, but the whole of the examinations under the jurisdiction of the Civil Service Commissioners should be made the subject of inquiry and consideration on the part of the Government. He thought it was quite clear that there was a *bonâ fide* conviction prevailing with tolerable unanimity in all quarters that something was decidedly wrong in connection with the bulk of these examinations. The complaint was generally made that the examiners, for the most part, set themselves to find out not what

the competitor knew, but, if possible, what he did not know. The consequence was that very often the result of an examination was that the best men were kept out of the Service. Probably no system could be devised which would be entirely free from serious objection, but he hoped the Government would endeavour to arrive at some satisfactory solution of the question.

Vote agreed to.

4. £33,467, to complete the sum for Exchequer and Audit Department.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN asked when Progress was to be reported, as he understood that the Sitting was to close at 7, and that Report of Supply had to be taken.

SIR W. HARCOURT: We will move to report Progress at about half-past 6.

Vote agreed to.

5. £3,353, to complete the sum for Friendly Societies Registry.

MR. HANBURY said, the Registrar, in his last Report on this Vote, made some remarks in regard to the inadequate way in which the accounts of the surveyors were sent in. They all knew there had recently been some gross cases of loss in connection with funds of this description—poor people, unfortunately, losing the accumulations of years. Well, so far as he could recollect, the Chief Registrar said that the law enforcing on these different surveyors an account of their annual receipts and payments should be more stringently carried out. As a matter of fact, there had been very few prosecutions for neglecting to carry out these duties; and he thought it important, looking at the class of persons who invested their savings in this way, that the Government should insist upon proper accounts being rendered. He should like to know whether anything had been done to carry out the wishes of the Registrar.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES said, that under Sub-head B he saw an item for cost of prosecutions contemplated. He did not understand what that meant. Were the prosecutions referred to settled,

Mr. J. Lowther

or was it meant that they would probably take place?

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, that provision had to be made in the Estimates for prosecutions which might be expected during the year.

GENERAL GOLDSWORTHY said, he hoped the Government would take steps not only to see that proper accounts were rendered, but that the funds which were stated to be in existence really were in existence. It was a frightful thing for some of these old people, who had been putting by money all their lives, to find when they reached old age that every penny of it had evaporated, and in a Society bearing the Government stamp. These Societies with the Government stamp were like patent medicines. People imagined that they were guaranteed by Government, and that they must be of the very best kind. He trusted that in future the poorer classes would be assured that if they invested in these Societies the benefits announced could be afforded by the subscriptions, and that the subscriptions would not be improperly made away with.

MR. J. LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet) said, he thought that before any Society could place itself under the State there should be full inquiry into all its methods. He did not know whether particular Society about which there had been a great deal of discussion lately came under this Vote—

MR. ASQUITH: No.

MR. J. LOWTHER said, the danger would be greater than ever if Societies such as that could obtain the *imprimatur* of the State. He wished to know precisely what steps were taken to ascertain, before these Societies were passed by the Registrar, whether or not they were conducted with regularity? So far as the old Societies were concerned, there was every reason to believe that they regarded the intervention of the State as a great boon, provided it were not carried too far.

*MR. T. H. BOLTON (St. Pancras, N.) said, the hon. and gallant Member opposite had raised rather a large question; but he (Mr. Bolton) desired only to make one observation upon it. The

certificate which was given to the Societies was hardly sufficiently clear to show that it did not warrant or guarantee the Society—that it did not give any Government sanction or recommendation—but merely certified that certain legal formalities had been complied with. The result was that frequently an unsatisfactory Society got a sort of hall-mark, and through being registered secured subscriptions which it would not otherwise obtain. If the Government would consider the desirability of making the certificate perfectly clear in the direction he had indicated it would be doing a service to a large class of persons who were much misled in this matter.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I cannot agree that the Friendly Societies would look with any favour on Government intervention. I have recently had a great deal to do with some of these Societies—including the most powerful—and I can assure the Committee that there is nothing they object to more than Government interference. Some of these great organisations, which in former days were lavishly conducted, found the necessity of introducing reforms. They introduced those reforms, and are now on a sound foundation. That was a spirit which ought to be encouraged, and which ought not to be interfered with. With regard to new Societies, I believe that where a certificate is given there is a certain inquiry as to whether the rules are reasonable and the tables are fair; but it cannot be understood, nor has it been the fact, that that constitutes a guarantee of solvency to the Society. There may be cases in which, through the carelessness with which the Societies are conducted, the certificate becomes perfectly illusory. That is the state of the case. I confess that, so far as I am able to understand the subject, I am not disposed to place the State in any way in the position of guarantor of the solvency of these Societies. We must, to a great extent, trust to the prudence and self-reliance of the Societies themselves as the best security for their soundness.

MR. J. LOWTHER said, the right hon. Gentleman had quite misunderstood him if he thought that he (Mr. Lowther)

had suggested that established Societies, like the Oddfellows and the Foresters, which had millions in their coffers, should be subjected to Government interference. On the contrary, he had frequently strongly denounced all attempts to interfere with the work of these Societies by the State. What he had intended to convey was that before the Government allowed any organisation whose solvency would not be a matter of certainty to shelter itself under the ægis of an official audit, an inquiry ought to be made as to its character. They knew all about the old Societies, and the less they interfered with them the better. Far be it from him to suggest that they should incur any responsibility in the matter. He agreed that no meddlesome officialism should be applied to the old Societies, but he thought they ought not to lend facilities through a Vote of this kind to any institution which could not prove itself to be of a thoroughly sound character.

***SIR J. T. HIBBERT** said, the Registrar had, under the Act of Parliament, certain specified duties to perform. Societies were not bound to go to the Registrar. They were not compelled to be registered; but if any Society wished to have the signature of the Registrar it would go to him and hand in a copy of its regulations and its scale of payments, and if the Registrar was satisfied he gave a certificate. But he did not give a guarantee in any way. That certificate was a great advantage, and, so far, the Registrar did good service.

MR. J. LOWTHER: If the Society is a sound one.

***SIR J. T. HIBBERT** said, that if it was not sound the Registrar did not give a certificate. He saw their rules and regulations and their scale of payments; and if he found that they were not satisfactory he declined to give a certificate. He agreed with everything the hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite had said as to the necessity of protecting the poor investor. They knew how much loss had occurred throughout the country in consequence of Friendly Societies becoming insolvent and breaking up. He should be glad if there were

some system, either county or general, by which poor people could invest their savings with safety. All the great Friendly Societies, it was hoped, were now on a sound footing. They were doing immense service in the country by enabling people to depend upon themselves; and he thought that Parliament ought to see that these institutions were made as far as possible a protection to the poor people. With regard to prosecutions in 1892, there were 23, and money was taken for prosecutions to come on.

*SIR C. W. DILKE said, the whole system existed under an Act of Parliament passed by the Government of which the right hon. Gentleman opposite had been a Member; and if it were to be changed it could only be done by Act of Parliament.

*MR. T. H. BOLTON said, the right hon. Gentleman had said that a certificate was given if the Society was a sound one, but otherwise that the certificate was refused. He did not think the right hon. Gentleman meant that.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, the certificate was given if the calculations and scales of the Society were based on sound principles.

*MR. T. H. BOLTON : That is to say, if the Society complies with the Act of Parliament.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT : Yes.

*MR. T. H. BOLTON : If it is in conformity with the Act of Parliament.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT : Yes. The certificate was given on the understanding that it did not imply more than that. It was a guarantee that the Society had complied with certain provisions of the Act of Parliament.

*SIR A. ROLLIT said, that an observation which had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman on the Front Opposition Bench (Mr. J. Lowther) was calculated to give a false impression. There was no real audit of a Society's accounts at all by the Registrar. The Societies had to render certain annual accounts, but as to examination of them nothing but of the most casual character took place. There was no audit that could prevent fraud un-

less the fraud was of the most glaring character. He would point out to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the matter might be dealt with by a clause similar to one in the Savings Banks Act, 1890, which provided that a certificate under that Act should not be considered as giving any guarantee to the depositors. It had been customary for some of those institutions to use the Royal Arms at the head of their announcements, or to say "Certified by Act of Parliament," but this was ended by the Savings Bank Act. These things were calculated to produce misapprehension. The great secret of the success of the Friendly Societies which had sprung from the working classes was that they were conducted by the people themselves, and anything which would tend to introduce anything like State control would be prejudicial.

Vote agreed to.

6. £9,917, to complete the sum for Lunacy Commission, England.

7. £84, to complete the sum for the Mint, including Coinage.

8. £8,043, to complete the sum for National Debt Office.

9. £12,042, to complete the sum for Public Record Office.

Resolutions to be reported upon Monday next; Committee to sit again upon Monday next.

SUPPLY.—REPORT.

Resolutions [8th September] reported.

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS, 1893-4.

CLASS II.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL wished to know, for the convenience of several Irish Members who wished to return to England to take part in the discussion of the Irish Votes, when those Votes would be taken?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby): On Thursday.

1. "That a sum, not exceeding £25,680, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Department of Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies, including certain Expenses connected with Emigration."

Sir J. T. Hibbert

2. "That a sum, not exceeding £7,533, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Department of Her Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council and for Quarantine Expenses."

3. "That a sum, not exceeding £108,090, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade and Subordinate Departments."

4. "That a sum, not exceeding £16, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894, for meeting the Deficiency of Income from Fees, &c. for the requirements of the Board of Trade, under the Bankruptcy Acts, 1883 and 1890, and 'The Companies (Winding-up) Act, 1890.'"

*MR. T. H. BOLTON said, it might be in the recollection of the House that at the commencement of this year he had asked a question with reference to a subject which was of very great interest to a large class of poor people throughout the country. An article published in *The Daily Chronicle* on January 17 last contained this statement—

"There is reason to believe that the Board of Trade has been creating, without anybody except its oppressed victims knowing of it, a new, and we do not hesitate to say, abominable industry in this country to the grievous oppression of the poorer classes. It is that of the speculative debt collector, who buys a bankrupt's book debts from the Board of Trade, and then fastens like a vampire on the wretched debtors, persecuting them, even though they be struggling in the direst poverty, with every engine of extortion known to the law."

That was very strong language, but it was not stronger than the traffic in small book debts deserved. This traffic arose in connection with the realisation of assets by Official Receivers, and it had been carried on to a considerable extent, especially in the County Courts which had bankruptcy jurisdiction. The Official Receivers, after collecting the good debts of estates, put the very doubtful and bad debts together and sold them for what they would fetch. The result was that debt collectors and persons doing work in the County Courts found it worth their while to buy these parcels of book debts, having more than ordinary facilities for enforcing payment. He had in his possession particulars of several such cases. In one

case—that of Marianne Deune, of Pontypool—book debts amounting to £800 were sold by the Official Receiver to the highest bidder for 40s., and no less a sum than £400 had been screwed out of the unfortunate debtors, many of whom were in a state of great poverty. Even up to this date defendants were constantly being brought up for judgment and summonses and executions were being taken out. He was supplied with other cases. In one case the assignee of the debt sued for £9 7s. 6d., in which he got an order for 4s. a month, involving 15s. poundage, the defendant being an unfortunate widow. In another case the judgment was given in 1883 for £8 3s. 5d., on which an order was made for 5s. a month—£2 12s. 3d. had been paid into Court. There were some costs and expenses, and the amount ordered to be levied was £5 7s. 6d. Execution had been issued. In another case the sum of £13 13s. 7d. was ordered to be paid by 4s. a month, and the poundage fees were one guinea. The latest judgment he had was in February, 1893. His correspondent described this as "a nefarious traffic," and he had extracts from the local papers which expressed themselves in the strongest language on the matter. Only on the previous evening he had a conversation with a distinguished County Court Judge in the South of England on the subject, and that gentleman told him that the practice was simply abominable, and that he did what he could to mitigate it by refusing to issue execution, or by spreading payments over a considerable period. Steps ought to be taken to alter the law in order to prevent Official Receivers selling book debts which ought to be wiped off as bad, and which would be treated thus by any respectable trader. The Official Receiver, of course, was in a difficult position. Unless he had distinct authority from headquarters to the contrary, he might consider it to be his duty to sell book debts in parcels, and so lay a foundation for this iniquitous system of extortion. *The Daily Chronicle* had gone into this matter at length, and in the article which he had mentioned referred to the sale of book debts for very small sums, for instance, of £50 for £1, and concluded as follows :—

"We cannot believe that the House of Commons will approve of the Board of Trade

selling their right of suing for an assigned debt due to a bankrupt estate to the usurious sharks who make it their trade to grind the faces of the poor, and who buy that right at a price so low that it gives them almost illimitable powers of torment and persecution."

He did not complain of individual Official Receivers in this matter—he complained of the system. His object in bringing the matter to the attention of the President of the Board of Trade was that the right hon. Gentleman might look into it carefully. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman to obtain a Return from the County Courts throughout the country—showing (1), the number of sales of book debts by the Official Receivers in Bankruptcy; (2), the amount of the debts sold; (3), the sums realised by the sales; and (4), the amounts by which dividends had been increased by such transactions. If such a Return was procured, it would satisfy the right hon. Gentleman of the substantial character of the grievance to which his attention was now being directed. The right hon. Gentleman would then, no doubt, see the necessity of taking strong action to prevent this sort of thing in the future. There was another point to which he wished to call attention—namely, the question of the official residences of the Official Receivers. The Official Receivers did not always have offices in the districts in which they acted, the consequence being that persons sometimes had to go a long way to wait on them for the purpose of giving information as to the state of their affairs. In one case a person living in the Tunbridge Wells district had to attend, not at Tunbridge Wells to give information, but at an office near London Bridge. This was an unfortunate man earning 15s. or 16s. a week, and it was hard upon him to have to go up to London instead of to Tunbridge Wells.

MR. HANBURY said, that as this was the first occasion on which the Votes had been increased by any payment on account of the Act of 1890 dealing with the winding-up of companies, he wished to direct the attention of the President of the Board of Trade to the Report of the Inspector General of Joint Stock Companies, which disclosed some startling facts. It was shown that in one year 120 companies were wound up by the order of the Court, 32 were voluntarily

Mr. T. H. Bolton

wound up, and 722 were wound up without any superintendence at all. The winding up of these companies involved a loss of £24,000,000. Of these companies 111 had been in existence for three years, 50 for two years, and 24 for one year only. The Inspector General stated that in no single case was the failure of one of these Companies brought about by any ordinary misfortune such as might attend a private trader. In every case the disaster was due either to mismanagement, or the promotion of illusory objects. He thought the time had come when the Board of Trade should be able to exercise more supervision over these swindling companies. Of course, the loss of £24,000,000 in one year must be bad for trade, and he hoped the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) would be able to introduce next Session a Bill for increasing his powers on the subject. Under Clause 56 of the Companies Act the right hon. Gentleman could appoint Inspectors and examine into and report upon a company at the request of one-fifth of the shareholders. He was afraid that was too large a number to require to combine together in order to bring the power into operation.

MR. BARROW (Southwark, Bermondsey) said, that at the beginning of the year he asked the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Mundella) whether his attention had been called to the registration of debenture bonds created by fraudulent and insolvent Companies. The right hon. Gentleman replied that the Lord Chancellor (Lord Herschell) was giving his favourable attention to the question. Months elapsed, and he (Mr. Barrow) called the attention of the Attorney General (Sir C. Russell) to it. The Attorney General promised that the Lord Chancellor would consider the subject with a view to legislation. Had any action been taken?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. MUNDELLA, Sheffield, Brightside): With respect to the first complaint made by the hon. Member for North St. Pancras (Mr. T. H. Bolton), my attention was called to the article in *The Daily Chronicle* in January last about the sale of debts. The question was investigated, and the result of the investigation was to satisfy me that there

was a class of men who exercised their calling in such a way as to inflict the greatest possible hardship upon poor people. As a result, I, in February last, caused a Circular to be issued to all the Official Receivers of the country calling their attention to the practice of selling debts, and requesting that it should not be carried out as it had been; that no debts should be sold by public auction unless where they were assigned as part of a going business; that in no case should any debts be transferred until all reasonable facilities had been afforded for the settlement of the claim; and that special notice should be given to the Department of all sales to second parties before they were actually effected. The result is that, so far as estates in bankruptcy are concerned, I believe the system has been brought into discredit. The cases quoted by the hon. Gentleman are all cases relating to last year. I have consulted with the Chief Inspector and the principal Official Receivers, and find that they have acted upon my Circular. I am informed that the whole system has been gradually brought into discredit, and the trade has been gradually cut out. Only the other day a professional debt collector summoned a poor person for a small amount, and the Judge made an order for the payment of 1d. a month, the first 1d. to be paid six years hence. It is so well understood by the County Court Judges that the system results in hardship that they are endeavouring as far as they possibly can to put an end to it.

*MR. T. H. BOLTON : Will you give a Return on the subject ?

MR. MUNDELLA : No ; I cannot give a Return, because it is impossible to go into old estates. I may point out that though officials in bankruptcy may do all they can to put a stop to this practice there is nothing to prevent private persons, especially medical men and others, selling their book debts at a low price. The County Court Judges are the persons who can most effectually check the practice, and they are doing so. With respect to the Official Receiver having an office at Tunbridge Wells, it was found that in that district it was more convenient to solicitors, clients, and everybody that the office should be near

London Bridge Station. It would cost a great deal more to send a solicitor to Tunbridge Wells than to bring a bankrupt, of which there are very few in that district, to London. That is the sole reason why the present system has been adopted with respect to the Report of the Chief Inspector ; no doubt a very scandalous state of things has been disclosed. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hanbury) must, however, remember that the Act was only passed in 1889, and that it had only had one year's trial before the Report was presented. It was one of the most stringent Acts ever passed by this House, and it has been very strictly put into operation during the past year. Numbers of prosecutions have taken place, some of which have not had satisfactory results. Some of them have cost the Treasury thousands of pounds, and the Judges have been very reluctant indeed to enforce the full provisions of the Act. I am quite sure that there has been no neglect on the part of the Official Receivers. The only complaint I have heard is that the Official Receivers are only too anxious to prosecute, and I constantly hear statements that they are prosecuting people. The hon. Gentleman asks me whether I can recommend an alteration of the Penal Law with the object of putting down fraudulent trading. I believe that the Act is making fraudulent trading at present as difficult as possible. It has only been about 18 months in operation, and has hardly had a fair trial yet. A most able Departmental Committee looked into the whole administration of the Department a short time ago, and they have reported that all is being done that can be done. With regard to the question of Debenture Bonds raised by my hon. Friend behind me (Mr. Barrow), I have brought the matter before the Lord Chancellor. The Lord Chancellor has not seen his way to introduce a Bill to regulate the registration of all the Debenture Bonds that may be issued, as he assures me such a measure would be very contentious.

MR. BARROW : That is not my case.

MR. MUNDELLA : I should be very happy if the hon. Gentleman will put his case on paper, and bring it before the Lord Chancellor himself.

*SIR A. ROLLIT said, he thought the hon. Member for Bermondsey (Mr. Barrow) had brought forward a very important subject, and one which was hardly likely to be so difficult to deal with as was indicated by the President of the Board of Trade. Indeed, the Bills of Sale Bill, which had come down from the Upper House, would have afforded an opportunity of dealing with the subject if that measure had not been abandoned, and he had himself handed in Amendments with that object. He trusted that at an early date the matter would be dealt with. He wished to express to the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Mundella) the very general feeling that there had been too great a growth of officialism and centralisation in reference to the administration of the Winding-up and Bankruptcy Acts. That feeling was general in commercial circles, and it was also largely expressed in legal circles. Whilst he accepted the principles of the Act of 1883, and even more those of his own Act of 1890, he thought it most desirable that the administration of those Acts should not take the direction of too much officialism and centralisation if this could possibly be avoided. He had heard of instances in which compositions of a large amount had been refused, with the result that a very small dividend had been ultimately obtained. He hoped the subject was one which would receive the attention of the Board of Trade, and that as much concession as possible would be made to public feeling with regard to it. While the Insolvency Laws had been well administered recently, there was one gap which might well be filled with reference to the administration of estates by deeds of arrangement. Such deeds were now public under the Registration Acts. At the present time one dissentient creditor could by insisting upon payment of 20s. in the £1, either secure a preference for himself or prevent an arrangement; and this was the difficulty which it was desired to deal with. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would seek an early opportunity of securing by legislation, at the instance either of the Department or of some private Member, with the help of the Department, the removal of this mischief.

Resolutions agreed to.

BURGH'S GAS SUPPLY (SCOTLAND) ACT (1876) AMENDMENT BILL.

Lords Amendment to be considered forthwith; considered, and agreed to.

CONSOLIDATED FUND (No. 4) BILL.

Read the third time, and passed.

LIGHT RAILWAYS (IRELAND) BILL.

(No. 454.)

Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; to be read the third time upon Monday next.

VACCINATION (PUBLIC DEPARTMENTS).

Return [presented 8th September] to be printed. [No. 412.]

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copy presented,—of Diplomatic and Consular Reports on Trade and Finance, No. 1286 (Russia) and 1287 (China) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (MISCELLANEOUS SERIES).

Copy presented,—of Reports on Subjects of General and Commercial Interest, No. 301 (Spain) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."

MR. R. G. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.) asked how it was that the Report of the Colonial Office Vote had been taken at half-past 6, when it had been arranged that it should be taken at 7?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I am in the unfortunate position of the man who desired to please everybody. It was certainly the intention to continue Committee of Supply until 7 o'clock; but an appeal was made by the Leader of the Opposition and the Member for West Birmingham that we should close the Committee earlier, in order to take Report of Supply. I had totally forgotten the other arrangements, and I am very sorry if the hon. Member has been put to any disadvantage in consequence.

Motion agreed to.

House adjourned at ten minutes after Seven o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 11th September 1893.

The Lord Kensington—Chosen Speaker in the absence of the Lord Chancellor and the Lords Commissioners.

GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND BILL.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

LORD DENMAN asked whether the Second Reading of the Bill for the Better Government of Ireland, having been passed after 12 o'clock on Friday night, the postponement of it would date from that day or from Saturday; because, if from Saturday, it would be impossible for it to be read a second time "that day six months"? He, therefore, wished it should be known that the postponement would, in the circumstances, be until the following Monday, the 12th March.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (The Earl of Kimberley): I really do not know what day it dates from, but it is wholly immaterial. It makes no difference what day it is.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Standing Order No. XXXIX. considered (according to Order), and dispensed with for this day's Sitting.

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE BILL [H.L.]

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

LORD DENMAN, in moving the Second Reading, said, that in view of the unfair opposition which had been made out of doors to this Bill, he thought it would be an excellent thing if it were carried in their Lordships' House, and submitted to the opinion of the other House at the next meeting of Parliament. He begged, therefore, to move that the Bill be now read a second time, so that, with the suspension of the Standing Orders in its favour, it might be passed through all its stages in that House.

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Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."
—(*The Lord Denman.*)

On Question, resolved in the negative.

LAND JUDGES COURT (IRELAND).

LORD ARDILAUN moved—

"That the Return moved for on the 8th August, 1890, relating to proceedings in the Land Judges Court in Ireland (in continuation of House of Lords Parliamentary Paper No. 249, of Session 1888) be presented to the House, notwithstanding that some slight alterations in the form of the Order have been found to be necessary."

He believed that the Motion was unopposed.

LORD ACTON said, the Return moved for would be got ready immediately.

Motion agreed to.

CAVALRY BARRACKS AT WINDSOR.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF ARRAN asked the Under Secretary of State for War whether there was any truth in the rumour that the General Officer commanding the Home District had reported that the Cavalry Barracks at Windsor were unfit for occupation; whether the Government expert and the principal medical officer had reported in the same sense; and whether, in consequence of these Reports, it was the intention of Her Majesty's Government to remedy at once the evils complained of; and whether the Under Secretary of State for War would lay on the Table all the Reports and Correspondence connected with the matter? He said that, in the short interval between the Division on the Government of Ireland Bill on Friday, and the Adjournment of the House, certain information having been given him with reference to the state of these barracks, he had had but a few minutes to put down the question in a somewhat uncertain form. More specific information had since reached him, of a character so remarkable that he should have liked to have had the opportunity of speaking to the Under Secretary of State for War upon the matter before bringing it to the attention of the House. As, however, it would be inconvenient for the noble Lord to be present to-morrow, he must put the question. Owing to constant complaints of the insanitary

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condition of these barracks, an expert officer (Captain Tindall) was sent to Windsor to report upon them. On the 3rd August he reported that all the drains were in a very foul state, that there was no proper system of ventilation, and the principal latrines were little better than cesspools, emitting their putrid contents into wells. The whole place stank in a most abominable manner, and money spent on works would be thrown away. On the 23rd August the principal medical officer reported, amongst other things, that the barracks were so bad as to be unfit for occupation. That appeared to him to be an unsatisfactory state of things. Then a subsequent Report was received from Captain Tindall on the 29th August, to the effect that the foul smells complained of were owing to an escape of "gas." It was very remarkable that an expert, well versed in such matters, should make so strong a Report in the first instance and one so very minimised three weeks afterwards. The only way to reconcile the two Reports was to suppose that in writing "gas" Captain Tindall had omitted the word "sewer," for of course it was easy to distinguish between the smell from an escape of illuminating gas and that proceeding from drains. Another strong fact was that the medical officer had reported that the barracks were "unfit for occupation." Further, in December, 1892, he believed that the General Officer commanding the Home District drew up a very strong Report on the condition of the barracks; but no notice was taken of it, nor any move made in the matter until August last. During the short time the Royal Horse Guards were at Windsor, before they went to Pirbright, on their way to Newbridge, two cases of illness occurred, one patient having to be sent away, owing, it was believed, to the bad smells; and in the other case, which ended fatally, the patient showed strong symptoms of enteric fever. He remembered a similar case occurring at Dublin, where the Royal Barracks were pronounced to be in an unsanitary condition. Nothing, however, was done in the matter, although men and officers were dying every year, and it was only when, presumably, it became convenient to put the matter into the Estimates that a very bad report of them was sent in, and the

Headquarters Staff was moved out at 24 hours' notice, and it was stated that it would be at the risk of their lives to return. Having put the facts he had mentioned before the noble Lord, he begged to put the question.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Lord SANDHURST) said, he quite recognised the public spirit which had prompted the question, and the friendly tone in which his noble Friend had couched his observations. A short time ago a question was asked of Mr. Campbell-Bannerman in the House of Commons, and, in reply, he quoted the Report of Mr. Tindall, who was not a military officer, but an expert in sanitary matters, and stated that several Reports had been received upon the drainage of barracks. The first Report from the General Officer commanding, complaining of the system, had been received in December, 1892; and two others had been received from the War Office Sanitary Inspector, dated August 1 and August 29. Although the system of drainage appeared to be old-fashioned and bad in principle, the health of the troops occupying the barracks had not suffered in any way. The Sanitary Inspector, who had used the smoke test, stated that he found no direct escape of gas from the drains into the building, but that the bad smells were sufficiently accounted for by the proximity of filthy latrines and numerous escapes of lighting gas within the building. After recommending certain alterations and repairs which were now to be carried out, the Inspector stated that he could not help thinking that hitherto the smells had been rather offensive than dangerous, and that when the alterations had been made the air of the officer's house would cease to be offensive; and he considered that no special steps need to be taken until the drains were re-constructed in due course. Steps were now being taken to remove the offensive stenches. Of course, the cleanness of latrines was not within the responsibility of the Secretary of State for War, but of Commanding Officers. Lord Errol, in command of the Blues, had complained to him that these drains were in a bad state. Thereupon, Mr. Tindall was sent to report as a preliminary step. Knowing that Lord Errol was dissatisfied with the state of the barracks to which he was to take his

regiment, he asked Mr. Tindall to come and see him and state the steps he had taken. Mr. Tindall states that he had used the smoke test, and the officers having complained of the offensive smells when the doors were opened on hot nights he had discovered an escape of gas. As he had said, the health of both regiments of Life Guards who had been quartered there had been uniformly good. His noble Friend was unable to understand how the Reports differed so much, but he should point out that Mr. Tindall had been selected to report on these matters because he was well versed in them. Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, after conferring with the Inspector General of Fortifications and the Quartermaster General, saw no reason why the troops should not go into these barracks. It should be stated that the second examination made by Mr. Tindall with the smoke test was very searching. He might also say that he had himself looked into the matter, and the weekly Returns still showed that the health of the troops had not suffered.

THE EARL OF ARRAN again remarked, while obliged to his noble Friend for the answer he had given, which was to a great extent satisfactory, that there were great discrepancies between the Reports sent in, and that Captain Tindall's Reports gave different reasons for what was complained of. He would refer to the matter on a future occasion, as he did not quite understand it, being a bit of an engineer himself.

LORD SANDHURST pointed out that Mr. Tindall's second examination was much more searching than the first, and that though in the first instance he said it would be useless to spend money on these barracks, he had since stated that there could be no complaint when the drains were finally re-constructed.

THE EARL OF ARRAN said, he understood the troops were going there?

LORD SANDHURST said, that was so, on the advice received from the Quartermaster General and Inspector General of Fortifications.

COUNTY SURVEYORS (IRELAND) BILL [H.L.]

Returned from the Commons agreed to with an Amendment: The said Amendment to be considered To-morrow.

CONSOLIDATED FUND (No. 4) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1^a: Then (Standing Order No. XXXIX. having been dispensed with) Bill read 2^a; Committee negatived; Bill read 3^a, and passed.

NAVAL DEFENCE (AMENDMENT) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1^a: Then (Standing Order No. XXXIX. having been dispensed with) Bill read 2^a; Committee negatived; Bill read 3^a, and passed.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY moved, "That the House do adjourn to Three o'clock to-morrow."

LORD DENMAN said, he thought it impolitic on the part of Her Majesty's Government to postpone the Sittings of that House without affording an opportunity of putting an end to the present coal strike, the most unfortunate strike that had ever occurred in this country. Railway traffic was to some extent suspended, and the crisis required to be dealt with. An opportunity ought to be afforded for a declaration of the opinion of Parliament in both Houses.

House adjourned at Twelve o'clock, till to-morrow, Three o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 11th September 1893.

QUESTIONS.

LEVEL CROSSING AT TILBURY.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade how many fatal accidents have occurred at the Manor Way Level Crossing, Tilbury, since the docks were opened?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. MUNDELLA, Sheffield, Brightside): I regret to say that four persons have been killed at this crossing since the opening of the docks in 1886.

As I stated last week, powers have been taken by the Company to abolish this crossing, and I have directed an Inspector to visit the spot and confer with the Company as to the precautions to be taken until the work has been executed.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping): Have the Board of Trade no power to compel the Railway Company to take more effective precautionary measures?

MR. MUNDELLA: No, Sir; the Board of Trade have no power in this case.

THE ROYAL NIGER COMPANY.

MR. DODD (Essex, Maldon): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Her Majesty's Government have received during the present year any Reports or official information with regard to the management by the Royal Niger Company of the African territory under the control of that Company; and, if so, what the effect of it is; and what is the estimated population and size of the territory within the Company's control or jurisdiction, and what official in Her Majesty's Service has now any duty of keeping Her Majesty's Government informed as to the condition of that territory or the management of it by the Company, and to whom British subjects not belonging to the Company, who trade or desire to trade with that territory, may look for advice or assistance?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir E. GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): The Annual Reports of the Council of Directors of the Company are furnished to Her Majesty's Government. Their effect is generally satisfactory. There is no official in Her Majesty's Service resident in the territory under the control of the Royal Niger Company. The officials of the Company are responsible for the local execution of the provisions of the Charter, and it is to them that British subjects should look for advice or assistance. The regions administered by the Company have been estimated to cover about 500,000 square miles, with a population of from 20,000,000 to 25,000,000.

A BLACKPOOL POSTAL THEFT.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Postmaster
Mr. Mundella

General whether he is aware that Mrs. Wotherspoon, a widow in poor circumstances, having sent a letter containing a postal order for 10s. to her daughter in Blackpool, the letter and the postal order were, while in charge of the Post Office, stolen by a caretaker at the Blackpool Post Office, in the employ of the Post Office; whether, while admitting these facts, the Secretary to the Post Office informed Mrs. Wotherspoon, on 23rd August last, that the Postmaster General was not liable to, and would not repay, the sum stolen by his subordinate; and whether it is a settled principle with the Post Office that it has no liability and no responsibility whatever for the theft by its own servants of letters or moneys while in its own charge?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. A. MORLEY, Nottingham, E.): I have made inquiry into the circumstances referred to in the question, which are substantially correct. The Post Office is by law exempt from liability for the theft of letters or their enclosures or of postal orders; and, as a general principle, compensation is not paid except in the case of registered letters. Mrs. Wotherspoon was duly informed that there was reason to believe that her postal order had fallen into the hands of a person who is now awaiting his trial on a charge of theft, and she was formally told of the legal exemption from liability of the Post Office. She has made no application for compensation, and it may be added that the question whether or not, as an act of grace, it will be possible to make good to her out of the taxpayers' pocket the loss which she has sustained will be a matter for consideration after the trial.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Am I to understand that this person's case will be considered? I am aware that by law the Post Office is not liable, but I hope that on application this woman's 10s. will be returned. Further, may I ask did the Post Office prosecute this man?

MR. A. MORLEY: I think it was the Post Office Authorities who prosecuted. Any application sent in by the woman will be duly considered.

THE NATIONAL TELEPHONE COMPANY.

SIR R. TEMPLE (Surrey, Kingston): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether there will be any conditions in

the proposed agreement between the National Telephone Company and the Post Office which will in any way limit the power of Corporations, County Councils, and other Local Authorities to impose any conditions they may think fit as to charges or otherwise on the National Telephone Company as a condition of permitting them to continue their telephone service, or obtaining further local privileges and powers, underground or otherwise?

MR. A. MORLEY: My answer to the hon. Member's question is "No." The question is one which is regulated by Statute, and I would refer the hon. Member to Section 5 of the Telegraph Act of last Session. I would also remind him that I have promised to lay the agreement on the Table of the House before its final conclusion, and that its provisions will then be open to inspection.

PETITIONS IN GOVERNMENT DOCKYARDS.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that a Petition against the Home Rule Bill has been circulated through Woolwich Arsenal; whether such a procedure is a breach of the Rules which regulate Government establishments; and whether steps will be taken to bring these Rules under the notice of any official who may have been associated with the circulation of this document?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling, &c.): Nothing is known of such a Petition having been circulated through the arsenal. Had such a proceeding been attempted, and come to the knowledge of the authorities, it would have been stopped.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: Will the right hon. Gentleman make further inquiries? My information is from a thoroughly reliable source.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I do not think it necessary to inquire any further after the intimation I have given as to what in such a case would be the action of the authorities.

MILITIA OFFICERS AND THE RECRUITING STAFF.

MAJOR RASCH: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, with refer-

ence to paragraph 210 of Militia Regulations, will he, taking into consideration the fact that a large proportion of Army recruits pass through the Militia, be prepared to grant a few appointments on the Recruiting Staff to officers of Militia?

***MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN:** There are very few appointments on the Recruiting Staff; and as such appointments require a previous knowledge of the Service, and a certain amount of seniority and experience, Militia officers cannot be selected. Almost all the recruiting officers of the Regimental Districts are Adjutants of Militia; but it is not considered desirable to give these appointments to Militia officers. The Permanent Staff, who do recruiting work, are under the Adjutant's orders.

HAWICK SHERIFF'S COURT.

MR. T. SHAW (Hawick, &c.): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate what progress has been made in fixing the boundaries of the jurisdiction of the Sheriff Court recently established in Hawick, and what is the cause of the delay in completing the arrangements for the business of the Court; whether it is the case that an attempt is being made to have the parishes of Ashkirk, Minto, Hobkirk, and Lilliesleaf deprived of the advantages and convenience of the new jurisdiction, and what course he intends to pursue with reference thereto; and whether, in the appointment of a Sheriff Clerk Depute, strict regard shall be had to the provisions of the law which prohibit such clerk practising directly or indirectly before the Court?

***THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR, Clackmannan, &c.):** The Draft Order establishing the new Court at Hawick is now before me, and would have been ere now transmitted to the Secretary for Scotland had it not been that there is dissatisfaction in certain quarters—that the parishes named in my hon. Friend's question are omitted from the new district. I have asked the Sheriff to report both in regard to this matter, and in regard to the appointment of a Sheriff Clerk Depute, which must, I think, be made subject to the restriction named. The delay has arisen solely from the causes now stated.

CORDITE AMMUNITION.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) : I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that upwards of 6,000 cartridges (hard metal-covered bullets) may be fired from the Maxim gun (8 millimètre barrel), with Danish smokeless powder containing no nitro-glycerine, without eroding the barrel, whilst the English Maxim gun (.303 barrel) fired with cordite powder and nickel-covered bullets has been proved to the War Office, by actual experiment, to be useless for accurate shooting after firing 2,000 cartridges ; this being so, is it proposed to provide a smokeless powder which will be less destructive to the .303 regulation barrel, and to introduce a better class of steel in the manufacture of the barrel than that now in use ; and whether it is the fact that a .303 barrel, after firing 2,000 rounds of cordite powder cartridges and nickel-covered bullets, showing erosion from breech to muzzle, was some time since cut in half longitudinally and furnished to the War Office, together with a Report ; if so, will the Report be laid upon the Table, and the halves of the eroded barrel shown to Members ?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN : No information has been received as to the action of Danish smokeless powder on the barrels of the Maxim gun. A private Report was received from a manufacturing company that a barrel (section of which was forwarded) has been eroded by the discharge of 2,000 cartridges of British Service pattern. This erosion, however, was attributed to the shape of the bullet and to the character of the rifling, and experiments are being made in both these directions. The erosion was not attributed to cordite, nor was any objection to its use made in the Report. The barrel was made by the firm in question from steel obtained by them. It would not be according to usual practice to lay on the Table this letter or the pieces of metal which accompanied it, as such communications between a private firm and the Department are generally of a confidential character.

*MR. WEIR : In consequence of the very unsatisfactory answer of the right hon. Gentleman, I shall raise this question on the Estimates.

THE PWLLHELI PETITION AGAINST THE WELSH SUSPENSORY BILL.

MR. GRIFFITH - BOSCAWEN (Kent, Tunbridge) : I beg to ask the Chairman of the Committee on Public Petitions whether the Petition from Pwllheli against the Welsh Church Suspensory Bill has been destroyed by order of the Committee ; and whether, before arriving at their decision, the Committee gave any opportunity to the vicar of Pwllheli and the Committee who got up the Petition to be heard in defence of their action ; and, if not, would he explain the reason ?

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon, &c.) : I would ask the hon. Member who replies to state whether the Members of the House who brought forward this charge and the Members of the Committee who supported them were not in the first instance favourable to such an inquiry as is indicated by the hon. Member ; whether the Chairman of the Committee did not say that after a careful examination of the Petition itself he had come to the conclusion that the intrinsic evidence of manipulation afforded sufficient confirmation of the charge against it ; and whether he did not consequently propose that it should be rejected ?

MR. BYLES (York, W.R., Shipley) : In the absence of the Chairman of the Committee on Public Petitions, I have to say that I have made inquiry, and I am informed, first, that the Petition in question has not been destroyed at all, either by order of the Committee or otherwise ; secondly, that the reasons which the Committee had for arriving at their decision were stated in the House publicly after our meeting last Wednesday week by the Chairman of the Committee (Sir C. Dalrymple) and in our Report ; and, thirdly, that the vicar of Pwllheli was not given any opportunity of being heard by the Committee, who, indeed, did not attempt to hold any judicial inquiry. With regard to the questions by the hon. Member for the Carnarvon Boroughs, it was felt that the *prima facie* evidence brought before the Committee justified them in believing that it was not a *bonâ fide* one with regard to a large number of the signatures, and it was thought that the best course to recommend to the House was that the Petition ought to be rejected.

MR. GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN : Will the hon. Member inform the House what the reason of this decision was ?

MR. BYLES : It was stated in the Resolution of the Committee, which was reported to the House on the 20th in a special Report.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE : Am I right in believing that the Committee have no objection to inquiring into this matter, if the vicar of Pwllheli and his promoters desire it ?

MR. BYLES : The Committee would be perfectly willing to undertake the inquiry if the House desire it.

THE CASE OF HENRIETTA WARD.

MR. A. CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E.) : In the absence of the hon. Member for South Birmingham, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that the woman Henrietta Ward, to whose case his attention was called on Friday last, has a sick child whom it has been found necessary to receive into the gaol along with her ; and whether, in view of this circumstance, he will grant a reduction of her sentence ?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. ASQUITH, Fife, E.) : I am informed by the Governor of the prison that the woman entered the gaol with a very delicate child on September 4. Her husband had applied that the child might be sent to prison with her, as it was so ill, and the Magistrates consented. The child has since admission been medically treated, and is better than it was on admission. I am afraid that under the circumstances there is nothing to justify me in receding from the position I have taken up, and in authorising a reduction of the sentence.

A WELSH CHARITY DISPUTE.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE : I beg to ask the hon. Member for Merionethshire whether his attention has been drawn to a County Court action instituted by the Trustees of a certain Charity at Pennrynydd, Anglesea, to eject a person, named William Jones, from their almshouses, upon the ground, amongst other things, of an alleged breach of Regulations which demanded attendance at the parish church as a condition of tenancy ; whether the

Founder of such almshouses had attached any such condition to the enjoyment of the gift ; and whether such Regulations were made by the Trustees with the sanction of the Charity Commissioners ; and, if not, whether the Charity Commissioners propose to take any action to enforce the fair and impartial administration of the Trust according to the declared wishes of the Founder ?

THE PARLIAMENTARY CHARITY COMMISSIONER (Mr. T. E. ELLIS, Merionethshire) : (1.) The information before the Commissioners, which is mainly derived from the newspaper report of the proceedings in the County Court, indicates that the non-residence of the defendant was the main cause of the decision given against him. (2.) Neither residence in the almshouses nor attendance at the parish church was made by the Founder a condition of his gift. (3.) The Regulations in question appear from the Reports of the former Commissioners for inquiring concerning Charities (1837) to have been made very shortly after the foundation of the Charity, and probably by the individuals appointed by the Founder to be the original Trustees of his will, and consequently have not received the sanction of the Charity Commissioners. A Regulation prohibiting non-residence is one which it is within the competence of the Trustees of an almshouse to make, and the Commissioners see no reason for interfering with the action of the Trustees in enforcing such a Regulation. Any Regulation compelling attendance at parish church would be invalid as being contrary to the declaration of the Founder. The Commissioners have decided to apply for the production of the alleged Regulations, and if any of them are found to be *ultra vires*, or contradictory of the wishes of the Founder, steps will be promptly taken to remedy the matter.

THE LEE-METFORD RIFLE.

MR. A. CHAMBERLAIN : In the absence of my right hon. Relative the Member for West Birmingham, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, on the issue of the Lee-Metford magazine rifle to the regular Infantry, several thousand stands of serviceable arms, Martini-Henry pattern, were returned to Bagot Street Factory to be

broken up; whether Colonel Nuttall submitted a proposal to convert them into carbines for a cost of 7s. 6d. each, and his pattern was approved by the War Office, and designated Mark II. M.-H. Carbine; whether the Superintendent of the Enfield Factory was then asked to submit an estimate for Colonel Nuttall's pattern, and tendered accordingly for 17s. 1d., being 9s. 7d. more than the estimate from Birmingham; and if he will state what are the facts of the case, and whether the great bulk of the conversion of the rifles into carbines is being done at Enfield?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. WOODALL, Hanley): All Martini-Henry rifles exchanged for the Lee-Metford rifles are returned to Bagot Street for inspection. If found serviceable they are retained for conversion or store. Only those found unserviceable are broken up. A proposal for conversion was submitted by the Chief Inspector of Small Arms, but his estimate was 10s. per arm. The pattern was designated Mark II. M.-H. Artillery Carbine. No trace can be found of any estimate for 17s. 1d.; as a matter of fact, the work is being done at Enfield for 7s. 1d. The bulk of the work was given to Enfield, as it was considered more properly to belong to a Manufacturing than to an Inspection Department.

PUTRID FISH.

MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to a case heard before Mr. Slade at the Southwark Police Court on Friday last, when the authorities of St. George-the-Martyr were compelled to bring five cartloads of putrid herrings through the crowded streets of the parish to the police court in order to have the fish condemned; whether there are any other means by which the Magistrate's sanction can be secured without endangering the health of the populace; and whether, if no such power at present exists, he can see his way to have the law amended?

MR. ASQUITH: The Magistrate informs me that in his view of the law he has only power to condemn what he has actually seen himself. If this be so the law is, in my opinion, in an unsatis-

Mr. A. Chamberlain

factory state, and I will consider whether legislation is necessary.

THE CHOLERA.

MR. KNOWLES (Salford, W.): May I inquire whether the Local Government Board has any further information which they think it desirable to impart to the House in reference to the cholera?

***THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD** (Sir W. FOSTER, Derby, Ilkeston): The information to hand at present is, so far, satisfactory. There have been no deaths at Hull, and there are only four cases in the hospital. At Grimsby up to yesterday, at midnight, there were two additional deaths; but to-day I have received no notice of any deaths, and I therefore regard the condition at Grimsby as, to that extent, satisfactory. At other places some cases which have been reported as cases of cholera have been proved to be due to other causes.

MR. E. STANHOPE (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): Can the hon. Gentleman say anything as to the case of choleraic diarrhoea reported from Boston?

SIR W. FOSTER: It is an exceedingly suspicious case, and one which, as far as microscopical and bacteriological examination has gone, the authorities are bound to regard as a case of cholera.

VOTES ON ACCOUNT.

MR. BARTLEY: In the absence of the Prime Minister, will the Chancellor of the Exchequer say if it is proposed to take another Vote on Account; and, if so, when?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EX-CHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby): I am not aware of any necessity for one. Should there be, due notice will be given.

THE COLLIERY DISTURBANCES.

MR. MACDONALD (Tower Hamlets, Bow): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department a question of which I have given him private notice. The question is as follows:—How many members of the Metropolitan Police Force have been despatched to Yorkshire; what proportion this number bears to the whole force; whether it is not a fact that these men have been

sent away for an indefinite period; and, if so, whether a permanent reduction of the Metropolitan Police Force is possible; and, lastly, whether the Government has finally resolved to do nothing in reference to the dispute except make a display of superior force; and whether they hold that this completes their responsibility in the matter?

Mr. ASQUITH: The number of Metropolitan Police sent to Yorkshire is 250. The total strength of the Metropolitan Force is over 15,000. The period for which the men have been sent is necessarily indefinite; they will be recalled as soon as they can be spared. By Section 25 of the Police Act, 1890, Police Authorities are empowered for special emergencies to strengthen their own force by borrowing from other forces. I am constantly impressing upon Local Authorities the importance of availing themselves of this power, and in my opinion it is the duty of Police Authorities whose own districts are in a normal condition to comply to the utmost of their ability with requisitions from districts which are in exceptional need. It was in pursuance of this obligation that I sanctioned the despatch of Metropolitan constables to Yorkshire. Their temporary absence for a special purpose is not to be regarded as indicating that any permanent reduction of the Metropolitan Police is desirable or possible. As to the last part of the question, I cannot assent to the description of measures urgently necessary for the prevention of gross lawlessness as a "display of superior force." The Government has no power to put an end to the dispute in connection with which these deplorable excesses have occurred. But, in common with the whole nation, they earnestly hope that on both sides counsels of moderation may prevail.

Mr. BARTLEY: I suppose no extra cost will be thrown on the Metropolitan ratepayers. The charges will be paid by the districts to which the police are sent, will they not?

Mr. ASQUITH: Of course that is so.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—COMMITTEE.

SUPPLY,—considered in Committee.

¶(In the Committee.)

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1893-4.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £267,800, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Salaries and Miscellaneous Charges of the War Office, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894."

Mr. HANBURY (Preston) said, he desired to direct attention to what had been called the "Cordite Scandal." Of course he could not say that that was a scandal, for that would depend on the reply given by the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War, but he was sorry to say that hitherto the replies of the right hon. Gentleman—written no doubt for him by War Office officials—had been very unsatisfactory, and had led him to the conclusion that there had been a good deal of concealment. The exact complaint he had to make in regard to that matter was one which had been made by private inventors over and over again; it was a complaint of long standing; it had been enforced by more than one Royal Commission and more than one Committee, and the complaint was that War Office and other Government officials were placed in a position which enabled them to practically pick the brains of inventors who came before them, and to apply the results of such operations, sometimes for the benefit of the Government, and sometimes for their own benefit. He ventured to assert that every case in which the inventor was not adequately remunerated was a scandal, whether the benefit accrued to the Government or to one of its officials in a private capacity. A further complaint he had to make was that while officials were professedly securing patents for the Government at home they were, unknown to the Government, securing patents in many foreign countries for their own private purposes. The result was—and this was his third complaint—that we had got a bad smokeless powder. The great difficulty connected with this question was the difficulty of getting full and adequate information. The public themselves

were very lax in these matters. They felt that they could trust the officials to do their duty, and in 99 cases out of 100 that confidence was fully justified. He did not, in fact, believe any country was so well served by its public officials as England was. On the other hand, these points generally were of so highly technical a character that it was utterly impossible for the public to take a special interest in them, and in addition to that on these official matters officials, although they might differ from the decisions arrived at by their brother officials, naturally held their tongue. There was, in fact, among them an *esprit de corps* which prevented them offering criticisms, even if they were free to do so. In the next place, private firms and experts had their mouths closed, for it would not do for them to quarrel with the Government, as if they did they would never get Government orders. On the other hand, he had certain advantages in presenting his case. One was that this certainly was not a Party matter. He was not laying any special blame on the present Secretary of State for War, as undoubtedly the greater part of what he complained happened while the late Government was in office. Of course, if the right hon. Gentleman had carried on the system or had recognised and accepted the results, he had taken upon himself some portion of the responsibility. Still, when both Front Benches were agreed upon a certain course and had accepted the responsibility it became more than ever difficult to arrive at the truth. Again, this was not a personal matter. He would, no doubt, have frequently to mention the names of two men, Sir Frederick Abel and Professor Dewar, but he was not going to contend that they had not done what they were perfectly entitled to do. If the Rules were, as he understood them to be, he only brought them forward prominently as an illustration of a very bad system, and he objected to that bad system, because the public were bound to lose if private inventors were not encouraged to take their inventions to the War Office. This was a matter of public honour, and it was little short of disgraceful that men should be tempted to submit their inventions and ideas to the Government, and that those inventions and ideas should be borrowed, and patents for them taken out in the

Mr. Hanbury

name of the Government or its officials. But this was a very old story. The grievance arose so far back as the year 1871, when the Treasury issued a Circular to the Admiralty and to the War Office to the effect that no officer in the Civil, Military, or Naval Services of the Crown should be called upon to judge or give an opinion in cases where their own interests might come into collision with those of any other person,

"Or be permitted to obtain or hold or be directly or indirectly interested in any letters patent for any articles needed for the use of the Government."

About a month since he asked a question of the Secretary of State for War in regard to that Minute, and the right hon. Gentleman replied that

"After the passing of the Act of 1883, which altered the law as to patents, the whole question was reconsidered, and in 1885 the Minute was withdrawn."

But he would like to remark in regard to this that the Patent Act of 1883, which enabled private inventors to hold patents as against the Crown, gave no security to inventors who, not having patents, submitted their inventions to the War Office. He was not sure that it gave them protection even if they had patents. The Treasury was to be the judge of the amount of remuneration to be paid them for taking their patents, but it did not prevent them from having their brains picked by War Office officials just as had been done before. It was, indeed, an actual encouragement to those officials to take out patents for themselves, and the passing of the Patent Act rather increased than did away with the necessity for the Circular. That evidently was the view of the Treasury, for in reply to a question put on the 14th July last, the Secretary to the Treasury informed him that—

"In a letter addressed to the Admiralty and War Office in December, 1871, the Treasury expressed the opinion that it was inexpedient that officers interested in patents should be appointed to judge of inventions. I (Sir J. T. Hibbert) am not aware that this opinion has ever been modified, and so far as I can judge it seems a reasonable one."

Thus they had the fact that the War Office and the Treasury were at issue on the point.

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN : The answer given by my right hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury

must have been given in forgetfulness of the fact that the Circular had been withdrawn. I ascertained that it had been withdrawn to the knowledge both of the Admiralty and of the War Office.

MR. HANBURY, continuing, said, he would have to press the Secretary to the Treasury further on the point. He quoted the Circular because he had strong evidence to show that it was issued partly as the result of the action of Professor Abel in that year—action exactly parallel to that taken by him in regard to the new explosive, and the subject of the present complaint. Now what was that action? In the year 1865 Professor Abel was a War Office chemist, and he was ordered, as such, to experiment on the safety of various explosives for Government use, the explosives submitted to him including white or German gunpowder, dynamite, nitro-glycerine, lithopacteur, and gun-cotton. What did he do? Having had those explosives submitted to him on behalf of the Government, he straightway, on the 25th April, 1865, patented improvements in the manufacture of gun-cotton for shooting as well as blasting. He did not transfer those patents to the Government, but he sold them in the following year to Messrs. Prentice, of Stowmarket, securing to himself a royalty of 10d. per 1,000 cartridges and £10 per ton of gun-cotton. He took out other patents in 1867 and 1868, as well as in 1869, and he recommended broadcast the purchase of that very gun-cotton from which he was deriving a royalty, of the very firm which paid him that royalty. He was asked to express an opinion upon rival explosives and upon nitro-glycerine, and in spite of the fact that the cordite now being manufactured by him contained more nitro-glycerine than any other explosive manufactured, he reported—

“I have to express my firm conviction that such appalling accidents as that which occurred in Wales cannot be guarded against by the enforcement of any measure short of an absolute prohibition of the importation, transport, and storage of nitro-glycerine or any preparation of that material.”

Surely that was strong evidence against his own nitro-glycerine. Again, in 1869, he recommended the Magistrate at Wandsworth to refuse a licence for the manufacture of Schultze gunpowder—another rival product—on the ground of danger. Now he was not complaining of

that; he was only pointing out what the system of the War Office allowed to be done. What happened in regard to the gun-cotton which he so strongly recommended? In August, 1871, at the meeting of the British Association, he said—

“Gun-cotton is now so completely unaffected by high temperatures, one deal box of it might actually burn away in the middle of a pile of similar boxes without exploding.”

Yet only a week later 10 tons of that very gun-cotton exploded at Stowmarket, blew up the works, and killed 30 men, including two of the partners in the firm. That showed how far Professor Abel's judgment was to be relied upon in regard to the safety of the material he recommended. In the year 1871 various charges were levelled against Mr. Abel in *The Mechanics' Magazine*, and the only one he replied to was one that royalty was paid on gun-cotton made for the Government. He denied that that was so, but the paper printed a copy of the agreement, which showed that there was no reservation of the kind, the only exception being that he was not to receive any royalty when the gun-cotton was manufactured by the Government itself. That convicted him of an awkward mistake. The War Office at the time did not know that he had taken out these patents, in the same way as it was ignorant that he took out the foreign patents for cordite in 1889. He was called upon to resign either his patents or his position. Naturally he did not wish to resign his position, so he sold his patents, and although they were bringing him in between £3,000 and £4,000 a year, he disposed of them to a Mr. Nicholson, of Dulwich, for £1,000. Would that be believed? Was it a *bonâ fide* transaction? It did not look like one. And a month or two later the Treasury Circular was issued. In 1888 Professor Abel was again called upon to judge new explosives, and he was appointed on a Committee with two others—Professor Dewar and Professor Dupré. The duty assigned to these three men was clear, and it was conveyed in a short Circular of Instruction which he would read—

“The Committee is appointed for the purpose of considering questions relating to new explosive agents, or the new application of, or improvements in the production and application of, known explosive agents which will be

referred to the Committee by order of His Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief for consideration, or investigation and report."

Anybody reading that Instruction would see that the primary duty of the Committee was to examine other people's inventions; they certainly were not to set to work to invent for themselves. But that was not the view taken by the Committee. It was nominated on the 10th July, 1888, and it sat for the first time on the 20th August. It certainly seemed as if by that time it had made up its mind that it was its duty to invent for its own benefit, and to take out patents abroad, because on the 20th August it issued a Memorandum, or rather it sent one to the Director of Artillery, which did not reach the War Office until the 31st December. This set forth that the War Office claimed—

"The originating of improvements in the production and utilisation of known explosives, or the discovery or invention of new explosive compounds or preparation was to be regarded as ranking foremost in value, and to the development of it the Committee should prominently devote themselves."

They were thus to become inventors. Then followed this strange remark—

"The Committee will unavoidably come under the stigma of not being impartial judges of the merits of inventions of private individuals, and of profiting by information imparted in confidence in working out subjects which they afterwards put forward as emanating from themselves, and the Committee must make up their minds to be indifferent to such imputations relying confidently upon a proper defence of their proceedings in high official quarters."

They were to be allowed to pick other people's brains in fact; hence the concluding words, which read—

"It would appear to be a fair and equitable arrangement to give to Government officials, whose patents are to be published in the ordinary way, the option of securing foreign patents for such inventions at their own cost."

This meant that they were to pick other people's brains, to work out inventions at the public cost, and to take patents out themselves and put the profits into their own pockets. Thus the Committee drafted a new code of morals entirely for their own benefit. It was just as if a Bishop were to swear an affidavit and file it—the effect of it being that he would not be bound by any of the rules of the Decalogue if he broke any of the Commandments, and then, having committed murder or some other offence, he

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were to produce that affidavit in his own defence and triumphantly claim an acquittal on the basis of it. It was perfectly ludicrous that they should be able to draw up for themselves a new code of official morals in that respect. But did the War Office accept anything of the kind? It was of no use their saying to the War Office beforehand that they were going to do a certain thing, if they did not tell the same fact to the private inventors who were to come before them. As a matter of fact the War Office knew nothing of that proposal until the half-yearly Report of the Committee was issued five months later. Was official sanction then given to that strange code of morals? The War Office ought to have thrown such a code of morals into the fire, but they covered it over with circumlocution and Minutes, and no reply was given. He was afraid when he questioned the Secretary of State for War on the subject that the right hon. Gentleman would have replied that although no official reply was written there had been verbal communications, and that in that indirect way the War Office had sanctioned the proposal. But to his relief no such suggestion was thrown out, but had there been any such statement he had in his hands a letter from Sir F. Abel complaining of the action of the War Office, and stating the damning fact that although a reply was frequently asked for, and although the Memorandum was re-presented in the first half-yearly Report, no communication was received by the Committee in reference to it. Thus no authority was given by the War Office.

ADMIRAL FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne): Silence gives consent.

MR. HANBURY protested against that, and said it might just as well be claimed that silence gave consent to the breaking of the Ten Commandments. If the hon. and gallant Member would look at the 13th paragraph of the Report he would see that the Committee itself asked for a new Regulation on this matter, thereby implying that they could do nothing without such a Regulation. He ventured to assert that they never had any authority for the War Office either to set up as inventors or to take out foreign patents. Let them remember that there were three Members of that Committee. Professors Abel, Dewar,

and Dupré, all accomplished chemists. Was Professor Dupré present at the meeting of the 20th August, when the Memorandum was executed and sent in? It was a startling fact in connection with that subject that M. Dupré, who certainly was not the least talented of the three Members of the Committee, washed his hands of the whole transaction, and no patent had been taken out by him, while patents were taken out simply and solely in the names of Professor Abel and Professor Dewar. What was the next step after sending in the Memorandum which the War Office did not accept. This Committee were as judges to decide on the merits of the different samples of explosives submitted to them. Eight such samples had been sent in before the 10th July, and they were sent in by men who had no information whatever of the tests to which the samples were to be subjected, and did not know who were the men who were to act as judges. Mr. Nobel was one of the inventors who submitted explosives to the Committee, and he had since commenced an action in which he deliberately charged its Members with having infringed his patent. Another inventor, Mr. Maxim, who was invited by the Committee to send in his powder, beat all other competitors in the trials, but his explosive was not adopted because, as the Committee said—

“They did not believe Her Majesty’s Government would accept a smokeless power containing nitro-glycerine as one of its constituents.”

This inventor had previously taken out patents for forming the explosive in strips or threads. As early as April 2, 1889—six months after they were appointed—Professor Abel and Professor Dewar took out patents of their own. The English patent was obtained for making a new explosive in cords or thread—hence the name “cordite”—which was exactly the form of the patent of Mr. Maxim taken out years earlier. In the same year Professor Abel and Professor Dewar took out three other patents, but one of these was rejected by the Comptroller because it was evidently the pick of another man’s brains, and it had to be altered a second and even a third time before it was allowed to pass. That patent dealt with the composition of the explosive, and would it be believed that

although Mr. Maxim’s powder was rejected on the ground that the Government would not allow a powder to be introduced which had a basis of nitro-glycerine, these two gentlemen took out in their own names, and not on behalf of the Committee, patents for cordite, which contained more nitro-glycerine than any explosive known to England or to any foreign Power? He believed it contained 60 or 70 per cent. of nitro-glycerine. Now he came to a further and even more important point. One of the two further patents taken out by the same gentlemen was for the machinery used in the manufacture of cordite, and patents were also obtained in nearly every foreign country. They thus secured a double interest in this explosive. According to their own code of morals, as set forth in the Memorandum he had read, they said that if they were allowed to take out patents at home on behalf of the Government those patents would be made public at once. These were their own words—

“By taking out patents the Committee will secure to the Government the practical results of their official investigations, and private workers will at the same time have no excuse for complaining that they are kept in ignorance of the operations of scientific officials, who may anticipate them in consequence of the work carried out in secret with public money.”

Would it be believed that, although the patent for cordite was taken out on the 22nd April, 1889, it was never made public, but that, the Secretary of State for War having certified that it was for the public advantage that it should be kept secret, the patent was never disclosed until May 28, 1892, and therefore inventors had no means of knowing until that time that the foreign patents had been taken out? These gentlemen did not inform the inventors and they did not inform the War Office of what they had done. This was how the Committee carried out the Instruction that

“No foreign patents were to be taken out by any Government official unless they were published in the ordinary course in England.”

These two Members did take out foreign patents, but they kept them secret.

ADMIRAL FIELD: With the sanction of the War Office.

MR. HANBURY said, they had no such sanction.

ADMIRAL FIELD: The Director of Artillery was informed.

MR. HANBURY : No ; he was not informed until two years after the patent was taken out. He was afraid the hon. Member had been misled by the very loosely written defences which had appeared lately in the columns of *The Times*. By keeping the patent secret they were enabled to take out a patent for the machinery for manufacturing cordite ; and they were also enabled to take out foreign patents and to keep them open so that the persons to whom they were transferred should have the benefit of the latest improvements. He wanted to know whether, if they were bound to transfer the cordite patent to the Government for home purposes, they were not bound to transfer the patent for machinery ? Then a very remarkable thing happened next. On the 22nd of July, 1889—three months after the application had been made for the patent to make cordite in this peculiar shape—Professor Abel, Professor Dewar, and Professor Anderson (now the Director General of the Ordnance Factories) applied for a patent for machinery for the manufacture of cordite. On the 1st of August, a week later, Professor Anderson was appointed to his present post at Woolwich, and the patent was not completed until six months after his appointment. He had received two answers from the Secretary of State for War in regard to that matter. The first was that Professor Anderson was not in the Government employment when he took out this patent. But the fact remained that he entered the service of the Government only a week later, and months before the patent was actually accepted. He was also told that Professor Anderson had no interest in the matter ; that he had transferred his interest in it to the War Office. He understood that the statement was not correct, and that the War Office authorities were not the only persons interested in the patent. When the transfer was made to the War Office other persons who were interested in the patent remonstrated, for Professor Anderson was only a shareholder in a limited company. The interest had eventually to be retransferred, and the Government were now actually paying a Royalty for using the machinery in the manufacture of cordite at Waltham. He ventured to assert that Professor Anderson continued to be deeply interested in the machinery

and in the products of the patent after he entered the Government employ. On October 16, 1888, Professor Anderson held 508 shares of £100 each. In October, 1889, he had transferred 50 of these shares to his son, and in December, 1889, he transferred the remainder to his wife and to other members of his family. Therefore, to say that Professor Anderson was not just as much interested in the patent as he was before was perfectly ludicrous. Did the right hon. Gentleman, when he stated that Professor Anderson had surrendered his interest in the patent, know that the shares had only been transferred by him to members of his family ? He laid stress on that point, because this was a case in which the men who had to judge what was the best explosive for this country were directly interested in foisting their own cordite on the country. They had not handed over the patent for the machinery to the War Office, and they had, therefore, an enormous interest in recommending an explosive that could be manufactured by their own machinery. He did not think the inventors who were invited to compete with cordite at Walthamstow were told of these patents. He was told that the publication of the three later patents was not disclosed till long after inventors had sent in their samples. But was there any effectual competition ? As showing how far these impartial judges would allow any other explosive to come into competition with their own, he knew of two cases in which competitors had applied month after month to have their explosives tried and were refused, although they offered to supply everything in the shape of guns and rifles. If the Secretary for War wished he would give him privately the names of those two competitors. But was the competition itself *bonâ fide* ? Competitors were obliged to send in their samples within four weeks of the issue of the invitation, though they knew nothing about the rifle or the cartridges, or about the conditions of the explosive which they were to supply. It was utterly impossible to have a fair competition on that basis. Now he came to the foreign patents. Did the competitors know how deeply their judges were pledged to cordite by the fact of their having taken out the foreign patents ? Just as the inventors had been deceived

when they entered into a sham competition, the War Office in their turn were deceived. He had in the handwriting of Professor Abel that patents were taken out in Germany on June 16, 1889, nine months after the Committee began to sit; in France on June 15, 1889; in Belgium on June 15, 1889; in Italy on August 24, 1889; in the United States on August 20, 1889; in Austria-Hungary in June, 1889; in Switzerland on June 25, 1889; and in Sweden on August 21, 1889. Patents were also taken out in another country, and he wondered that Professor Abel had not mentioned that country, and that was Russia, on August 11, 1889. Surely that was the country to which, last of all, he ought to have sold the patent. Why, he should like to know, was mention of that fact omitted in the published document? If Professors Abel and Dewar had no War Office authority for selling these Government patents and official secrets to Foreign Powers they came within the Official Secrets Act, and ought to be prosecuted for betraying official secrets. It was monstrous that men occupying an official position should betray these inventions to foreign countries. He wanted to know how far the War Office knew of this? The evidence was that for two years even the Director of Artillery did not know, and that for three years the Secretary of State for War did not know. Professor Abel, in a letter, said that he was in a position to show that the War Office knew that he and Professor Dewar were taking out these patents. If so, the Committee ought to have the names of the officials to whom the fact was disclosed. Thus, in taking out these patents these two gentlemen did a gross injustice to the War Office, to the inventors who came to compete without knowing that their judges were interested parties, and to the public, because in 1889 they had determined on cordite, which was not adopted in the Service until May 28 of this year. Four years, which might have been profitably employed in finding out a new explosive, were thus wasted. Now he came to the defence made by the War Office for this strange state of things, and on this he would press the Secretary for War to tell the Committee why a distinction was drawn between the cordite patent and the machinery patent, and why the latter was not conveyed to the War Office. In the

strange defence that was put forward on the part of Professors Abel and Dewar the aid of the British taxpayer was first called in. It was said that his purse was affected to the extent of £500,000. But it was a remarkable fact that this cordite should be of such value to England, when the result of the foreign patents, according to Professor Abel's statement, was only £828 during all these years. It did not look as if foreign countries viewed cordite as a valuable invention. Then it was said that if this suit were lost the British taxpayer would lose an amount varying from £500,000 to £1,750,000. No doubt it was a formidable lawsuit, but the Patent Act did not deal with the particular case that had arisen. No doubt if a man took out a patent, and if the Government adopted it, the Treasury could decide what reward should be given; but when a patent had been infringed, and a large quantity of cordite had been made, it would not be for the Treasury to say how much should be paid to Mr. Nobel for having his brains picked and his ideas stolen. It would be for a Court of Law to settle that, and that was how the loss of £1,750,000 might arise. It was all nonsense to try to get the aid of the British taxpayer. He did not want to be the receiver of stolen goods. If he was not fairly entitled to these patents it was ridiculous to make appeals to his pocket. The defence went on to say—

"You must not hamper Professors Abel and Dewar in any way, because this is an important lawsuit, and the dynamite combination is both wealthy and influential."

But why should all these inventors be leagued together, unless they felt that they had been treated with gross injustice? Next the defence went on—

"Do not attack Professor Abel and Professor Dewar. They are your champions. They are bound to defend this patent."

Yes, but at the cost of the country. The War Office was going to find the money for them, so that they might defend the foreign patents just as much as the home patents. The writers of the defence seemed to ignore the fact that there was a third Member of the Committee who had declined to soil his fingers by taking out patents. Then it was asked—

"What are we to do? At once to encourage investors by buying indiscriminately any and

every smokeless powder brought to our notice, or take some powder at the inventor's valuation? It was easy, and might have been made a lucrative course to do so."

Of that last remark he complained bitterly. Insinuations of that kind ought not to be made.

"Professor Abel is doing his duty to the country, and through a long public career has stopped many designs on the public purse."

If the War Office had that information they ought to have disclosed it; otherwise the statement had no value whatever; and he should press the right hon. Gentleman for an answer as to that. It was to the public interest to know when inventors went wrong just as much as when public officials did. Then it was asked—

"Why did not these men use their right to oppose the issue of the patent that embodied their ideas?"

Because the War Office kept the matter secret for three years. How could they object when the specifications had never been made public? It was perfectly ridiculous to put questions of that kind. Next it was said—

"It is also easy to talk at large of the advantages conferred by an official position for picking brains, but nobody has pointed out where these advantages are to be found."

He ventured to assert that the advantage was to be found very easily. Well, he would like to know what private inventor had the opportunity of getting 18 other inventors to go and submit their inventions to him? Mr. Nobel said that he put everything frankly, without reserve, without any concealment, at the disposal of the Committee. A good deal was made in the defence of the assistance given by Sir Andrew Nobel. Now, he did not like to see the Elswick firm drawn into official connection with the War Office because that firm were manufacturers of guns; and if they could give a certificate to the War Office patent for cordite the War Department officials in return had an opportunity of giving them orders for guns. Thus the certificate could have little value in his eyes. It was a matter of fact, however, that although Sir Andrew Nobel was able to give a certificate as to the value of cordite for British Government purposes, the Elswick firm had a different explosive of their own which did not contain nitro-glycerine at all, and which was a French invention. Then the

defence went on to say that the Committee were not responsible for cordite being finally chosen as the Service powder. It was explained that—

"It was selected by the Military Authorities after trials carried out by officials specially deputed for the duty by the Secretary of State."

The answer of the Secretary of State for War to that was that the chemical tests and everything involved in judging how far these explosive compounds carried out the requirements of the Government and the War Office was decided by this jury of three men, whose Report was handed to the Director of Artillery, and by him sent through the Adjutant General to the Commander-in-Chief. Eventually, the Secretary for War approved the adoption of cordite. There was, in fact, no Court of Appeal so far as the chemical aspect of the question was involved. There was only one other statement in the defence with which he wished to deal, and that read—

"The Memorandum published by *The Times* shows that the War Office was fully cognisant of the intentions of the patentees from the very first."

He thought he had disproved that by showing that the War Office had totally ignored the suggestion of the Committee that the Members should be allowed to take out foreign patents. It was further said that no importance ought to be attached to the secrecy of the cordite patent, because this patent was disclosed by the machinery patent in 1890. If so, why did the Secretary of State for War, a week before that patent was disclosed, certify, on his authority as Minister of the Crown, that it was to the public interest that the specification of the cordite patent should not be disclosed, and why was it kept secret for another two years? It was impossible to meet that argument. And what was the good of disclosing it then, when their own machinery patent was taken out? There was another reason still in the background for getting the Secretary of State to certify as he did—namely, that it enabled the patentees to get the benefit of modifications and improvements made in the cordite during two successive years. He was sorry to have to trouble the House at such length, but there was one other aspect of the case he wished to touch upon, and that was the effect of cordite on rifles.

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He believed it was fatal to the Maxim gun.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! I do not think the qualities of cordite can be discussed on this Vote. That matter arises on Vote 9.

MR. HANBURY said, he would not press that point. But he would like to call attention to a statement made by a gentleman largely prejudiced in favour of cordite, because he had a considerable interest in the manufacturing machinery. He regretted the Secretary to the Admiralty was not present at that moment, because Professor Anderson had made a startling statement in a lecture at Woolwich with regard to cordite, which had been adopted as Service powder for the Army and Navy. The Professor said—

“It is only this year that we have produced what may be called a Service cordite, and experiments now being carried on by the Ordnance Committee will show more and more what are the necessary precautions to be adopted in it. But the temperature is certainly one, and this has a very important bearing on the ship's magazine. For some reason best known to themselves the Navy put their magazine near their boilers to get them as hot as possible. That will not suit cordite at all. They will have either to shift their magazines or to stick to black powder.”

They were told the Admiralty had an idea that some preparation could be used to prevent the temperature in ships' magazines rising above 100 degrees. But three years ago they were told it was impossible to prevent that in India, or in ships passing through the Red Sea, apart from the effect of the magazines being between the boilers. Then how impossible it would be to store cordite on their ships unless the magazines could be shifted—which was not possible. Seeing that they had already spent over £200,000 on this explosive, and large quantities had been made for their ships, this seemed to be a very bad look-out. This raised a very important issue. He had adduced some remarkable facts, but there were still more remarkable facts behind which could only be properly brought out on oath in a Court of Law by Mr. Nobel and by those associated with him. He asked the Secretary of State for War to put an end once for all to the rumours of compromises that were going about. He was told that compromise after compromise was being offered to Mr. Nobel, and they knew what the influences at

work must be. In March last the Treasury and the War Office offered to abandon the patents after the short period had elapsed for which fees had been paid. There were men connected with the War Office who naturally were only too anxious that all the evidence should not come out in open Court. He knew that even that very morning private manufacturers had received a Circular from the War Office referring to the lawsuit as a friendly suit as between Mr. Nobel and the War Office. Did the hon. Gentleman want the facts brought out in open daylight? This was not only a matter of honour, but it involved a large amount of the British taxpayer's money, and it ought not, therefore, to be checked by way of compromise.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Perhaps I can save the time of the Committee. The hon. Member's eloquence on this part of the subject is being entirely thrown away. If in any private or official communication I have used the expression “a friendly suit,” it is in the sense that both sides are anxious to prosecute the case as quickly as possible, not in a vindictive spirit, but in order to elicit the exact truth of the matter.

MR. HANBURY said, he was glad to hear it, but he was bound to say that he had seen official documents dated as early as March last stating that the Government were perfectly prepared to abandon these patents.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No.

MR. HANBURY said, the intimation did not come from the War Office, but from the Treasury; therefore, he warned the War Office to be on its guard against that Department. He wished to know whether the conduct of the case rested with the War Office or with the Treasury?

***MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN:** With neither the one nor the other. It rests with the Law Officers of the Crown—that is to say, the Department of the Solicitor to the Treasury.

MR. HANBURY said, he believed the document to which he referred came from the Solicitor to the Treasury. He wished the right hon. Gentleman to be on his guard against a Department that went so far as to say, that it would sacrifice its patents, or only maintain them for the short period during which the fees

had to be paid. That was half-way towards a compromise.

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN : No such proposal will be made to any one without my sanction. When I said the case was in the hands of the Law Department, I meant that they would conduct it, but they will take no important step without my complete sanction, and no such proposal has ever received my sanction.

MR. HANBURY : I am very glad to have got that statement from the right hon. Gentleman, who is now pledged that neither the War Office nor the Treasury will compromise the suit.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN : I cannot answer for the Treasury.

MR. HANBURY : Then we have got no farther, and it may be compromised after all.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN : No.

MR. HANBURY : Will the right hon. Gentleman give a pledge that the case shall not be compromised ?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN : Certainly.

MR. HANBURY said, in that case he had all he wanted, and he did not regret having brought forward the matter. He had intended asking the Secretary of State for War to appoint a Committee of Inquiry—not into the personal matter, but into the system as a whole, because they had had complaint after complaint from inventors, who said that they were afraid to go to the War Office or to any public Departments with their inventions, because they were never sure that they would have justice done to them, and that their ideas would not be borrowed, patented, and sold to foreign countries by some Government official for the benefit of the country, or, what was worse, for the benefit of his own pocket. In this way the country lost the advantage of much inventive genius. They could not get their best men to come forward with inventions. Rich inventors like Mr. Nobel could defend themselves, but poor inventors had no protection. This sort of thing had been going on for years. Treasury Circulars had been issued against this system, though they were now said to be obsolete, and the Commission presided over by Sir James Stephen reported that it inflicted injustice upon inventors. Therefore, if the pre-

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sent law-suit did not come to a head, he hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would grant a Committee, in order that all the facts with regard to the system generally might be investigated. The right hon. Gentleman would agree with him that the system was a bad one, and that even if there was no injustice done to the inventors those persons laboured under the idea that there was, and they were backed up by Reports of Committees and Commissions. His object was to see that the interests of the State were secured by securing the benefit of the inventive genius of the country, whether the inventors were rich or poor, and he hoped that the fullest inquiry would be instituted by the country. He begged to move the reduction of the Vote by the sum of £500.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A, Salaries, be reduced by £500."—(*Mr. Hanbury.*)

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.) said, he begged to support the observations of the hon. Member for Preston. He (Major Rasch) wanted to deal with the question of the applicability of cordite to the British Army. Cordite obtained its name from its similarity in appearance to thread or cord. It was composed of 58 parts of nitro-glycerine, 37 of cellulose or gun-cotton, and 5 parts of mineral jelly, such as vaseline. The basis of the whole composition was nitro-glycerine, which was one of the highest explosives known to science. No one who, like himself, had had any experience of the dynamite explosion in London in 1882 would doubt the power of the explosive. They had to remember in connection with cordite that in India nitro-glycerine could not be handled under a temperature of 70 degrees, and that when frozen in Canada it became an infinitely more violent explosive, and the explosive force exercising its power not in a propelling direction, but in a blasting manner, the probability was that when frozen it would burst the rifle without driving out the bullet.

THE CHAIRMAN : The hon. and gallant Gentleman is going into the explosive qualities of cordite, which question does not come under the Vote.

MAJOR RASCH said that, under the circumstances, he would reserve his observations on that part of the subject. He would only say that, in his opinion,

cordite was not suitable to the requirements of the British Army, seeing that the Army had to serve both in hot and cold climates. As to the way in which cordite was invented, hon. Gentlemen who studied the question would know that in 1888 a Committee was appointed by the War Office to go into the question of explosives in the British Army and British Naval Service. That Committee sat under the Presidency of Sir Frederick Abel. To all intents and purposes, the Committee was Sir Frederick Abel and he was the Committee. Inventors to the number of 17 or 18 exposed their inventions publicly before the Committee, and in about a year's time Sir Frederick Abel or the Committee evolved from the knowledge they had picked from the brains of these inventors a substance called cordite. The inventors who had submitted their various powders and inventions to the Committee got nothing. Cordite was invented by Sir Frederick Abel and his Committee. It was obvious that inventors could not be expected to submit their inventions to the War Office or to the Government if they got absolutely nothing out of the product of their brains; nay, more, if they saw their own ideas patented by someone else, and someone else making money out of them. With reference to the transfer of the patent in 1889, it was assigned to the War Office. He thought he was right in saying that two months afterwards another patent for the manufacture of cordite was assigned to a foreigner named Heitmann, who was resident in Cologne, but who was head of an explosive factory in this country and of several explosive factories on the Continent. What he (Major Rasch) wished to suggest was that even if cordite had been the absolute property of the Chairman of the Committee it would hardly have been according to regulations that the patent should be sold to a Foreign Power. But the cordite which the Committee evolved and produced was not their property at all. It was paid for by the taxpayer of this country, the cost being something like £200,000. Sir Frederick Abel and Professor Dewar had no right to sell the patent, whether they got £840 for it or £500,000. The accredited representative of the War Office at the time stated that the War Office had no know-

ledge that this patent had been assigned, and finally the Secretary to the War Office had stated, in reply to a Metropolitan Member, that the inventors were entitled to the profit just as much as any other inventor would be entitled to the profit of an invention sold outside the United Kingdom. He was astonished at the complaisance of the War Office in this matter. He ought to correct himself and say, having served many years in the Army, and some years in that House, that he was astonished at nothing that the British War Office did. Sir E. Hamley used to say that the War Office was an epitome of centralisation gone mad. He was not saying anything against the present Secretary of State for War, for he was sure if there was anyone in the House who wished in the Army the maximum of efficiency at the minimum of expense, it was the present Minister for War. In this case the War Office had surpassed itself. In the first place, it accepted an explosive which a great many people considered absolutely unsuitable for the British Army; and, in the next place, it allowed the patent for the manufacture of the explosive to be sold to a Foreign Power. Under the circumstances, he thought he was justified in saying the War Office had "gone one better" than it had ever gone before.

MR. COCHRANE (Ayrshire, N.) said, he took a considerable interest in this question, partly because Mr. Nobel's factory of Ardeer was in his constituency of Ayrshire. The hon. Member for Preston had, in his opinion, made out a claim for the furnishing of full information to the Committee on this question of cordite gunpowder. If this information was not given, the Committee would know that a grave state of affairs existed, involving the public honour. What they represented to the Committee was that it was to the public advantage that inventors should be treated with common honesty, and that their inventions should not be filched from them. The Minute of 1872 made the matter quite clear, and the case of Mr. Nobel was a very striking instance of the way in which at least one inventor had been treated. The Minute contained the following:—

"My Lords consider that no officer should be called upon to judge, nor to give an opinion where his own interests may come into collision with those of any other person and that no

inducement should be held out to officers employed in any Department of the Public Service to make use of labour or materials entrusted to them for the good of the Service in prosecuting investigations from which they themselves are to derive any pecuniary advantage, since it is evident that the opportunities enjoyed by such officers must suggest to them improvements, and it is only just that the public, by whose resources these improvements have been worked out, should have the benefit of them."

It was stated that this Minute had been superseded in 1883, but that fact was not generally known. Mr. Nobel submitted his samples of nitro-glycerine powder to the War Office in accordance with the Circular, which stated that, at all events, the samples would be dealt with in a fair manner. The hon. Member for Preston had referred to the value of the cordite patent, but no doubt the price was influenced by the fact that ballistite, which was another patent of Nobel's, was used abroad, its composition being 40 to 60 per cent. of nitro-glycerine and 60 to 40 per cent. of cellulose. The fact that Italy, Germany, Austria, and other countries used ballistite very largely might account for the small price given to Sir F. Abel for the cordite patent. This case formed a most striking instance of the way in which our inventors were treated. Mr. Nobel was the inventor of dynamite in 1867, and of blasting gelatine in 1875, and it was in consequence of these discoveries that the idea of using nitro-glycerine for propelling purposes was first entertained. After many years of toil and thought, Mr. Nobel first conceived the idea that nitro-glycerine might be used for small arms, and he took out a patent in 1888 for ballistite, which was quite similar to cordite. He was induced, by the Circular of 1872, to place the information before the Committee in the fullest, freest, and most unguarded manner, and he invited every kind of examination which the Committee chose to make of his explosive. The Committee drew up the Memorandum read out by the hon. Member opposite, in which they themselves laid down the principles which they relied upon. The principal paragraph was the following:—

"Relying confidently upon a proper defence of their proceedings in high official quarters."

He hoped the Committee would not have an "official" defence, and that the whole matter would be inquired into on its merits. Every fact should be brought

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out in an impartial manner before the House and the country. He considered that Mr. Nobel had been exceedingly hardly treated, because no sooner had the War Office obtained his patent than they set to work to make cordite, which was very similar to Mr. Nobel's invention. The Ardeer works in Scotland was the only place where nitro-glycerine was made. After succeeding in getting the patent, the War Office advertised in *The Glasgow Herald* for workmen as follows:—

"Nitro-glycerine manufacture. Required for Nitro-glycerine Factory at Waltham Abbey two thoroughly competent and reliable men, who have been specially trained in the manufacture of nitro-glycerine; the pay would be 30s. per week. Application in writing should be addressed to the Superintendent, Royal Gunpowder Factory, Waltham Abbey, Essex."

There was no other works than the Ardeer Works from which specially skilled workmen in nitro-glycerine could be obtained, and the result of the advertisement was that four or five of the most experienced and skilled men in Mr. Nobel's works were induced to leave his service, and enter that of the Government. That was a scandalous state of affairs, and he hoped the whole matter would be thoroughly inquired into on its merits. If this cordite was an infringement of Mr. Nobel's patent there had been a serious delay in bringing the matter to a decision in the Courts. The damages, he hoped, would be very heavy.

*THE CHAIRMAN (intervening) said, that was a subject of judicial proceeding, and the hon. Member was not in Order in discussing it.

MR. COCHRANE said, he thought the relations of Mr. Anderson, Director General of Ordnance Factories, with regard to the patent for the machinery used in the making of cordite required explanation. Recently specifications had been issued to the makers of explosives inviting them to manufacture a certain quantity of cordite for the Government. Those specifications, however, were worded in such a manner that manufacturers making cordite were obliged to use the process and apparatus which these gentlemen had patented. The Specification to govern Manufacture and Inspection, approved 14th August, 1893, was in these terms—

"1. Composition—the percentage composition of the cordite should be as follows:—Nitro-

glycerine 58 per cent. ; gun-cotton, 37 per cent. ; mineral-jelly 5 per cent.

2. Ingredients.—The whole of the ingredients and materials used in the manufacture of cordite are to be of the description, and to have passed the tests, laid down in the Specifications in Appendices B to K.

3. Manufacture.—The manufacture of cordite from the weighing out of the ingredients to the final blending of the finished cordite is to be carried out in all its details in the same manner as at the Royal Gunpowder Factory, Waltham Abbey."

Such a state of things would require a great deal of explanation before the public would be perfectly satisfied. Men in positions like that of Director General of Ordnance Factories should be above suspicion ; it certainly was undesirable in the public interest that they should be able to send out specifications which induced manufacturers to think their manufactures would not be used unless they employed machinery which was patented by the gentlemen who would have to approve of the products. He did not wish to pursue this further. He should like to be informed what were the terms of the Report, which induced the Government to make cordite a Service powder. Why did not a Committee test the effect of cordite upon small arms before the powder was accepted, seeing that it had been two years before the War Office ? Was there any other powder which wore out small arms with greater rapidity than cordite ?

*MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) said, that many inventors were put to shifts in order to develop the conception of their brains, and it was very hard lines when their ideas were stolen from them. For 25 years he had had a good deal to do with inventors, and he had always warned them not to submit their inventions to the British War Office if they expected remuneration or reward. The House ought to do its best to protect the honest inventor. He wanted to know whether Sir Frederick Abel and Professor Dewar were the honest inventors of cordite powder ? He had very grave doubts about it. The hon. Member for Preston had produced documentary evidence to show that the whole transaction was of a very shady character indeed. They could not allow a high official to have a stigma of this kind upon him. The matter ought to be thoroughly inquired into.

These things happened not during a Liberal Government, but during a Tory Government, and he thought the hon. Member for Preston deserved the thanks of every Member for the pluck with which he had revealed the misdeeds of his own Party. The present Secretary of State for War was not responsible, but it would not do for him to burke the question now that he was in Office. There had been a good deal of trying to cover it up. He (Mr. Weir) had endeavoured to get some information in regard to cordite powder, but had got no satisfaction. The Secretary of State for War was a universal provider of war material for our forces, and as the British public paid high prices they had a right to expect a good article. It appeared to him (Mr. Weir) a shady mode of conducting business to keep the public ignorant of the patent for cordite powder for a couple of years, whilst they allowed the secret to be made known by permitting their experts to take out patents in foreign countries. The War Office said the invention must be kept secret, and yet Professors Abel and Dewar took out patents in several other countries. If the Government wished to keep the invention secret it ought not to have been patented at all, and certainly not in any other country. There were too many wooden-heads in the War Office, or they would have told Professors Abel and Dewar and Dr. Anderson that they would not allow them to carry out the policy they had adopted. If the officials of the War Office had been sharp business men they would have retained the secret and process of manufacturing cordite for themselves. He trusted that the Secretary of State for War would appoint an impartial and efficient Committee who would make an exhaustive inquiry into the subject.

ADMIRAL FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne) remarked that men of great distinction had been most unfairly and unjustly attacked by his hon. Friend the Member for Preston (Mr. Hanbury), and he was afraid there was a likelihood of the Committee being led away into a false issue. The Committee had nothing to do with rival inventors. All they were concerned with was whether his hon. Friend had made out his contention that certain distinguished men had contravened the Regulations under which they were serving. He admired the hon. Member for Preston ; indeed, he had a

kind of political affection for him. His hon. Friend was a strong man all round. At the same time, a War Office official was to his hon. Friend very much what a red rag was to a certain animal. The moment a man entered the War Office his hon. Friend was ready to go for him, and to think he was incapable any longer of doing an honourable thing. His hon. Friend saw fraud or omission of duty in every act of such an individual. He (Admiral Field) had always been ready to act on another principle, and to believe that those who were in the Public Service were honourable men until they had been proved to be rogues. These chemical experts were appointed not on their own motion, but by the late Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope). His hon. Friend (Mr. Weir) seemed to be wild with anger with these distinguished men because they invented cordite. Why, that was the object of their appointment. They were appointed to invent a smokeless powder which would meet the requirements of the Public Service.

MR. WEIR (interrupting) said, his contention had not been that they ought not to have invented, but that, when they did invent, the invention should be the property of the State.

ADMIRAL FIELD, said that was just what it was ; the moment the invention was made by these distinguished men a patent was taken out and transferred to the War Office. One of the complaints of the Members of the Committee was that, having been appointed to suggest a smokeless powder, they received no definite instructions for their guidance. They were put in a position of difficulty, and instead of having anathemas hurled at them they really deserved sympathy. For his own part, he was satisfied that they had done their duty honourably and fairly. It was not the case that they had analysed all the compounds submitted to them. The inventors simply appeared before them and stated their inventions without submitting samples. It was perfectly true that Mr. Nobel explained his invention. He (Admiral Field) was a Member of a War Office Committee on Explosives 20 years ago, and he then formed a very high opinion of Mr. Nobel. The Committee, however, had nothing whatever to do with the rival claims of Mr. Nobel and Sir F. Abel. All it could do was to see whether there was any

foundation for the charge that the Members of the Committee had been guilty of breach of trust. His hon. Friend (Mr. Hanbury) stated that the Committee examined the inventions submitted to them, and reported upon them. That was just what they did not do. All the experiments were carried out by a Committee of officers down at Woolwich, the Members of the Scientific Committee not being present. The Committee of officers reported that cordite was the most valuable of the compounds submitted to them. Sir F. Abel's reputation was European, and everybody who knew that gentleman knew he was incapable of picking the brains of other men. As early as 1872 Professor Abel invented and patented the very first smokeless powder in the form of cartridges for rifles. At that time the Navy and Army did not care so much about smokeless powder as they did now, and nothing came of the invention. Mr. Nobel was the only inventor who made his nitro-glycerine powder really known to the Committee. In 1890 Sir F. Abel, in a lecture on smokeless powder, gave Mr. Nobel all the credit of being the first to bring nitro-glycerine powder to public notice, but said Mr. Nobel's invention did not fulfil all necessary requirements. Professor Abel looked further into the subject, and he and Professor Dewar patented a modification of Mr. Nobel's invention. If there was a dispute between Sir F. Abel and Mr. Nobel the proper place to settle it was a Court of Law, and not a Committee of the House of Commons. Not long ago War Office officials were able to patent their inventions, even against the Government. His hon. Friend (Mr. Hanbury) was very angry with Sir F. Abel and Professor Dewar because they patented their invention in foreign countries. If they had not done so, Foreign Governments would have been in possession of the patents. It might be said that the Government ought themselves to have patented the invention abroad. If they had done this, his hon. Friend would have come down to the House with another wild charge against the Government for interfering with private trade. The charge hurled against these men was perfectly unjust. He was assured that they acted quite openly as far as their official superiors were con-

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cerned, and actually communicated with the Director of Artillery verbally from time to time, and were told to take out the foreign patents. In April, 1889, Sir F. Abel had a discussion with the Director of Artillery concerning the securing of foreign patents.

MR. HANBURY, interrupting, said, if Professor Abel was able to prove that he informed the Director of Artillery in April, 1889, that he had taken out these patents, that would be a complete answer; but he could not prove that, because at that time he had not taken them out.

ADMIRAL FIELD was informed that in April, 1889, Sir Frederick Abel had a discussion with the Director of Artillery concerning the securing of foreign patents, which eventuated in his receiving from the Director of Artillery verbal authority to take out certain patents. Therefore, seised as he (Admiral Field) was with this information, he felt very strongly that this attack of his hon. Friend was most unjust and most unfair. It was a very serious matter to drag eminent men on to the floor of this House, who could not answer the charge except by deputy, or through the officials of the Departments with which they were connected. If they were allowed to appear at the Bar of the House, they would, no doubt, be able to convince every honest man that the charges had no foundation. He knew his hon. Friend would not bring these charges forward if he did not believe them; but his hon. Friend's mind was poisoned by rival inventors, and they all knew how they felt towards one another. He believed Sir Frederick Abel, Professor Dewar, and their *confrères* were as incapable of any dishonourable action as his hon. Friend himself, and that was saying a good deal. He objected to such charges being brought forward, and these gentlemen termed, in a scornful way, "implicated officials," when they could not be there to answer charges for which he was convinced there was no foundation.

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: My hon. Friend the Member for Preston (Mr. Haubury), in opening his case on this cordite question, used an expression which has only been too common during the last few weeks. He spoke of it as "the Cordite Scandal," and I think, in consequence of some remonstrance by word

or gesture from me, he said that he would not call it a scandal till it had been proved to be so. I wish other people had acted on that principle, because I do think that it is very little creditable, and certainly not to the advantage of the Public Service of the country, that we should see on newspaper placards and elsewhere, in large letters, "The Cordite Scandal," when avowedly only one side of the case has been stated, and when that has been stated in an obviously *ex-parte* and partisan spirit. No one can doubt, Sir, the immense importance of the question raised—importance not only as it affects the result to the Public Service of the acceptance of cordite as a Service store, but as affecting the general character and practice of Public Departments. And I am very glad the duty of bringing it forward has fallen into the hands of the hon. Gentleman, who always does, to say the least, ample justice to any case of this sort, and in whose hands it will certainly lose nothing in point of vigorous demonstration. Turning to myself, I have been not accused, but a complaint has been made of the answers I have given to questions on this subject, and my hon. Friend the Member for Ross and Cromarty (Mr. Weir) especially complains of evasive answers. I am afraid I cannot give the answers my questioners would wish to have on all occasions, and when I fail to give the answers they desire they say I give an evasive answer. My effort has been to state the facts on every occasion. I have not been asked any question as to the rights or wrongs of any point, or as to the policy or justice of a case, but merely as to dates and facts. I took immense pains in order to make sure that I was correct in the answers I gave, and, having ascertained what the correct answers were, I gave them.

MR. HANBURY: Might I give one instance? My right hon. Friend told me distinctly that as soon as Dr. Anderson joined the Service he ceased to have any connection with the firm of Easton and Anderson. I think nobody, having heard that answer, would have thought he had simply transferred the whole of his shares in the company to his wife and family.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I understand that what happened in that instance is what happens in many cases.

Easton and Anderson is a limited company, and one of the rules of the company is that the shares must not be sold in the open market. If he had to denude himself of his shares, to whom could they go?

MR. HANBURY: He kept his interest.

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: His interest was not personal to himself, and what more could he have done than to take the course he did of handing them over to those to whom alone he could transfer them. It was the utmost he could do towards divesting himself of these shares, and there was no evasion at all in the answer. But, so far as I am concerned, the Committee will understand I have no personal responsibility whatever for any of the events that are under discussion. Everything in this matter, except my formal acceptance of cordite as a Service store, occurred before I came into Office. When I came into Office very naturally I made some inquiry into this case of cordite. I was almost immediately assailed by rival inventors who had other smokeless powders very much better than cordite, and were only longing for a more intelligent Secretary of State for War than had previously occupied that position in order that the enormous advantage of their powder should be at once established. I made my inquiries as to cordite—that is to say, as to the opinion and experience of the military officers around me of the results of cordite; and having ascertained that it had answered all that was expected from it; that the results had been better than had been expected from it in every respect; that all the tests it had been subjected to had resulted in its favour, and, above all things, that its stability was well established, and that it did not change under climatic influences—having ascertained that, and knowing that this prolonged and elaborate inquiry had taken place, and that, as my hon. Friend has said, £200,000 had been spent on plant and works to produce it, I say I should have been unworthy of occupying the position I hold if, because it was new to me, I had said—“Here are some people who say they have a better powder; let us throw the whole thing into hotch-pot and have a fresh inquiry and fresh experiments for another half-dozen years.” I say so long as I was satisfied with the

opinion of my military advisers that it answered their purpose, I was bound to stand by it until there is reason to believe that a much better powder than it is available. That is my position on the general question. You, Sir, have ruled that we are not to discuss the qualities of cordite, but if it had been open to do so I have here all the particulars I could have given of it. That was the judgment I came to on the evidence submitted to me, that it perfectly answered its purpose, and therefore it was I shut the door to these clamorous inventors, and on some day last spring I accepted cordite as a Service store. So much for that part of the question. As I have said, I have no responsibility for the events, and I think I shall best consult the convenience of the Committee and my right hon. Friend and predecessor the Member for Horncastle (Mr. E. Stanhope) if I leave it to him to answer all the detailed points that have been urged by the hon. Gentleman as to the events of the past, as to which I have only secondhand information. Whilst that is so there is one thing I am responsible for. I may very well be asked: Surveying all these past transactions, do you think that the practice of your Department in these matters is right? As to that, I admit fully my responsibility and the obligation I am under to give my opinion. The hon. Member for Preston began his story by disclaiming any intention to say anything personally obnoxious of anybody, and yet I am bound to say that, although all through his speech he was telling what men of honour would do and would not do, he at all events succeeded in making it evident that in his opinion all the officials connected with these transactions are villains of the deepest dye. My hon. Friend said at the beginning he was attacking no one personally—

MR. HANBURY: What I said was this: that I should describe what these men had done; that I believed it was a thoroughly wrong thing to do, but that it was quite compatible with the system permitted by the War Office, and they were not transgressing the Rules. I said then what I say now—that I do not think they ought to have done what they did.

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It is very small salve to anyone's feelings to have a general statement of that sort

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proclaimed at the beginning, and then have a series of accusations brought against them with a constant commentary as to what men of honour would have done in the circumstances. Let me say this of Professor Abel and Professor Dewar: You may search, not only this country, but the world, and not find two men more qualified to decide any question such as was submitted to them in regard to this cordite. I should also include Mr. Dupré, whose name the hon. Gentleman did not introduce. Professor Abel, especially, is held by universal consent to be the highest authority on all military explosives. My right hon. Friend and predecessor had to appoint a Committee on explosives, and does anyone suggest he could have appointed better men than Professor Abel, Professor Dewar, or Mr. Dupré? Let me say this of Professor Abel: He has served the War Office and other Departments of the Government with the greatest fidelity and success for many years, and his reward has been exceedingly small when we think what he would have earned if, instead of accepting Government employment, he had started on his own private account, and reaped all the advantages which an eminent man like him would have been sure to have reaped. My hon. Friend went on to argue that they were appointed only to judge of the powders that were sent in. That is to say, they were to judge of the half-dozen, or dozen, or two dozen kinds of powder sent in, and if no individual powder came up to the requirements that were supposed to be necessary they were to bundle it all out, and say—"We will have none of this," and sit there with arms folded, and the Department was not free to apply—

MR. HANBURY: The right hon. Gentleman entirely misrepresents me. That is not what I said.

***MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN:** The hon. Gentleman proceeded to say they had invented something in order to enable the Department to get the best powder they could have. Surely their duty was to apply their great powers to endeavouring to assist the Department in obtaining that powder; and if that was not what they were to do, then persons of less eminence would have been sufficient to conduct experiments, and have been fit to accept or reject individual

powders submitted to them. They were picking men's brains, we are told. Whose brains? Let me separate Mr. Nobel at once, and I separate him because he is distinctly capable of being separated from anyone else. It has always been acknowledged, not only by the Committee, but by the Department and everyone concerned, that Mr. Nobel deserves the greatest consideration. Undoubtedly we owe very much to him for the main idea of these powders, and, therefore, I say I am as anxious as my predecessor was—and the Committee acknowledged it again and again—that he should be treated, as he deserves to be treated, with the greatest consideration. He alleges the definite point that by using cordite—by the manufacture of cordite—we are infringing his patent. That our legal advisers, learned in these matters, deny. His advisers assert that we are. What are we to do in these circumstances? Obviously a friendly suit at law is the best solution. I say friendly on purpose, because we have no hostility to Mr. Nobel, and I believe he has none to us. But he makes this assertion, and if he can prove this assertion we are bound to stand by the result and give him that compensation which is required. I do not touch in the least upon the merits of the case which is to be tried at law. The right hon. Gentleman opposite, I believe, set his face against any proposal to compromise or do anything except decide a great matter of that sort by a Court, and that not only for the main reason that the question was so important in itself that it deserved such treatment, but also that it would be an exceedingly dangerous thing for any Secretary for War to consent to any large pecuniary compensation in a case of that sort unless he had the definite authority of a Court of Law to do it. What the decision of that case may be we cannot tell. As I said, our technical advisers are very positive he has no case, and his advisers say he has. Let a Court of Law decide it. I can only repeat what I said interjectionally in the course of the hon. Gentleman's speech, that there is no desire whatever to compromise that action, and, on the contrary, the War Office has done everything it could since I have been connected with it to hasten it on. Before I leave this question of Mr. Nobel I

should like to add a few words. I was asking who had his brains picked. Which of the inventors of smokeless powder, on a gun cotton basis, all of which have been discarded? Has anything been stolen from them? Not a thing; not an idea. And in the great majority of cases these were patented powders. The very meaning of the word "patent" excludes the idea of a secret. If a man has patented an invention anyone can go and see the specification and ascertain all about it, and there is no picking of brains or filching of secrets whatever about it. No one has alleged that in cordite there is anything stolen or borrowed from all the powders that were not on a similar basis to cordite.

MR. HANBURY: Maxim.

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It is rather breaking my own rule and trenching on the domain of actual facts, but the truth is that what Mr. Maxim invented was the passing of a plastic mass through holes in a cylinder in small threads for the purpose of expelling the air from it, and when that had been done it resumed the solid, or at any rate compact, mass in which it had originally been. He did not invent anything which left the explosive in cord form after passing through the cylinder. I do not wish to enter into the details of particular points. What I want to say is that we admit Mr. Nobel's claims to consideration. Notwithstanding what the hon. Member for Ayrshire implied, we have endeavoured in every way to treat him with that consideration. The little question about the employment of labourers, and so forth, had, I thought, been settled between his company and myself. I do not think any grievance or soreness exists on either side regarding that transaction. We await with patience, and I may add with hope, the result of the issue that is going to be decided between us. Now, as to patents—and I am reviewing all this from the point of view of the War Office, not from the point of view of the actual events—Professor Dewar and Professor Abel took out patents, and forthwith assigned them to the Secretary for War.

MR. HANBURY: Including the Anderson machinery?

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Yes; that also was assigned. There was some hesitation or discussion about it between the firm and the War Office and

Dr. Anderson, but it was assigned to the Secretary of State for War.

MR. HANBURY: It was not re-assigned in any form. It was not assigned back, or any portion of it.

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No; it was not re-assigned back, but, as I have said, there was a controversy about it at first. It is the rule now in the Public Service with regard to patents that, if any public servant takes out a patent, he must obtain for that purpose the consent of the head of the Department, and then must assign the patent to the head of the Department. And why? Because the whole matter being in a state of activity, anyone else who forestalled by a day that patent could immediately establish a claim for compensation from the Secretary for War; therefore, the moment anything was invented which was likely to be beneficial by a person employed by the Department, it was the most natural thing to patent it and assign it to the Secretary for War. They did not put a penny in their pocket by that transaction. It is alleged that, although it is not objectionable to take out a patent at home and assign it to the Secretary of State for War, yet it is a terrible thing to take out foreign patents. The War Office has nothing whatever to do with, and have no interest in, foreign manufacture. We are not going to manufacture any powder or buy any powder abroad, and, therefore, it is immaterial to us whether we have patents abroad or not. In that sense we have no interest in it. These patents were taken out abroad by these gentlemen at a time when anyone else might have taken their ideas and patented them abroad; and if it is alleged that they ought to have in that case also assigned the foreign patents to the Secretary of State for War I have to ask why should they do so, and what was the Secretary of State for War to do with them when he had them assigned to him? It was much better for the Secretary of State for War to steer clear of the whole matter, and have nothing to do with the foreign patents. As a matter of fact, it is well known that little profit was made or makeable out of this foreign patent. But I quite admit that, to my mind, it is an arguable matter what course should be taken with regard to foreign patents. I do not take the strong line of my hon. Friend. I

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think there is a good deal to be said on both sides. Let me again say that I am dealing with these matters from the point of view of the practice of the Department. I can only say it is a matter upon which I have an open mind. I have no strong opinion one way or the other; but excepting these foreign patents, which is an arguable point, at all events I am not aware of anything these gentlemen have done which can be said for a moment to have brought profits to themselves. Therefore, when we are told that they picked the brains of the inventors in order to make profit for themselves, I am sure they did not pick the brains of the inventors, and I have shown, so far as this country is concerned, and probably other countries too, there was no profit in this country, and very little probably in any other.

MR. HANBURY : My point is this : that whilst this process was kept secret in England, unknown to the War Office, they disclosed it to Foreign Powers. They took out these patents in 1889 long before it was made public in England in any shape.

***MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN :** The right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. E. Stanhope) will no doubt explain. I do not think the hon. Member is right as a matter of fact. But, at all events, if a patent is taken out there is no secret. The hon. Gentleman talks about selling the secrets of our Government to Foreign Powers. There were no secrets to sell. The patents were open to all the world, and, therefore, Foreign Powers had every knowledge of our patents and all about them. There were no secrets. We have few secrets in this country, and those we have were disclosed by this transaction. I have not entered, and do not intend to enter, on all the details of dates and facts mentioned by the hon. Member. But I have dealt with the main issue, and on the main issue I find, first of all, that these eminent gentlemen were justified in inventing a powder for the assistance of the Government; secondly, they did not pick the brains of anyone; and, thirdly, where the idea or the general conception of the powder could be brought home to anyone, as in this case to Mr. Nobel, the War Office authorities had always felt that Mr. Nobel should be

treated with great consideration. In taking out their patents these gentlemen were merely acting according to the authorised practice of the Government Departments in order to protect the public interest, and not to protect themselves, and having taken out the patents they were assigned to the Secretary for War. I ask the Committee confidently where is the justification for the assertions of a cordite scandal? The scandal is that such accusations should be brought against the Department, and against men who have loyally and successfully served the public, on such a very small basis of foundation.

MR. E. STANHOPE (Lincolnshire, Horncastle) : I think the right hon. Gentleman has dealt fairly with this case, as he has dealt with every matter that came before him since he has occupied the Office of Secretary for War. I may say, in answer to the hon. Gentleman behind me, that, so far from desiring to keep the Committee in the dark as to the transactions with regard to cordite which took place during the time I was in Office, I shall be happy to afford all the information as far as I am personally concerned. I regret, Mr. Mellor, that owing to your decision I am prohibited from going into the merits of cordite, because I am sure it would be a great satisfaction to the country to learn the opinion of those who are responsible to the country for cordite as to the merits of cordite as an explosive. But I may be allowed to say a word as to the stability of cordite in answer to that portion of the case presented by the hon. Member for Preston. The stability of cordite is a subject of great importance. More than three years ago the War Office sent a specimen of cordite to India and to Canada. The authorities directed that an experiment should be tried in heat and in extreme cold, and under every possible condition of damp and other circumstances likely to affect the stability of the explosive. At the time when I left the War Office the Reports as to the behaviour of cordite, under these conditions, were exceedingly satisfactory. It is perfectly true, as has been said, that cordite labours under certain disadvantages when exposed to an extreme temperature. But to that temperature

cordite need never be exposed, not even in India; and on board ships there is no difficulty in keeping down the maximum temperature of the magazines to 100 degrees. Therefore, cordite is practically unaffected by heat. I pass from that to the general question of the right of public servants to take out patents. Originally there was a Treasury Minute practically prohibiting Government servants from taking out patents. Everyone felt, however, that the Act of 1883 relating to patents altered the position of affairs, and it was thought that the state of things in regard to Government servants should be altered. A Committee was appointed consisting of representatives of all the Departments of the State who were connected with these questions. The Committee at that time recommended that permission should be given to take out patents by persons employed by the Government. The Circular of 1873 was rescinded and permission was accordingly given under certain conditions to persons employed by the State to take out patents, though it was recommended that when these patents were taken out they should be assigned to the Secretary for War. At a later stage, however, he was not altogether satisfied with the investigation to which this Order was exposed, and I called upon the Committee representing the various Heads of the Departments to re-assemble. The Committee again met, with the result that they were unanimous in their opinion to allow persons employed by the State to take out patents with the consent of the Heads of this Department, and to assign them to the Departments. That Regulation has since been acted upon. Why was that recommendation made? First of all, because you cannot practically prevent these patents being taken out. A. B., a public servant, makes an invention. You may say that A. B. shall not take out a patent; but what is to prevent A. B. going to C. D., who is not a public servant, and getting him to take out the patent in his name, a course which would even more injuriously affect the Department and the State? Secondly, it is of great importance that the Government itself, when an invention is made in its Service, should be protected against someone outside taking out a patent and immediately claiming a royalty from the State. The object of assigning the

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patent to the Government is to prevent royalties from being claimed against the Government in this country; and that, I submit, is an important consideration. But to come to the particular case under discussion, I must say that no more ridiculous charge has ever been brought against any public man than the charge made against Mr. Anderson, Director General of the Ordnance Factories. It is said that this gentleman has used his position in order to advance the interests of the private firm with which he had been connected. Now, what really happened? A member of a private firm makes a valued invention; that private firm has been accustomed to manufacture machines for the purpose of carrying on this kind of work for the Government, and it was, therefore, natural that those concerned in the invention of cordite should have turned to this firm in order to make a machine for the manufacture of cordite. That was done. Mr. Anderson invented a machine; application was made for the patent; and not long afterwards I, as War Minister, offered Mr. Anderson the position of Director General of Ordnance Factories. I made inquiries in every direction, and I found that Mr. Anderson was the man best qualified to fill one of the most responsible posts in the Service of the State. That opinion of mine has been more than justified, for it is now universally admitted that no better official has ever been appointed. Mr. Anderson has effected enormous improvements and economies in the conduct of the Royal Arsenal, and the opinion which has been formed of his abilities has been more than justified. Because Mr. Anderson was appointed to this post, I do not see on what ground the firm with which he has been connected should lose all right to manufacture machines. It would be absolutely ridiculous to make such a condition. Mr. Anderson has nothing to do with placing the contracts—more than I have at the present moment. The person who places the contracts is the Director of Contracts, and he came to me in the most straightforward manner and said—"I should like you to know the facts. Easton and Anderson are likely to have these contracts, and as Mr. Anderson was lately a member of that firm I wish to know do you assent?" I said that a firm which had done so much in

the interest of the public had a right to the contracts. The firm, therefore, has a share, but only a share, in the supply of these machines.

MR. HANBURY : Not the whole of the contracts ?

MR. E. STANHOPE : About two-thirds of the machines are made by the Government themselves. I think that a very slender basis on which to found a charge of malversation against one of the most eminent of our public servants. I believe Mr. Anderson to be absolutely incapable of what has been alleged against him, and I venture to say that the Committee will require much stronger facts than have been yet alleged to induce them to condemn a man who has so ably served the public. Then there is the case of Sir Frederick Abel and Professor Dewar. When the question arose of choosing a smokeless powder, the person responsible was the Director of Artillery. The Director of Artillery came to me and said that he was absolutely incapable of choosing a smokeless powder by himself, and asked that a Committee of chemists might be appointed to report as to smokeless powder in general. A Committee was appointed—Professor Dupré, Professor Dewar, and Sir Frederick Abel. These gentlemen arrived very quickly at the conclusion that there was at that time no smokeless powder suitable for the Public Service, though they thought that one particular powder, composed mainly of nitro-glycerine, was the one which afforded a basis upon which the Committee might hope to achieve more satisfactory results. They communicated with Mr. Nobel, who was the inventor, and they asked him to continue the experiments with the object of making the powder suitable for the Public Service. After a certain time the Committee, who continued their own experiments, arrived at the invention of cordite. They believed that cordite was a powder thoroughly suitable in every respect for the Public Service, and they applied for a patent. That application came before me, and I granted leave for cordite to be patented in this country, the patent being assigned to me as Secretary of State for War. There were three patents taken out. Two of these were not kept secret at all. One was the process for manufacturing cordite, and the second was the machine for making cordite. The patent

that was kept secret for a time was the patent which described the manner in which the material was drawn into threads or cords. I recollect that at the time there was a good deal of discussion between the Director of Artillery and myself as to whether it was desirable to observe secrecy. I wanted to make a secret of the whole matter, following the practice of foreign nations. I very soon found that it was impossible to keep the process of manufacturing cordite secret, and the reason why a portion of the patent was sealed was that at the particular time one of the officials of the War Office, who had been concerned in the experiments made by the Explosives Committee, was trying to sell their methods to an outside firm with the intention of using them against the Government. Within the next month the whole affair was made public. The machinery was patented, and everybody knew how cordite was to be manufactured. The hon. Member's charge of secrecy is based on the fact that, while everybody knew how cordite was manufactured, it was not until my attention was called to the matter that the decision to keep part of the patent sealed was rescinded. A great deal has been said about the time that has been wasted. There has been no waste of time in the matter. The British Army has to operate in countries of varying temperature, and, therefore, experiments extending over two years had to be conducted in Canada and in India, in order to make it clear that the stability of cordite was assured in intense heat and intense cold. The person responsible for the trials of cordite was the Director of Artillery, and he reported that cordite possessed better qualities than any other powder. In 1891 the Explosives Committee came to an end ; but experiments are still being carried on, not by people interested in the patents, but by the Ordnance Committee, which is composed of military officers of the highest experience, with a view to deciding whether or not cordite should be continued in the Public Service. I desire to say a few words about the foreign patent. Sir Frederick Abel in August, 1888, submitted a Memorandum on the subject to the Director of Artillery, which got into the newspapers. We have never been able to get an explanation of that circumstance from Sir

Frederick Abel. The Memorandum certainly never reached me in that shape. At any rate, I should like to say, in justice to Sir Frederick Abel, that that does not affect his position. The Memorandum was included in the half-yearly Report, and no complaint was made of the Memorandum, so far as I know, up to the present time. I quite agree that a great deal can be said as to whether or not it was desirable that a patent should be taken out abroad. But there is no ground for accusing Sir Frederick Abel and Professor Dewar of selling secrets to a Foreign Power. There was no secret for them to sell.

MR. HANBURY: But there was.

MR. E. STANHOPE: I think my opinion on the subject is worth a little more than that of the hon. Member. I know that there was no secret whatever for them to sell, and, that being so, the charge against them on that point falls to the ground. The question may be put whether it is desirable or not that the patent should be taken out abroad? Again I ask, is it possible really to prevent it? A. B. having invented something in this country may tell the secret to C. D., who could immediately go abroad and patent it, and try to get the benefit of it. Again, the War Office cannot be expected to take out patents in all foreign countries in order that the benefits of the patent might be secured to this country; and if the inventor himself is not to be allowed to take out patents in foreign countries, what is there to prevent anyone borrowing the idea from the specification published in this country and patenting it abroad for his own benefit? I do not want to express any very positive opinion on the subject; but, having gone fully into it, I think it is not fair or just to cast these imputations on Sir Frederick Abel or Professor Dewar. I think I have now dealt practically with all the matters before the Committee. I felt that after these allegations of scandal and corruption it was the bounden duty of the right hon. Gentleman and myself to give such answer as we could to them. I must say I do think that in this country we ought to be very careful how we listen to the cries of disappointed inventors. They always find fault with the Government that rejects their inventions. It has been always so in the past,

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and will be so in the future. Let them, if they like, abuse the Government and say that their inventions are better than the one adopted, but do not let them without absolute proof charge against the officials of the Government that they have been corrupt in the manner in which they have discharged their duties, or guilty of scandalous action in connection with the manner in which a particular warlike material has been adopted. I have a belief in our Public Service, and some considerable experience entitles me to express it. I think that no body of public servants in any country is more entitled to respect than the public servants of this country. Do not let accusations be cast upon them gratuitously and without adequate proof which it is very difficult for them to answer, and which are listened to with an attention they do not deserve in foreign countries. At any rate, let careful inquiry be made into any case that may be preferred against them before they are stigmatised by the names these gentlemen have been stigmatised by. I have only one other word to say with regard to the action by Mr. Nobel which is now pending. I have from the very first, so far as I am concerned, deprecated the idea of compromise, though I admit I have been approached on the subject. Publicly and privately, while I was Secretary of State for War, I have met with reproach from many inventors, and have very seldom been left alone; but I have always held that the question should be tried in a Court of Law. I rejoice that the right hon. Gentleman opposite endorses that opinion, and I heartily support him in it.

MR. HANBURY said, he thought the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War rather misunderstood what he said as to the matters the Committee set themselves to investigate. They were to test the various explosives, and then, in the last resort, to invent on behalf of themselves. But they reversed the process, and within six months of the Committee being appointed they actually took out a patent for an invention of their own. Then there had been no explanation offered as to the fact that Professor Dupré had had nothing whatever to do with these patents. The patents were professedly taken out by the Committee, but they were only taken out by two of the Committee. With

regard to Professor Anderson, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Horn-castle had put into his mouth words he did not use. The charge he made was that a week before he was appointed Director General of Ordnance Factories he took out a patent, and that, although that patent was assigned to the Secretary for War, a portion of it was subsequently transferred to Messrs. Easton and Anderson. He admitted that the main charge was that referring to the foreign patents. As to that, he still maintained that it had not been met. In the first place, it had not been denied that these gentlemen took out those foreign patents and received royalties for them. He did not complain so much of that, because they might say the War Office knew of it, though, as a matter of fact, they knew nothing of it for two years afterwards. But what he complained of was this: that while this cordite patent was a secret in England, while the Secretary for War was carefully keeping it a secret and certifying up to May, 1892, that it was to the public advantage to keep it a secret, the patent was disclosed to nine Foreign Powers in 1889.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.) expressed regret that the Secretary for War had been precluded by the Forms of the House from going into the merits of cordite. If the right hon. Gentleman had given an opinion to the House it would have received publicity. He believed they were making, to a certain extent, a leap in the dark as to the merits of cordite, and they ought to have some opinion on the subject. He could not think that it was a proper policy for the War Office to pursue to advertise for inventors to bring forward the best powders they could, and then, as soon as they got the ideas of the inventors, to take advantage of them and go on inventing on their own account. That was not a large and generous view to take. He thought it was a weak point in the argument of the Secretary for War that he approved of the question being wholly determined in the Law Courts. In an action the War Office might succeed in their facts, and yet the general idea of the patent might have been taken from someone else.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.), who was met with cries of "Divide!" said, this was a serious question concerning

the Public Service. He deplored attacks made upon men in the highest position in the Public Service, who could not answer for themselves. His hon. Friend had levelled a number of charges against those men, and when the matter came to be examined the charges came to nothing, so much so that he did not believe his hon. Friend would divide the House. That Members of Parliament should take up superficial newspaper attacks was a most unfair thing towards those who could not answer in the House for themselves, and the House ought to defend old public servants from such scandalous attacks.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis), who also was interrupted by cries of "Divide!" said, the Committee had always expected attack. In their Memorandum of August, 1888, they said that they would inevitably come under the stigma of not being impartial Judges, and

"they must make up their minds to be indifferent to such imputations."

But it appeared they were not indifferent to such imputations now. They said that they must

"rely confidently upon a proper defence of their proceedings in high official quarters."

They had now had a defence from both Front Benches, high authorities; from the hon. Member for Islington, a still higher authority; and from the hon. Member for Eastbourne (Admiral Field), the highest authority, who had shown himself as good a lawyer as he was a seaman. He much regretted that the Secretary of State for War had not been allowed to go a little further into the subject of the merits of cordite. He must point out that the Admiralty officials were at this moment stating that it was "an unstable compound," and he would like to know whether the right hon. Gentleman's opinion of cordite was as favourable as formerly?

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The same, but stronger.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES could not understand, then, how it was that all the official scientific lecturers were preaching the doctrine that it was an unstable compound. He himself very much doubted the merits of cordite, and believed that before long they would have to give it up and go back to black powder.

Question put, and negatived.

Original Question again proposed.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS (Birmingham, Bordesley) wished to call the attention of the Committee to a detail of administration by the Secretary of State for War which had inflicted a great hardship upon many workmen of the artisan class in Birmingham, the dismissal in unfair proportions of workmen employed at Sparkbrook Factory. There were two Small Arms Factories, the one at Enfield the other at Sparkbrook, and the claim he urged was that the men in either place should be equally treated in the amount of work. Of course, when the demand for rifles had decreased, there must be reduction in the number of *employés* engaged in the manufacture, and the late Government had faithfully followed the principle of dividing such orders as there were equally between the two factories. The falling-off began during the time of the late Administration, and there was 20 per cent. reduction all round in the number of men employed, but the present Government had made a reduction at the rate of two to one against the interests of Sparkbrook. In June, 1892, there were 2,100 men employed at Enfield, and in July, 1893, the number was 1,987, so that 123 men were discharged during the 12 months. At Sparkbrook the reduction during the same period was 198—namely, from 657 to 459. In answering a question upon this matter, the Financial Secretary, in justification, said the Enfield men were working five days a week instead of six, while, he understood, the Sparkbrook men were working full time. Upon this last point the hon. Gentleman was misinformed, and, as a matter of fact, the men at Sparkbrook, especially those on piece, were in some cases working four days, or at least less than a week. But, even accepting the statement of the Financial Secretary, and taking off a sixth of the number of men discharged at Sparkbrook, it would make 165, allowing for the short time at Enfield. On that basis, if the Sparkbrook men were reduced at the same rate as the men at Enfield, then there should have been 38 discharged from Sparkbrook instead of 165. If they took the men who should have been discharged at Enfield in the same proportion that they had been dis-

charged from Sparkbrook, then there should have been 500 discharged from Enfield instead of 120. That showed it was an unfair proportion. In answer to a question a week or two ago, his hon. Friend admitted the excess there was of discharges at Sparkbrook, but said there were greater chances in Birmingham of men getting employment. But his (Mr. Jesse Collings') answer to that was that it was well known that trade of the particular kind to that upon which these men were employed was very bad just now, and the result of the policy of the Secretary of State for War was that, instead of these men—who, in his opinion, had been very unfairly treated—being able to get other employment, they were now walking about the streets reduced to the condition of non-employment, with all the necessary evils attendant upon it both to their wives and families and themselves. As a justification of their policy the Government said that more work was given to Bagot Street. That answer was not sufficient. Bagot Street was a place where arms were specially repaired, and there was only an apparent increase at Bagot Street. The year before the present year there was an abnormal lowering of the Estimate, and all that the Government had done now was to place Bagot Street in the position it was in before that lowering occurred, but he wished to point out that Bagot Street had nothing whatever to do with the question. They might as well have said, in justification for discharging the men from the Small Arms Factory at Sparkbrook, that they had given more employment to men who were making glass bottles in some other factory. The two factories were under different Votes and sub-heads, and his hon. Friend might as well have said they had given more employment to Enfield because they had increased the Vote for war purposes. His hon. Friend said that the fact also ought to be taken into account that there were a variety of other articles made at Enfield which were not made at Sparkbrook, and, therefore, more men were employed. That was no answer at all, because when the factories were in full swing, and double the money was voted to what was voted at the present time, the turn-out of swords, lances, and machine guns—which were not made at Sparkbrook—was very

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small, and he questioned whether the whole amount of such articles would come to £10,000 all told. Therefore, that was no answer; but even if it were, they were speaking of the working men employed in the two factories, and what they contended for was that they should be treated fairly and upon an equitable basis. He hoped the answer they would receive would be a promise that these men who had been unjustly discharged from Sparkbrook should be reinstated to the extent that they should be brought up to the same proportion as those employed at Enfield. That, he thought, was a very moderate and fair request—one founded on justice, and one that would remove a great deal of indignation on the part of these men. Another point on which he wished information was whether it was the intention of the Government to close the Sparkbrook Factory as a manufactory and to turn it into a mere repairing shop? If that was what the Government were going to do it was a very serious policy; and from an answer to a question, he understood that such a policy was at any rate in contemplation. He was told, in the answer to his question the other day, that Sparkbrook was originally acquired as a repairing shop. He would not go into that question now, as he had previously shown that that was not the case—that the Sparkbrook Factory was bought for a mere song, something like £60,000, on the express understanding that it should be retained as a manufactory for small arms; and if the policy of turning it into a repairing shop was entertained, he thought there would be a serious blot on the Army administration of this country, and that in a time of danger very great difficulty might arise owing to the policy that had been pursued. What was the position of things? The factory at Enfield was exposed, and had no resources of minerals, whereas the factory of Sparkbrook was situate in the Midland Counties, surrounded with minerals, was a first-class factory, filled with the best machinery, and fulfilling all the requirements set forth by the Royal Commission. Sparkbrook had an area of 21,000 square yards, with a large amount of land that could be obtained at a moderate price adjoining, and which could be used to increase the factory if it should be thought advisable to remove the repairing shop from Bagot Street to Sparkbrook. What he wished to know

was whether the Government were going to abolish one of the two Royal Arms Factories, or whether Sparkbrook was to be partially abolished? On the grounds of economy, on the grounds of national defence, on the grounds of good administration in Army matters, he hoped there was no truth in the idea that the policy he had indicated was to be carried out. The next question was whether the right hon. Gentleman would rectify the injustice that had been done to the working men of Bordesley, and whether they would be restored, but only in the proportion that would put them upon the same level with the other Royal Institutions? At present, as he had said, the discharges had gone on at the rate of four times the proportion of those at Enfield, and that, he thought, was not fair. He hoped they would get a satisfactory reply from the Government, and he could assure the Secretary of State for War they would not be satisfied with anything less than a promise to reinstate the men in the same proportion as the men who were employed at Enfield. He would not move to reduce the Vote, as it was not his object to reduce the salary of the right hon. Gentleman, but he had felt bound to call attention to the matter, and he hoped to obtain a satisfactory reply.

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. WOODALL, Hauley) hoped his right hon. Friend would permit him to reply, as he was charged with the administration of the Manufacturing Departments of the Army. Though he was not sure that he should be able to satisfy the right hon. Gentleman, he hoped to be able to make such a statement that would show they were acting in a spirit of perfect fairness between the two factories. During the 10 years ending in 1891 the number of workmen employed in these factories had been more than trebled, and the expenditure had been proportionately increased, but now they were forced to go through the extremely unpleasant and uncomfortable process of bringing back the expenditure to something like its normal condition. His right hon. Friend had pressed him from time to time with regard to the claims of the two rival factories, Enfield and Sparkbrook. He had told the right hon. Gentleman that the numbers at Enfield and Sparkbrook had been reduced, but he would like to call the right hon.

Gentleman's attention to the fact that on the accession to Office of the present Government the number of men employed both at Sparkbrook and Enfield were considerably increased. So reluctant were they to bring about any diminution in the employment that the numbers were kept up, and the maximum amount of wages was paid all through the winter, until the close of the month of January. Now, his right hon. Friend said they were starving Sparkbrook unfairly in proportion to what was being done at Enfield. If a comparison was to be made between the two factories, it must be between the manufacture of rifles at Enfield and Sparkbrook, and they were bound to leave out of sight those employed on other implements of war. But he was willing to dismiss that consideration and give his right hon. Friend the figures he desired. He (Mr. Woodall) had prepared a calculation showing the number of men employed in the two factories in the corresponding months of last year and this year. For instance, in August, 1892, there were employed at Enfield 2,246 men. That number had been reduced in August of this current year to 1,798. That, as his right hon. Friend would see, was a reduction of 20 per cent. In numbers the actual reduction at Sparkbrook had been 38 per cent., the figures being—men employed in August, 1892, 724; in August, 1893, 449. Then in regard to the actual wages paid, he had obtained the figures, though they had not been asked for by his right hon. Friend. At Enfield, in August last year, the amount of wages paid was £4,245 per week, and in the same month of the current year it was £2,856, or a reduction of £1,389, which worked out at 32·27 per cent. reduction, or very nearly 33 per cent. But what were the figures at Sparkbrook? In August last year the wages paid were £985 per week, and in August of this year the wages paid amounted to £695, which worked out at 29·44 per cent. reduction. These figures, he thought, bore out his statement that at Sparkbrook the men, as far as possible, were kept on full time, whereas at Enfield they played on Saturday. He could not quite understand his right hon. Friend's objection to the introduction of Bagot Street into the discussion. He knew that Sparkbrook was in the constituency represented

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by the right hon. Gentleman; but if the right hon. Gentleman would be good enough to recall the statement made by the Secretary for War when discussing the Estimates, he would remember a distinct pledge was given by the Secretary of State to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain) that the diminution at Sparkbrook should, as far as possible, be compensated for at Bagot Street. What were the facts? At Bagot Street the wages paid in August, 1892, were £246 10s. 2d. Those wages increased until, in the corresponding period of the current year, they reached £454 16s. 8d., making an actual increase of 84·5 per cent.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS asked if the hon. Gentleman would give the amount paid in wages before 1892?

*MR. WOODALL said, he should find it very difficult to give offhand everything his right hon. Friend wanted; but if the right hon. Gentleman would follow it up with questions from time to time, he would be delighted to give the figures he desired. Taking the month of July last, and comparing it with July of 1892, he found the increase at Bagot Street was 116 per cent. Then the right hon. Gentleman went on to say that the men had been unjustly discharged.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS said, he did not refer to individuals having been unjustly discharged, but he said it was unjust to the men as a body that they should be discharged in four times as large a proportion as at Enfield.

*MR. WOODALL said, he could not for a moment accept his right hon. Friend's figures. The right hon. Gentleman had talked of its being unfair, of the men being unjustly discharged, and he had called on the Government to rectify that injustice. He (Mr. Woodall) protested that the War Office had acted in a spirit of the greatest fairness, and that it was a matter of extreme regret to diminish the number of workmen at all. He would promise that during the remainder of the present financial year there would be no further dismissal of men from Sparkbrook, and that those who remained would be kept in full employment as far as possible. He (Mr. Collings) on a previous occasion had assumed that Bagot Street was to be closed, and Sparkbrook converted into a repairing factory; but as nothing yet had

been determined in regard to the future of the two Factories, he was not able to afford either satisfaction or dissatisfaction to the right hon. Gentleman in this matter. As the number of magazine rifles required became manufactured employment would, of course, become less and less, and there would be no excuse for keeping on the men. It was impossible for them to undertake to find employment for men when there was no work to be done. He sympathised with the right hon. Gentleman in reference to the matter, and he might add that he, as a Member for a Midland constituency, had some interest himself in the welfare of the working people of Birmingham, and he was not likely to do anything that would go against their welfare. The Government were, however, considering what best could be done to maintain the Sparkbrook Factory. The matter was still *sub judice*; but it would receive the most perfect consideration from the Secretary for War, and his intention was to arrive at a decision which should not overlook the interests of Birmingham, while at the same time they were bound to have due regard for the welfare of the Public Service.

MR. POWELL WILLIAMS (Birmingham, S.) said, he thought his hon. Friend (Mr. Woodall) was under some misapprehension with regard to Sparkbrook, and he would earnestly press upon him that before disposing of this matter he should pay a visit to Sparkbrook Factory, and see what were its capabilities.

MR. WOODALL: I have visited both Sparkbrook and Bagot Street Factories, and seen their condition for myself.

MR. POWELL WILLIAMS said, in that case he thought the action of the Government all the more wanting in excuse. It seemed to him little short of absurd to regard Sparkbrook as a repairing station. It had been fitted up at considerable cost for the manufacture of the magazine rifle, and he strongly objected to the policy of reducing it to a mere repairing station. If it were only a repairing station, why were they to be put to such cost for the manufacture of magazine rifles? A considerable sum had been expended in this direction. Under these circumstances, he thought the Government should continue their old policy, instead of looking at this matter in a new way. Here they had a factory capable of producing 600 rifles per week, and possibly, under pressure,

1,000 rifles might be turned out. Why should such a place be regarded as a mere repairing station? Reference had been made to a comparison of the wages paid at Enfield and Sparkbrook, but that did not show the actual state of affairs. The wages paid were no indication of the number of men employed. A larger number of persons were employed in proportion at Enfield than at Sparkbrook.

MR. WOODALL: No.

MR. WILLIAMS: Well, all he could say was that the number of persons discharged at Enfield was only 38, as compared with 165 at Sparkbrook. He objected altogether to the policy of the Government in regard to Sparkbrook; but on the point of fairness, he held that the artizans of Birmingham had not been treated as those of Enfield, and he trusted that in any future arrangement by the War Office they should have no reason to complain. He appealed to the Committee on that point, and hoped they would place the men on an equal footing.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; Committee counted, and 40 Members being found present,

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) said, the Secretary of State for War would learn without any surprise that it was his intention, in connection with this Vote, to bring before the Committee the question of the recent selection for the command at Aldershot, and, therefore, he need not offer any apology to the Committee for taking the course he was about to do with regard to it. The appointment of the Duke of Connaught was, he thought, absolutely unique. The Service journals almost without a dissentient voice agreed that it was an unsuitable, regrettable, and unfortunate appointment; and in the daily Press there was practical unanimity as to the unsuitability of the appointment. Indeed, an organ of the Liberal Party, with great candour and courage, had informed the Government that it was nothing more nor less than a discreditable job. In these circumstances, he thought that the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War would hail with satisfaction the opportunity he desired to afford him of putting before the Committee all the reasons that could be adduced on behalf of the appointment, which had been received with such expressions of dissatisfaction and alarm. He desired to make it distinctly and

absolutely clear that the protest which he would make against the appointment was not actuated in the slightest degree by any feeling of hostility towards the distinguished person who had been appointed; and it was only fair for him to say that, as far as his own observation went and as far as his knowledge of the feelings of military men went, he thought that there were very few of our Generals who enjoyed a greater amount of personal popularity throughout all ranks of the Service than did the Duke of Connaught. This, however, was no personal matter, and those who thought with him wished to consider the appointment purely from the point of view as to whether it was the best appointment that could have been made in the interests of the Army and the public. The view that would be taken of this appointment must be judged entirely by the character of the Aldershot command; and, indeed, had the appointment been one at Devonport, York, Plymouth, Edinburgh, or any other Provincial Military Centre he should not have deemed it his duty to bring the matter under the notice of the Committee. But the Aldershot command was one of the most important that we had at our disposal. In some respects it was equal in importance to the post of Commander-in-Chief. Why was this so? Simply because Aldershot was the great military training school of the Kingdom and the great testing station of the Army, through which from 10,000 to 12,000 men were passed every year, and it might make all the difference between an efficient and non-efficient Army whether or not we had a General at Aldershot who was capable of discharging the duties of the post. His contention was that we ought to have at Aldershot, in the first place, a man who from actual personal experience was acquainted with every detail of every branch of the Service; and, next, a man whose opinion would receive weight not only at the War Office, but throughout the country. In these circumstances, the appointment ought to be bestowed upon the very best man that could be obtained. Was the Duke of Connaught absolutely the best man that the War Office could obtain? If it could be proved by the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War that the Duke of Connaught was at the time of his appointment the senior available officer, the case in His Royal Highness's

favour would be established, although he quite admitted that the appointment ought not always to be regulated by seniority. He desired to lay before the Committee a few facts which might serve as a useful guide to them in arriving at a decision upon the point. He found that Sir Donald Stewart took 41 years to become a General, Lord Wolseley (whose promotion was hastened by his distinguished services) took 30 years, Sir Archibald Alison took 43 years, Lord Chelmsford 44 years, Sir Peter Lumsden 43 years, Lord Roberts 39 years, and the Duke of Connaught 25 years. He was aware that the Aldershot appointment was only a Lieutenant General's command; but, looking at the question from that point of view, he found that Sir George Greaves took 41 years to become a Lieutenant General, Lieutenant General Davies 39 years, Lord Clive 37 years, Sir Richard Harrison 38 years, Lieutenant General Buchanan 42 years, while the Duke of Connaught had taken only 21 years to become a Lieutenant General. From these facts the Committee would be able to judge how far seniority ought to be put forward as a reason for this appointment. The plea of seniority in the case implied one of two propositions: either His Royal Highness was superior in military capacity to every living or dead General, or that the seniority was spurious and fictitious. Then, when the Duke of Connaught went to Aldershot, every principal officer on his Staff would be senior to him in service and experience. The Assistant Generals would be, one seven years and the other six years, his senior; the Major General commanding the Artillery would be 18 years his senior; the Colonel commanding the Royal Engineers would be 11 years; the Major General in command of the Cavalry 13 years his senior; and of the three officers commanding Infantry brigades two were 14 years his senior and one 13 years. An objection against this appointment was that the Duke of Connaught had not had that active military experience which was necessary for the post. He served with his regiment in Egypt, and since then he had an important command at Bombay; but these cases furnished him with no real active experience. Another objection was that His Royal Highness had not time to discharge the duties of the important post at Aldershot, and he (Mr. Dalziel) con-

tended that the man who ought to have been appointed was the man who would have nothing else to think of but the Service, and who would give all his time to the command and live in camp. It was rumoured that a Chief of Staff was to be appointed after the Duke of Connaught took over the command, but he hoped that rumour would be denied by the Secretary of State for War. The War Office ought to have looked round to ascertain if they could not find a Lieutenant General for the post, but he would probably be told by the right hon. Gentleman that no Lieutenant General was available for the post. If that were so, it would be an extraordinary admission to make—that of all the distinguished Lieutenants General the Duke of Connaught was the only man who could have been removed from his other duties to take this office? He would presume no Lieutenant General was available, but surely there was ample precedent for making a Major General available. He would, however, come to the possibility that only Generals were available, and here he must say a word with reference to the replies given by the right hon. Gentleman regarding a name that had been introduced in connection with this command. He meant that of Lord Roberts. What was the excuse that was given on behalf of the Commander-in-Chief for the non-appointment of Lord Roberts? He presumed it would be admitted that of the two men, Lord Roberts and the Duke of Connaught, that Lord Roberts, with his vast military experience, his great skill, and his personal connection with all branches of warfare, would have been preferable for the appointment. They were told it would have been derogatory to the dignity of Lord Roberts, or of the office of Commander-in-Chief in India, which he had held, to accept the Aldershot command, but it would have been well to bear in mind the saying that, "Your dignity is like your liver; you never know you have any till something goes wrong with it"; and he thought Lord Roberts, who was prepared to accept the appointment, might very well have been left to take care of his own dignity. The right hon. Gentleman knew that Lord Roberts was prepared to accept this command, and he would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it was more derogatory that Lord Roberts

should have placed all his military knowledge at the disposal of his country by accepting the command than that he should have been allowed to knock practically unanswered at the door of the War Office. He thought the point of dignity would not stand examination for a single moment. If the War Office had been anxious to have anybody else than the Duke of Connaught, dignity would have been brushed aside. They had it on the authority of the right hon. Gentleman that there were only three commands that could be taken by an ex-Commander-in-Chief—Malta, Gibraltar, or Dublin. He (Mr. Dalziel) thought Lord Roberts was perfectly right in declining the post at Gibraltar or Malta. He had no authority to speak on behalf of Lord Roberts, and he thought Lord Roberts deprecated the introduction of his name into this discussion; but he had to point out that in considering this appointment they could not leave out the claim of Lord Roberts, and therefore he was compelled to bring his name forward. It was impossible fully to consider this appointment without at the same time considering the claims of Lord Roberts. Malta and Gibraltar had been refused, and only Dublin was available for Lord Roberts. He supposed there was no suggestion that there would be a vacancy at Dublin for some years to come. Until Dublin became vacant the country was not to have the advantage of Lord Roberts's experience and advice. He had said that the man appointed to the Aldershot command ought to carry weight throughout the country. He would read a short extract from a paper which would carry more weight than anything he could say. He referred to that eminently respectable authority *The Spectator*, which said in a recent article—

"Who can pretend that the recommendations, suggestions, and earnest representations of the Duke of Connaught would have one hundredth part of the weight which would belong to those of a man of Lord Roberts's standing? In the one case they might be pooh-poohed as the vapourings of a person little better than an amateur. In the other, they must at least be considered. . . . The country at large could not be got to say, 'The Duke of Connaught asks for this, and he really knows what is wanted; please do it,'—for the very good reason that no one would be persuaded of the truth of the proposition."

If he had not some consideration for the time of the Committee he could quote from 20 representative journals, Con-

servative and Liberal. The quotation from *The Spectator* represented the views expressed by a large body of journals throughout the country. He had seen it stated that an apprehension existed below the Gangway that this was only a step towards the post of Commander-in-Chief, and that a satisfactory assurance would be given on that point. He himself was totally unaware of any apprehension on the subject. He could not believe that anyone could suppose for a moment that an assurance on that point would satisfy the protest intended to be made against the appointment. He thought he would be a very bold and a very great Minister indeed who would come down to this House and, in face of the Report of Lord Hartington's Commission, announce the appointment of the Duke of Connaught as Commander-in-Chief. He knew it was impossible for him, in connection with this Aldershot appointment, to get at the real expression of the opinion of the House of Commons. There was a remarkable number of noticeable absentees amongst the Members of the House who usually took a prominent part in military discussions. He knew, to some extent, what the reason was, and he respected it. At the same time, he thought it unfortunate that the gentlemen who had in private spoken out strongly against this appointment were not now present to express their opinion in public. He could not help thinking that the case would have been different if this appointment had been made by a Tory instead of by a Liberal Government. In that case he was sure it would ere now have been brought before the House as a matter of definite and urgent public importance. He should ask the Committee to say that this appointment was not in the interests of the Public Service, and he asked those who believed that special favour had been shown to the Duke of Connaught to join with him in making this protest, and thereby helping to dispel the notion which was growing in the ranks of the Army and throughout the country that Royal favour was a surer passport to military distinction and responsibility than years of faithful and distinguished service.

COLONEL WARDE (Kent, Medway) said, he would not apologise to the Committee for taking part in the discus-

sion, because he never had hitherto taken up the time of the House of Commons. He felt bound to protest against the course pursued by the hon. Member who had proposed the reduction of the Vote, and especially against the statement that the Press of the country was unanimously against this appointment. If the hon. Member had based his objection to the appointment solely on the ground that no member of the Royal Family ought to receive any appointment such an objection might have been understood. Inasmuch, however, as his objection was based on the assumed fact that there were other officers in the Service whose claims ought to have been preferred, and who were more qualified for the appointment, one could not help believing that he must be very ignorant of the subject with which he had attempted so dogmatically to deal. His (Colonel Warde's) professional knowledge, he thought, qualified him to raise his voice on this occasion. He had been nearly a quarter of a century in the Army, and had served on more than one occasion under the Duke of Connaught. He asserted without fear of contradiction that the position of the Duke of Connaught was unique, because not only had His Royal Highness served through two grades in the Cavalry, and through every grade in the Infantry, but he had held two appointments on the Staff of the Army, and had also held the unique advantage of serving in both of the Ordnance Corps—an advantage not within the reach of any other officer. His Royal Highness had served his country in the Army for 25 years, and had held no fewer than six appointments as General Officer commanding troops. He had served his country in all quarters of the globe, and altogether he was unusually well qualified to take the command of a mixed body of troops, either at home or in the field. Before the time when His Royal Highness became a cadet he was carefully trained by an eminent officer, whose name had always inspired esteem since he won the Victoria Cross before Sebastopol—Sir Howard Elphinstone. The hon. Member (Mr. Dalziel) either made a slip of the tongue or betrayed his ignorance when he said the Duke of Connaught served with his regiment in Egypt. The Duke did nothing of the kind. He served in command, as a General, of a brigade,

Mr. Dalziel

and in that capacity had charge of the reserves at the battle of Tel-el-Kebir. The reserves were selected from the most seasoned and highly-trained troops placed under a most careful and reliable General, and in case of a reverse they would be called upon to make a supreme effort to retrieve the fortunes of the day. Therefore, His Royal Highness occupied on that occasion a most responsible and proud position. Supposing the Duke of Connaught was not the senior officer who could be appointed to the Aldershot command, was it not the case that seniors had frequently been passed over? Objection was taken when Wolfe was selected to command the expedition to Quebec on the ground that he was not the senior officer. It was also represented to George III. that he was mad. "Begad," said the King, "I wish he would bite some of my Generals!" In days gone by, when Lord Wolseley was selected to command an expeditionary force over the heads of his seniors, was his appointment objected to? Lord Roberts—and he (Colonel Warde) yielded to none in admiration for that distinguished officer—was also selected over the heads of several of his seniors on more than one occasion. Was his appointment on those occasions objected to? No; the fact was that the real objection to the Duke of Connaught was because he happened to be a Prince of the Blood Royal.

MR. DALZIEL said, his objections were not against the Duke of Connaught as a member of the Royal Family, but because he believed undue favour had been shown towards him.

COLONEL WARDE regretted that he had misunderstood the hon. Member. He, in common with the hon. Member, when he entered that House, took the oath of allegiance to the Sovereign, and he congratulated himself that the first opportunity he had of raising his voice in the House was for the purpose of protesting against the growing tendency of a portion of the community to belittle the services which any member of our Royal Family might have rendered to the State. He believed it would be a disastrous day for us when our people should cease to encourage the Royal Family to take an interest in or espouse the Service which in times gone by had done so much for the Empire.

MR. DALZIEL: As I did not move the reduction, may I do so now?

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A, Salaries, be reduced by £100."—(Mr. Dalziel.)

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping) said, he was sure it would be a subject of regret to hon. Members opposite if the Committee felt itself unable to accept the nomination of the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy and *The Spectator* newspaper for the rather important command at Aldershot. He rather thought the hon. Member had protested too much: he had set up a dummy, and then knocked it down again. He seemed to say that there was only one Lieutenant General in the Army—i.e., the Duke of Connaught. He could not think where the hon. Member got that idea.

MR. DALZIEL: I never made such a statement.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD said, he certainly understood that to be the view of the hon. Member; but, of course, he would withdraw the remark. The hon. Member was, no doubt, a most excellent Radical, but, as a soldier, he objected to his making the Aldershot command the cockpit of his political opinions. The hon. Member had stated that he did not make any allusion to the Duke of Connaught on personal grounds, or because he was a Prince of the Blood, but it certainly seemed to many Members of the Committee that the real objection was to be found that the Duke had what was supposed in these days the misfortune to be a Prince. Had there been in this country a law which, as in France, prevented the Princes of a certain dynasty holding Army appointments the objection might have been logical, but they were bound to bear in mind the fact that the Duke of Connaught accepted service in the Army under the belief that if he properly carried out the duties of any subordinate positions he might fill, and if he showed an aptitude for command, he would be eligible for higher and more responsible posts. The hon. Member for Peterborough made an unworthy insinuation the other day when he asked where was the Duke of Connaught at Tel-el-Kebir. The answer was that the Duke was where he was ordered to be. If ordered to the front he would have been there and done his duty, the same as any other Englishman.

MR. A. C. MORTON said, he had asked how far from, or how near to, the actual fighting the Duke was.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD said that was the *gravamen* of his complaint, for the insinuation was that the Duke was not in the fighting line. If ordered into the fighting line, the Duke would have been there; but it was impossible for all the Generals to indulge in a free fight to secure that position. As it was, the Duke had command of the Reserves, which was a position of extreme delicacy and importance. At one time it was said as a joke we only had one General; now the idea appeared to be that we only had two, but he was sure Lord Roberts would be the last man to insinuate that there were no other Generals perfectly able and fit for the command at Aldershot. It was hardly complimentary on the part of hon. Members opposite to interfere with the discretion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Stirling Burghs. He had always looked upon the Secretary of State for War as a strong Radical, a modern Cromwell; but he believed he was capable of exercising a wise discretion. He certainly was not a man likely to yield to Court pressure, as had been suggested, and beyond doubt he had filled the post with credit to himself and advantage to the Service. The hon. Member for Kirkcaldy had stated that the commanding officer at Aldershot should be an officer who had had experience of all branches of the Service. Well, the reply to that was, as the hon. and gallant Member for the Medway Division had stated, that the Duke had had exceptional advantages in that respect.

*MR. BURNIE (Swansea, Town) supported the Motion. He put to the Secretary of State for War the first question on this subject some time since with all sincerity, and without having any animus against the Duke. The replies given struck him as very unsatisfactory, and he was convinced, from what he had since heard, that whatever might be the arguments used by hon. Gentlemen that evening, the country would never be impressed with the idea that the appointment was a *bonâ fide* and a correct one. Questions had been put by the hon. Members for Gateshead and Peterborough with regard to the Duke's service at Portsmouth, the length of his

various leaves of absence, and his services in Egypt, but there was a practical question still more worthy of consideration in the interest of the Army itself. Aldershot, it should be remembered, was a training camp for active service. He did not desire to throw doubt upon the Duke's personal courage, but he was sure that if ever this country were again engaged in a great war, it would be thought undesirable, as a matter of State policy, to allow any Member of the Royal Family to take the command of the troops in the field, one State reason being that if our Army were by any chance discomfited while under the command of a Prince, the people might begin to find fault with the Court, and a very serious feeling might arise even against the Sovereign. Aldershot was one of the most important posts in the Service; the duties were most onerous, and surely it would have been better to have selected for the command the officer who had the greatest experience and training, and who had seen more active service. He was not there to champion the cause of Lord Roberts or anyone else. The appointment had been defended on the ground of seniority; but he could not help remembering that while the Duke of Connaught had reached the position of General in 25 years, it took Sir Donald Stewart 41 years, Sir Archibald Alison 43 years, Lord Chelmsford 44 years, and Lord Roberts 39 years. Was it likely that but for the accident of birth—that but for being a son of the Queen—the Duke would have had this rapid promotion? He knew it was stated that this being only a Lieutenant General's command the Duke would only receive the pay of a Lieutenant General. But was it likely he would be long content to receive £1,000 less a year than he was entitled to as a General? They could well understand the pressure that had been brought to bear on the right hon. Gentleman, and they regretted that he had not had the courage to withstand it. He seemed to have forgotten that he was a Member of one of the best Governments they had ever had, from a democratic point of view, and he did wish that the right hon. Gentleman, holding such a responsible position, had ignored the accident of birth, and had treated the Duke of Connaught as he would have treated any other officer. Had he done that, the Duke of Connaught would certainly not have received that

Colonel Lockwood

appointment. It had been suggested that if the Motion were carried the Secretary of State for War would resign. He hoped sincerely he would do nothing of the kind in such an event, for they all recognised his administrative ability and his geniality. Everything fitted him for the post he held; but certainly it would be better for a Minister to resign than for a Government to be wrecked. It would be regretted on all sides if the right hon. Gentleman took the Debate as a personal attack. That certainly was not the intention of those who had initiated it. They sympathised with the right hon. Gentleman in the position in which he was placed; but they felt bound to go into the Division Lobby against him, because they believed the appointment was in direct antagonism to democratic principles and a disadvantage to the Army.

*COLONEL MURRAY (Bath) said, he wished to remind the Committee that the Duke of Connaught had gone through every step of rank, from lieutenant to his present position, in the course of his 25 years' service, and had served in almost every branch of the Service. He had served for several years at Aldershot before in command of a brigade; he had held commands at Portsmouth and Bombay, and had served with the utmost distinction in every appointment he had held. The hon. Member had told them the Duke would never have had the appointment had he not been the Queen's son. The right hon. Gentleman had denied that impeachment, but the allegation exposed the real ground of the hostility to the appointment. The hon. Member for Peterborough asked the other day the exact distance the Duke was from the firing of the Egyptian troops. He believed the distance was not exactly measured in yards, but he could say that the Duke was under fire. He had himself seen the Duke marching and bivouacking before the enemy, constantly expecting attack, and it certainly was not the Duke's fault that the attack was not made. Besides, it should be borne in mind that an officer on active service might do valuable work without being constantly under fire. He would say nothing as to the suggestion that Lord Roberts should have been appointed. He had the advantage of serving under that distinguished officer in India. He had just relinquished a very important command, and there could be no

necessity for giving him another command immediately on his arrival in England. Further than that, Lord Roberts would, he felt sure, be the last person to find fault with this appointment.

*MR. A. C. MORTON said, he, like the hon. Member for Swansea, was dissatisfied with the appointment, not because the Duke was a Member of the Royal Family, but because he felt a better choice could have been made. Some days since he put on the spur of the moment a question as to the distance at which the Duke of Connaught was from the fire of the enemy at Tel-el-Kebir. He was now told that the Duke was actually under fire, but he was sorry to have to controvert the statements of military gentlemen opposite, because they did not seem to know anything about the matter.

COLONEL MURRAY: I may inform the hon. Gentleman that I was present on that occasion.

*MR. A. C. MORTON said, that the testimony of the hon. and gallant Gentleman did not coincide with the information he had from another gentleman who was present. He had in his hands the statement as to the events previous to the battle of Tel-el-Kebir, showing the exact position of the troops.

ADMIRAL FIELD: Are we called upon to discuss the Egyptian Campaign?

*MR. A. C. MORTON, continuing, said, that the Duke of Connaught was ordered into the rear with the Brigade of Guards, which was in the fighting line, and did not take any part in the advance of that night. An Irish regiment took the place of his brigade in the fighting line.

MR. HARE (Norfolk, S.W.): I was present myself, and that account is incorrect. The hon. Gentleman's informant seems to be mixing up the battle of Kassassin with the battle of Tel-el-Kebir. The battle of Tel-el-Kebir took place about sunrise. The Duke of Connaught commanded the brigade in which I served, and he was certainly under fire.

*MR. A. C. MORTON, of course, accepted what the hon. and gallant Gentleman said, but his information was not exactly the same. However, he did not want to go any further into the matter. He did not blame the Royal Duke. If he had been in his position, and with his prospects, he did not think he would have got any nearer the real fighting than the Duke did. But, with respect to the Alder-

shot command, he did not wish to treat it as if it were the case of Lord Roberts. The Committee had a right to criticise any Government who made a bad appointment to an important office. He did not say that they had a right to force Lord Roberts on the Army or on the Government; but they had a right, when they considered a bad appointment had been made, to protest against the appointment, especially if they thought it was done as a matter of favour. Their duty as Radicals was to fight against privilege, and to do away with privilege in this country. Every man—and woman, if they liked—should be treated according to their merits and not according to their birth, and therefore for all such appointments the best men should be selected. If he were a military man he should consider the pushing aside of capable soldiers and the selection of the Duke of Connaught for the Aldershot command as an affront. He was surprised that military men had not spirit enough to resent such a state of things. It was more insulting to military men than to anybody else. He believed they had good, capable military men in the country whose services ought to be recognised; and they should insist that when honours and emoluments were to be given away they should be given to men who did the real work and who could be depended on in case of need. There was a strong belief entertained that the appointment of the Duke of Connaught to Aldershot was but a step in the direction of making him Commander-in-Chief. One of the most important recommendations of the Royal Commission, over which Lord Hartington had presided, was that the office of Commander-in-Chief should be abolished; and that the Secretary of State for War, who was responsible to the House and the country, should be the real head of the Army. He would, therefore, like to hear from his right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for War whether the Government intended to carry out the recommendations of the Royal Commission?

*MR. BUCKNILL (Surrey, Epsom) said, the discussion had been interesting and amusing. He was quite prepared to take as his text the words of the hon. Member for Peterborough—"A Member of the Royal Family should be placed on the same footing as any other officer in the Army."

Mr. A. C. Morton

*MR. A. C. MORTON; I said, "any other citizen."

*MR. BUCKNILL said, the officers of the Army were generally citizens. He had yet to learn that any special favour had been shown to the Duke of Connaught. That really was the point; for if the Duke was a competent officer to hold the appointment which had been given to him, there could not in reason be any ground for complaint. They had heard of the qualifications of the Duke as a soldier from hon. Members well entitled to speak on the subject; and he, too, was personally aware that the Duke had qualified himself at Woolwich with distinction for service in the Royal Engineers and the Artillery. The fact was that the Duke was probably more highly educated as a soldier, outside the battlefield, than any man in the Army, and, therefore, absolutely competent in every respect for the Aldershot command. There was not a single Member in the House that could suggest that the Duke of Connaught was not an excellent officer, or a most popular officer, or a most industrious officer. It was said that the opposition to the appointment was non-political. He should say, with all respect, that he did not believe it. Hon. Members opposite knew perfectly well that these appointments were not always given by seniority. The hon. Member for Peterborough had quoted history in an amusing fashion. The hon. Member spoke about the campaign in Bombay.

*MR. A. C. MORTON: I did not say a word about the campaign in Bombay. I spoke about the Bombay command.

*MR. BUCKNILL said, he had taken down the words of the hon. Gentleman, and he was in the recollection of the Committee. When hon. Members got up to make speeches on delicate matters like this they should be particularly careful of the language they used. The hon. Member had also declared that he did not press the case of Lord Roberts. They all agreed as to the distinguished career of Lord Roberts, and if Lord Roberts had received this appointment the whole country would have been satisfied. But if the hon. Member did not press the case of Lord Roberts he was left only with the plea of the incompetence of the Duke of Connaught. The hon. Member could not get away from that logically. And if the hon. Member did not press the case of Lord Roberts, and could not make good

the incompetence of the Duke of Connaught, where was he? Logically, he was on his back. The hon. Member for Kirkcaldy had said that all he wanted was fair play for all. He quite agreed with that sentiment. Let there be fair play to all; and let them not be unfair to a man because he happened to be a Prince of the Royal Blood. The real objection to the appointment was that the Duke was of the Royal Blood, though hon. Members opposite had not the courage to say it in so many words. They said the Duke was unfit for the command at Aldershot. He believed hon. Members did not really know what sort of a place Aldershot was. He did, for he had been there scores of times. Aldershot was a large training establishment, and, of course, of great importance as a military station; and if the Duke of Connaught—as had been admitted to be the case—was going to visit his post daily to discharge his daily duties, was it not a miserable plea to complain that he was going to live in a house a few miles off? The hon. Member for Kirkcaldy seemed to hold three briefs in this matter. Did he hold a brief for Lord Roberts? Did he hold a brief against the Duke of Connaught? Did he hold a brief for the rest of the British Army?

MR. DALZIEL: For the country.

***MR. BUCKNILL** said, the hon. Member said he held a brief for the country. He was reminded of what had been said in another place—"What did the country know about the hon. Member?" What instructions had the hon. Member from the country to make the statements he had made? To him, as a Tory, it was not altogether unagreeable to see the Government attacked by its own supporters; but as he considered the complaints against the appointment of the Duke of Connaught groundless and unjust, if there was a Division he would have great pleasure in supporting the Government.

***MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN:** It is with no small satisfaction that I find this opportunity provided for me of explaining more fully than I have had yet occasion to do the full and true circumstances of this case. The questions that have been from time to time addressed to me on this subject were questions of fact, and I answered them as such; and I find that I was gibbeted in certain newspapers as having

given a wretched and poor account of it, no adequate reason, and a bald and altogether disappointing story. I gave no story. I only answered individual interrogations put to me. I will, at all events, take this occasion to correct an error into which a phrase I have used apparently induced some to fall. I said that the Duke of Connaught was selected for this command by the Commander-in-Chief, and it was immediately said—"Oh, yes, by his own cousin; and the Secretary of State for War is so poor a creature that he was not able to resist the Commander-in-Chief. Everyone who knows anything about it is aware that all the higher appointments and promotions in the Army are made subject to the approval of the Secretary of State for War. Every one of them has to receive my initials before it can be acted upon; and in the case of all the more prominent appointments such as this one, the selection, although made by the Commander-in-Chief—for that is the proper and official phraseology to use—is discussed and considered beforehand between the Commander-in-Chief and the Secretary of State, and it is with the Secretary of State's full consent and authority that the Commander-in-Chief submits the appointment to him for his formal approval. Therefore, this appointment is not the appointment of the Commander-in-Chief, but of the Secretary of State. I have every whit as full and as direct a responsibility in the matter as the Duke of Cambridge, and even in some respects a more direct and higher responsibility; and, therefore, I am glad now to say why it was that this appointment was made. The Committee might have expected to hear two objections raised to this appointment. First, because the Duke of Connaught is the son of the Queen; but that view of the question has been repudiated. It was also supposed that the attack might have been grounded on the theory that Lord Roberts would have been the proper appointment; but, again, the hon. Member who moved the reduction, although he dwelt on that side of the question, dissociated himself from any intention to bring prominently forward the name of Lord Roberts. I think there are three considerations to which the Committee might be invited to look. First of all, there is the question of the fitness of the Duke of Connaught for the

command; next, the question of seniority; and, lastly, the question of alternative. As to the fitness of the Duke of Connaught for this command, I say that, to the best of my knowledge, military judgment is not divided on the subject at all. I have not been able to learn any opinion of any consequence in any quarter which would condemn the appointment. From the private soldier up to the General, through all ranks of the Army, the opinion is, and it has been expressed to me fully from quarters quite outside the circle of my military advisers, that he is admirably fitted in every respect for the post. I received a letter the other day from a distinguished General who is on the Retired List, and therefore of whom it cannot be said that he had anything to gain or lose by expressing his opinion—a General of whom I will say that he is about as competent a judge as exists in the country from his experience of warfare in Europe and Asia. My correspondent, after stating that the Duke had been grounded in every branch of the Profession, said—

"He has always shown special aptitude for the tactical training and instruction of troops, and he is, therefore, in all respects the General Officer of all others specially fitted for the command of a camp like Aldershot."

That is only one opinion among many. As to the contention of the hon. Member for Peterborough, that an officer should have been under fire in some engagement in order adequately to fill such a position as this, the view appears to be taken by the hon. Member that it is the duty of a General to prance on a horse in front of the assembled Armies, and and to reproduce what we are familiar with as the tactics of the days of the Trojan War, by challenging some leader on the other side to mortal combat. I may be allowed to make my contribution to the history of what occurred at Tel-el-Kebir, and I share with my hon. Friend the Member for Peterborough the advantage of being entirely innocent of any personal experience in the matter. Lord Wolseley's plan of attack was to advance against the entrenchments in two lines. The first line was to deliver the attack; the second line was to be in reserve and follow it up if the first line was repulsed. The Duke of Connaught was in the second line, and most soldiers will agree that the chances were that the second line would have quite as much of the fighting as the first. The first line delivered the

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attack before 6 o'clock in the morning, when it was still dark. The Egyptian soldiers fired right manfully, but it being dark, and their rifles being sighted for a long distance, the whole of their fire for many minutes fell on the second line, and the Duke of Connaught, who, according to the hon. Member, was in a place of perfect safety, had his orderly bugler wounded beside him, which was proof that he was not altogether out of the range of fire. But this aspect of the case is really beside the mark. He is not any better nor any worse for having been under fire. He is a good deal the better, however, because of his having commanded a brigade in that short campaign, because the duties of a General's command are not limited to the mere moment of combat, but involve all the responsibilities, through many days, of providing for, and preparing, and bringing up, the troops under him. Besides, the Duke's experience in India has been extensive. He commanded a Division in India, and he subsequently commanded the forces in the Bombay Presidency. I have heard this spoken lightly of to-night. All that I can say is that again and again I have heard from officers who served in the Bombay Presidency at the time, not only of his great popularity and of his mastery of his profession, but of the enormous pains he took to discharge his duties. I have been informed that he learned the native language in order to be able to communicate more freely and easily with the native troops under his command, and in every respect he devoted himself with great zeal and success to all the duties which fell to his lot. This constitutes quite a sufficient experience and qualification for such a command as Aldershot. The Aldershot command has been magnified in the public Press and this House as if it were some command of immense dignity. It is a place of drill and training, and, therefore, the qualities of tactical instruction and training possessed by the Duke emphatically justify the appointment. I wish also to point out that Aldershot is a place which is peculiarly under the eye and superintendence of the Headquarter's Staff. The Commander-in-Chief and the Adjutant General are constantly there and constantly superintending and advising, and—I say it in no offensive sense—interfering with the General Commanding the troops, and on

that account also it is not a place of such dignity as some others that might be named. These, then, are his qualifications: The Duke of Connaught has worked hard at his profession while he has been in the Army, and with great success; but apparently—not in this House, I am glad to say, but out of it—he is held to possess one disqualification—that, namely, of being the son of the Queen. Instead of that being a disqualification, we ought to rejoice that a son of the Queen should be in a position to be even thought of for such a command; we should rejoice that, instead of devoting himself to a life of ease and self-indulgence, as he might have done, he has lived this hard and useful life in the service of his country. Therefore, I say that the best opinion that I can obtain amply justifies this selection. But selection was not necessary. I am not afraid of selection, and I am quite prepared to dip pretty low down in the list in order to get a better man than can be found at the top of it. I can appeal to the case, referred to to-night, of the appointment of Sir George White, who was only a Major General, to the command of the forces in India. There was no necessity to dip on this occasion. I took the Generals' List as I found it. Aldershot being a Lieutenant General's command, to hold which Generals are eligible, I looked down the list to see who was the senior officer who was fit to hold this command. The condition of the list was this: Above the Duke of Connaught there were 15 Generals. One is Lord Roberts, of whom I shall speak afterwards. There were three Marine officers and three Staff Corps officers, who are not eligible; and taking these seven from the 15 there remain eight. One of these is commanding in Ireland, and the other is the Governor of Gibraltar, both higher positions. That leaves six. Of these there is one in Parliament, my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Oxford (Sir G. Chesney). He is a most distinguished man in every way; but if I may use a homely phrase, he is not "in the running" for such an appointment, and does not desire to obtain it. That leaves five. Three of this number are within a short time of being superannuated—that is to say, they will be over age within the next year or so—and it would be absurd to appoint any officer to this command who would have to vacate it within a year or so. That leaves two,

who were in one sense eligible for this appointment; but they are engaged upon duties which they are performing so well that they ought not to be removed. One is the Lieutenant Governor of Guernsey, and the other is the Inspector General of Recruiting. And the next officer on the list is the Duke of Connaught. We are told that this is a job, but actually he is the senior officer on the Generals' List available for appointment to this command. He was recommended to me upon all hands, as I have said, by military opinion—I did not consult lay opinion—as being, I will not say the best officer in the whole Army, but certainly fully adequate to the duties of this position. I think the Committee will agree that I, at least, cannot be accused of any favouritism or jobbery. Then I come to a point which has been raised by my hon. Friend the Member for Peterborough, and which I believe to be one which exercises the minds of some persons interested in this question. It has been said that this is nothing but a stepping-stone towards the Duke of Connaught's appointment to the Office of Commander-in-Chief of the Army at headquarters. I think it may not be without its use if I read a very short extract from the Report of the Hartington Commission on this subject. The Hartington Commission was not an ordinary Royal Commission in this sense: that it was appointed to consider the organisation of the War Office and the Admiralty, and there were upon it three men who had held the Office of Secretary of State for War. They were Lord Hartington himself, Mr. W. H. Smith, and myself, and there was also Lord Randolph Churchill, who had been Secretary of State for India and Chancellor of the Exchequer. So that from the point of view of these two Benches, and of official experience, and of what could be considered good opportunity for judgment in the matter, you could not have a stronger or more authoritative Commission. What did that Commission unanimously, with one exception, say? The one exception was my hon. Friend the Member for Kingston, who disagreed with us on this very point, and thought that the Commander-in-Chief's Office ought to be continued. The Report says—

"While we have considered it necessary to indicate the defects in principle which exist in the present organisation of the War Depart-

ment, we recognise that the unique position so long held by the present Commander-in-Chief may have rendered it undesirable to adopt any other system in making the recent changes, and that his great experience may have enabled the existing system to work with the success claimed for it during the short period from which it has been in operation. His Royal Highness has on all occasions accepted with the greatest loyalty the changes which successive Secretaries of State have thought it right to introduce, and he has brought to bear upon the work at the War Office a personal popularity with the Army in general which cannot fail to be of public advantage. But it is clear that no possible successor could enjoy a position and influence which years of service to the State are alone capable of establishing. We, therefore, proceed to indicate the general lines upon which we think that the administration of the War Office should be based, and towards which, at the occurrence of a vacancy in the Office of Commander-in-Chief, or at any favourable opportunity future changes should be directed. . . . It has been contended that the existence of the Office of Commander-in-Chief in its present form is essential to the maintenance of the Royal Prerogative of the Sovereign as head of the Army. We are unable to accept this view. The question of the Constitutional relations in regard to Army matters of the Sovereign, the Secretary of State for War, and the Commander-in-Chief was, as we have already stated, fully discussed by Committees of the House of Commons of 1860, and their conclusion, in which we fully concur, appears to have been distinct, that the authority of the Sovereign over the Army could only be exercised, in the same way as any other power of the Crown, through a responsible Minister; and that no Constitutional question would be involved in any change which it might be thought desirable to make in the Office of Commander-in-Chief."

And then the decision is this—

"It will thus be seen that, for reasons independent of and additional to those which have led us to propose the creation of an organising and consultative department, freed from executive and administrative functions, we are of opinion that the permanent retention of the Office of Commander-in-Chief, as it now exists, should not form a part of the future constitution of the War Department."

I quote this in order to make more emphatic the position in which we stand. That recommendation of the Royal Commission was assented to by four Secretaries of State and ex-Secretaries of State, three of whom had been Secretaries of State for War. I cannot conceive, therefore, that any appointment of a permanent nature to the position of Commander-in-Chief of the Army can henceforth be made. Now I come to the third point, and that is the alternative. I have been told that Lord Roberts ought to have been appointed, and that what I said about the dignity of the office he had just quitted was a mere excuse.

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Was it a mere excuse? I think I am justified in entering a protest against the introduction of Lord Roberts's name. I do not know—I will not say I do not know—I am certain, that this has been done without the knowledge or the cognisance, and probably in the face of the remonstrances, of Lord Roberts himself. Lord Roberts has had a most distinguished career. As we all know, he has been most fortunate in his opportunities of distinguishing himself, and he has taken ample advantage of them. The result is, that he has come comparatively early to the top of the tree; and the worst of it is that, when you get to the top of the tree, there is no further tree to go up. That is precisely Lord Roberts's position. Several Commanders-in-Chief have come back from India at even an earlier age than Lord Roberts. Sir William Mansfield came back at 50, and he was so much impressed with the fact that there was no employment of much consequence for him, except in the case of war, that he actually contemplated taking other employment away from military service. For a Commander-in-Chief coming back from India there are open only three appointments—the command in Ireland and the Governorships of Malta and Gibraltar. To put Lord Roberts—however willing he might be to take it—in command at Aldershot, after having set in order the Armies of India, to bring him down to a drill-master's position, immediately under the supervision of other officers, would be an indignity. You would never expect a Lord Chancellor, his term of Office being over, to accept the position of a Puisne Judge; and these questions of etiquette are peculiarly strong in the Army. I will put a test case. The Quartermaster Generalship of the Army has just been filled. I have some reason to know that Lord Roberts declined that office many years ago. The officer who has been appointed to that post is the officer who retired from the command at Aldershot, so that if Lord Roberts would not accept the position of Quartermaster General, *à fortiori* it would be unbecoming to propose that he should accept the command at Aldershot. I am most anxious, as I am sure everybody must be, to take the fullest benefit of the capacity and experience of Lord Roberts, but we cannot create an appointment for him. Let me mention

this: If he had been appointed to the command at Aldershot an office would have had to be created for him, as it would have to be made a General's command at an increased cost of about £1,000 a year, because an officer who has had a General's command cannot come down to a Lieutenant General's. As I have said before, it was absolutely impossible to contemplate that course; therefore, I never regarded him as available. The Duke of Connaught, I have said, is the best officer for the appointment, or, at any rate, as good as any other. I have endeavoured to do all honour and all respect to Lord Roberts, and not only offered him a vacant Governorship, but the reversion of another Governorship which was likely to be vacant. And I really deprecate and deplore all these personal contrasts, for which I am not responsible, and which, I am sure, Lord Roberts has not raised. I am satisfied, at all events, that this is the best appointment, and that it has been made on its merits in the interests of the Army; and I end, as I began, by saying that I am personally fully responsible for it, and I look with confidence to the decision of the Committee.

*MR. A. C. MORTON: Do I understand that in the case of the death or resignation of the Duke of Cambridge the position of Commander-in-Chief of the Forces would not be refilled?

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Certainly, according to the decision of this Committee.

MR. E. STANHOPE: When I first heard the speech of the Member for the Kirkcaldy Burghs I had considerable doubt whether it was necessary to take part in the Debate, because I am bound to say I never heard him discuss a subject with greater tact. But, at the same time, the upshot of his speech was that the Duke of Connaught was not competent for the command at Aldershot. It fell to my lot to have to make an appointment to the command of the Southern District in England, and that appointment was just vacant when the Duke of Connaught returned from India. I had to make inquiries as to his competence, as to the manner in which he had discharged his duties in India, and as to the way in which he had done his work in any other place. From all quarters, and from every military authority to whom I applied, I obtained information that the

Duke of Connaught had done all the work entrusted to him in a thoroughly competent manner. Everybody knows quite well what the experience of the Duke of Connaught was in India; and after he came back from India it was in the full knowledge of everybody that he had not only done his work well, but had earned the love of all those who served under him, and even of the natives also. And if he was thoroughly competent to be appointed to the Southern District, now that another appointment has become vacant, nothing has since occurred which renders him unqualified for Aldershot. Unfortunately, the name of Lord Roberts has also been introduced. Upon this side of the House I am quite sure that we entertain the highest opinions of the merits of Lord Roberts. So far as I am personally concerned, I can claim to have a very high opinion of his services, because I differ from the right hon. Gentleman in thinking that there is one other post to which a man who has served in India might be appointed, and that is the post of Adjutant General. I think, upon the whole, that no man was more thoroughly qualified to fill the office of Adjutant General than Lord Roberts. Therefore, it was with the consent of my colleagues that I proposed, when a vacancy occurred, to ask Lord Roberts to take up the duties. It so happened that circumstances occurred which rendered that appointment impossible, and I had to ask Lord Roberts to continue the excellent work he was carrying on in India which, with that thoroughly patriotic spirit which he has always shown, he was ready and willing to do, and he undertook those duties and, very much to the advantage of the country, continued them until a recent period. I deprecate altogether the trying to draw comparisons between this officer and another. My belief is that the choice must be left to the Executive Government. Certainly I am not prepared to interfere with the exercise of the discretion of the Executive Government, and I believe they have chosen for the post a man thoroughly competent to perform its duties, and I hope and believe that the House generally will endorse that verdict.

*SIR C. W. DE FOR V. (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) the proper half of the matter could be put in without no offence to that long speaker.

He wished to state briefly the considerations which had made it very difficult to decide which way he ought to vote on this occasion. He entirely rejected, so far as he was concerned, what had been made to form so large a portion of the Debate—namely, the personal question as between Lord Roberts and His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught. He did, however, think the words “derogatory” and “indignity,” which had been used so much by the Secretary of State for War with regard to the offer of the Aldershot command to General Lord Roberts, were rather strong words, seeing that Lord Roberts himself was willing to take the appointment. That appointment was, however, outside the real issue. Another question he wished to put aside was with regard to the future Commander-in-Chief, for there was no doubt that the position in its present shape would not in the future continue to exist, especially after the Report of the Hartington Commission. He had himself never thought that the position would be renewed in its present shape. Of course, it might be continued in a reduced form, but at any rate it would have to be changed considerably, and could, therefore, be dismissed at present from their minds. The real question, he thought, was a very limited one. The Secretary of State for War had defended the appointment because the Duke of Connaught possessed sufficient qualifications, and the late Secretary of State for War had also expressed the opinion that the Duke of Connaught was competent for the post. If that had been the sole question, he was bound to say that he should have supported the Government, but there was another point to which he would like to refer. Aldershot was a training school not only for the men and regimental officers there employed and for the battalions, but also for the Generals Commanding. It might, indeed, be said to be the only school in the United Kingdom where a General Officer could obtain experience in commanding men in battle, and, therefore, only officers who were likely to command Armies in case of serious war ought to be put in command of such a place. Was it likely that the Duke of Connaught, under the circumstances, could be called upon to take the command of the Army? He had just quitted was? He did not

believe that any King or Cabinet would think for a moment of entrusting the chief command to any Member of the Royal Family. Political considerations would be overwhelming in such a case, and it was with that firm belief that he had made up his mind to support the view which had been put forward by his hon. Friend.

MR. JEFFREYS (Hants, Basingstoke) observed that it would, no doubt, be interesting to the Committee to learn what were the feelings of the soldiers themselves as to this appointment. He had a good many constituents, both officers and private soldiers, and he had taken some trouble to learn how they regarded this appointment. He was glad to say that both officers and privates were united in receiving with the greatest approbation the appointment made.

SIR H. FLETCHER (Sussex, Lewes) asked permission to say a few words as, perhaps, the oldest military officer at that moment sitting in the House. He wished, in the first place, to thank the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War for the manner in which he had spoken that evening in reply to the attack which had been made upon the Duke of Connaught; and he wished, as a personal friend of His Royal Highness during some years past, to confirm all that had been said as to his capacity. He (Sir H. Fletcher) had watched the Duke's military career from the very commencement, and he could endorse every word which the Secretary of State for War had said as to his fitness for the post to which he had been appointed. The right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean had stated that in case of war no Member of the Royal Family would be asked to take command of the British troops; but he, as one who had served in the Army both before and during the Crimea, might remind the House that in the course of that campaign the Duke of Cambridge commanded the First Division of the Army. He felt sure the Army would feel indebted to the Secretary of State for War for the kind but just words which he had used respecting the Duke of Connaught, and he assured the Government that if a Division were persisted in they would receive the support of his hon. and gallant Friends on that side.

MAJOR RASCH said, that most people would admit the eminent qualifications

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of His Royal Highness; and those who had served with him, as he had, would allow that he was a good soldier. But these were not the sole qualifications for an Aldershot command. As the right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean had stated, Aldershot was the practical training school for the British Army. It was the headquarters of the First Army Corps, and the place from which almost all the troops were sent on foreign service. He thought if the Duke of Connaught, instead of being a General had been a Colonel, as most men of his age in the Service were, he would not have had much chance of ever being promoted to this command. He did not think these arrangements were in the interests of the Service or of the country. He remembered some years ago, when he was only a subaltern in the Carbineers, although he was recommended for promotion by his Colonel, yet he was superseded by a gentleman who was a personal friend of an illustrious individual. He was pretty sure that did not do much good to the regiment in which he served, and he knew it put a termination to his own military career. He thought the Secretary of State for War rather gave himself away by saying the Duke of Connaught was the senior officer, and ought to get this berth. The Duke of Connaught was senior, because he had been promoted by leaps and bounds. He had the greatest respect for His Royal Highness, both as a man and a soldier, but as he did not regard these arrangements as being in the interests of the Service he should support the Amendment.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 39;
Noes 156.—(Division List, No. 302.)

Original Question again proposed.

ADMIRAL FIELD said, he had a Notice on the Paper to move a reduction in the salary of the Secretary of State for War. He did not propose to move that reduction, but he wished to call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to a case revealed in the Report of the Committee on Public Accounts with regard to the loss of stores in South Africa, and to the allegations made against Major Richards who had charge of these stores. He wished to say he knew nothing of Major Richards personally, and he had never heard of his

name till he became aware of the facts of the case from the Report of the Public Accounts Committee. On looking into the case, however, he found it was one of great hardship. He had questioned the Secretary of State for War on the subject, but had not received satisfactory answers, and he now urged the right hon. Gentleman to do justice in the matter. The facts of the case were these: Major Richards had the misfortune to have charge of stores in three stations in South Africa which were something like 50 miles apart, and, of course, it was impossible for him to be in three places at once. He had made repeated applications for clerical assistance, which had not been acceded to, and yet he was made responsible for the loss of the stores, and in consequence of such loss was placed on reduced half-pay of 4s. 6d. a day. It was clear from the Report to which he referred that the first loss of stores was due to what was called "gun running"—namely, the stealing of rifles by the natives, which no man could prevent. Application was made to the Treasury to wipe off that loss, which application was declined. Shortly after that the Secretary of State for War and the Commander-in-Chief applied to have this unhappy officer re-employed, after being placed on reduced half-pay of 4s. 6d. a day; but the Treasury declined to permit of his re-employment, and the man had remained on reduced half-pay ever since. On the stores being taken over by Major Richards' successor a further deficiency was found, and he believed that was the reason why the poor man had been kept on half-pay. But they had the Commander-in-Chief, who was the judge of the facts, stating—and the Secretary of State for War agreeing with him—that it was a case where the man might even have been re-employed; therefore the Treasury were out of court in attempting to hold Major Richards responsible for that first loss, representing a value of £336. There was a further deficiency to the extent of £400 on Major Richards' successor taking up the duty, and the late Secretary of State for War, anxious, he supposed, to get this sum of money written off, did not press any further application on behalf of this unhappy officer. He regretted the Secretary of State for War did not place the man on the proper half-pay of his rank, for he committed no offence that

would bring him under the rules of Army discipline. There was no imputation on Major Richards' honour; and if the view was taken that he should be made pecuniarily responsible for the loss of the stores, then having been punished for three years by the loss of 6s. a day, he was not sure whether, calculated at compound interest, the Treasury had not recovered the whole of the money. The hon. and gallant Gentleman proceeded to quote from the evidence of official witnesses at the inquiry before the Committee to show that the losses attributed to the officer in question mainly existed on paper, being attributable in some cases to clerical errors, and were not really substantial; while, as a matter of fact, this officer was absent from his storehouses for a month at a time on active service, and three important military expeditions were conducted during his term of office. He contended that under these circumstances it was an act of the grossest injustice to deprive this officer of his half-pay. There was no charge against Major Richards' honour, and it was shameful to treat him in this way. He (Admiral Field) had taken up this case out of pure compassion for the unhappy man, who appeared to have no friends anywhere, and he earnestly hoped the Secretary of State for War would see that he should now receive his proper half-pay, especially considering the fact that after a very few more years' service Major Richards would have been entitled to £1 per day, and that he had been reduced to this miserable pittance of 4s. 6d. a day for losses which, by the evidence of the Government's own official witnesses, he could not prevent.

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, the hon. and gallant Member had asked him a question on this subject some time ago. The case occurred before he came to the War Office under the present Government, but he had looked into it, and was perfectly satisfied as to the decision. Before the offence occurred which was now referred to, this officer had been twice censured in consequence of the unsatisfactory manner in which his duties had been discharged. Stores under his charge had been stolen, and it was found that the examination by him had been most superficial. The stores had been left in the hands of subordinate persons. Notwithstanding this, there

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desire to regard with leniency what had occurred owing to the special circumstances of duty in the Transvaal; but subsequently considerable deficiencies were again discovered in the stores, and his predecessor had decided that Major Richards could not again be placed in responsible charge of stores. No other course was open in the circumstances except to remove his name from the effective list; but the officer was granted the highest pension which he could receive under existing warrants.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping) said, he desired to call attention to the question of counsel being allowed to appear before District Courts Martial on private soldiers, in the same way as at General Courts Martial. The hon. Member for Roxburghshire had previously brought this matter forward, and he recognised that the hon. Member was animated by the idea of obtaining justice for the private soldier. But beyond the broad question of justice he thought some rather delicate questions of military discipline arose. At the present moment, though counsel were permitted to appear for the private soldier before a District Court Martial, he was not allowed to put his cross-examination straight to the witness, but had to appear as what was called the friend of the prisoner, and had to conduct the examination through another person's mouth. The right hon. Gentleman knew how difficult the responsibility of the Commanding Officer had become in recent years, and he was sure he was not anxious to do anything that would unnecessarily increase that responsibility. He had consulted several high authorities on the subject of Courts Martial; and they were all, with one exception, agreed that if this change were carried out it would be extremely detrimental to the well-being of the Service, as District Courts Martial were almost invariably composed of officers of much less experience than those at General Courts Martial, and would probably find their task a difficult one with counsel.

*THE CHAIRMAN pointed out that the observations of the hon. Member ought to have been made on the Vote for Martial Law.

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, that the answer he had given on this subject was not a hap-hazard one. He quite appreciated all that the hon.

and gallant Member had said, but, on the whole, he thought it would be desirable to extend the powers of the soldier's friend in the District Court Martial, especially where a soldier was tried in relation to his accounts. He appealed to the Committee to allow the Vote to pass.

MR. BRODRICK (Surrey, Guildford) said, the conversation which had just taken place reminded him of a long and interesting Sitting when the right hon. Gentleman promised that the Army Act should be reprinted. They asked him to carry that out within a month.

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, he did not think they were asked to carry it out within a month. He had no recollection of that. It was done by the Stationery Office, and it had been in their hands. He had asked about it once or twice.

MR. BRODRICK: At all events, we may hope to have it before we vote the Army Annual Bill next year?

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I hope so.

MR. JEFFREYS (Hants, Basingstoke) said, he wished to call attention to the complaint of the Cavalry who were placed under canvas, because of the dispute between them and a Line regiment at Aldershot, that they were denied the allowances usually given to men placed under canvas. It was quite contrary to the Regulations that they should be denied extra allowances when they had not been tried by Court Martial. If the proceeding were illegal some notice ought to be taken of it.

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, he did not remember all the details of this question, but the opinion of the officer in command at Aldershot, and of others, was that the right course had been taken, and that no extra charge ought to be thrown on the public because of the conduct of the men themselves.

COLONEL MURRAY (Bath) asked for information as to the working of the new system of appointing officers of the non-combatant branches of the Army to the General Staff. He thought that the welding of these different branches would give rise to confusion on active service.

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, his attention had not been particularly directed to the question. He had not heard anything to lead him to think with the hon. and gallant Member.

MR. COHEN (Islington, E.) drew attention to the position of the Second Division clerks, and hoped an assurance would be given that the engagements entered into with them would be kept.

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, he had obtained with great difficulty from the Treasury seven promotions to the upper grade, which was one of the principal things that were asked for. He had also endeavoured to find out whether any Staff posts could be found to which they could be appointed, but, of course, it was impossible for him to create Staff posts on purpose. He had every desire to do all he could to meet the wishes of the Second Division clerks.

MR. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough) said, that some months ago he asked the right hon. Gentleman several questions in reference to the Adjutant General and the 2nd Battalion Coldstream Guards, then at the Tower. It appeared that according to the Queen's Regulations the Commanding Officer might reprimand, or severely reprimand, a non-commissioned officer, but not punish him in any other way; but it appeared also that when the Commanding Officer either reprimanded, or severely reprimanded, he made the non-commissioned officer forfeit his indulgences, which appeared to him to be contrary to the Regulations, although possibly within the power of the Commanding Officer.

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, that he remembered looking into this matter, and finding that the action of the Commanding Officer was, in the opinion of his military advisers, perfectly regular, and in accordance with military practice. The indulgences were entirely at the option of the Commanding Officer. He would, however, look into the matter again.

MR. E. STANHOPE desired to know whether the hon. Member who had given notice of an attack on the Chaplain General was going to bring his Motion on? For the last 18 months or more the Chaplain General had been the subject of bitter attacks in the newspapers and elsewhere; and as yet no opportunity had been given of answering the attacks. It was most cowardly conduct; and as far as he knew the charges were quite unfounded. He desired to defend the Chaplain General to the fullest extent.

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, that his hon. Friend had spoken to

him on this subject, and asked him to support the case on which his Notice of Motion was based. This he refused to his hon. Friend, and added that he did not see any reason for re-opening the question. On the strength of that answer his hon. Friend had gone away and abandoned the intention of bringing on his Motion.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

2. Motion made, and Question proposed,

“That a sum, not exceeding £560,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay and Allowances (exclusive of Supplies, Clothing, &c.) of the Militia (to a number not exceeding 135,546, including 30,000 Militia Reserve), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894.”

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.) asked whether the five years' Rule in connection with officers commanding Militia battalions was now carried out, and would be carried out in future?

SIR A. HAYTER (Walsall) asked whether the Secretary of State for War could not raise the number of men who joined the Militia Reserve from 30,000, as he did not see any use in that fixed number?

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, that in regard to the five years' appointments, he had not inquired into that matter. He was under the impression that they were five years' appointments now. He was certainly in favour of shortening the period. The matter mentioned respecting the Militia Reserve might also be considered.

MR. E. STANHOPE said, he had seen in the newspapers recently a proposal to assist men on the Island of St. Helena to emigrate to the Cape. All Committees that had considered the subject were of opinion that they should depend upon St. Helena for local Militia, but it was said—“You cannot get the men to join. They want to go away, and if you impose compulsory service you will drive the men away from the Island.” He did not think these dismal anticipations had been realised so far. He was told that owing to distress on the Island a certain portion of the inhabitants were likely to run away from it; at any rate, it was desirable that some statement should be made on the subject by the Government. Then, he desired to know what steps were being taken to arm the Militia with the new magazine rifle? Everyone agreed

that it was desirable to give this force the new rifle. There were great difficulties in the way, the greatest of which was that in many cases there were not at present ranges where the Militia could shoot with the new rifle. At the same time, he put it to the right hon. Gentleman most seriously whether it was not possible to at least arm that portion of the Militia which was included in the Third Army Corps with the new weapon?

MR. COCHRANE asked whether it was not possible to increase the number of non-commissioned officers on the permanent Staff during the period of training? The regiment with which he had the honour to be connected had only 20 on its permanent Staff—although there were 800 privates to be drilled—and of these 20 there were always five or six away acting as canteen sergeant, mess sergeant, and so on. The result was that 50, 60, or 100 men had to be drilled by one non-commissioned officer, and that was far from satisfactory. Would it not be possible for regiments that did not happen to be training to supply non-commissioned officers to regiments in training?

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, he would look into the last point mentioned. With regard to the magazine rifle, he had not the figures at hand as to the number available for the Militia, but he fully realised the importance of completing the work as soon as possible, especially in respect to those regiments which the right hon. Gentleman opposite had referred to. The story concerning the St. Helena Militia was very amusing, almost comic. The upshot was this—they found that if they were to substitute a Militia there for the Regular troops in order to man the fortifications they must have Regular troops in order to create the Militia. Unless they had Regular troops there they were told the inhabitants would leave the Island *en masse*, so that they must keep Regular troops in order to maintain a population out of which could be enlisted a Militia to take the place of the Regular troops.

MR. BRODRICK wished to know whether the right hon. Gentleman had yet considered the point he had promised earlier in the year to give attention to—namely, the question of identifying the

Mr. Campbell-Bannerman

men in the Militia with a view to seeing that a man did not join more than one regiment. In connection with the Army Reserve, the right hon. Gentleman had said he would consider whether it would not be possible to require Militiamen to report themselves on one given day at some convenient place or places. Would the right hon. Gentleman consider the matter between now and the Autumn Session?

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Yes.

Question put, and agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported Tomorrow; Committee to sit again Tomorrow.

SEA FISHERIES REGULATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.—(No. 244.)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

MR. ANSTRUTHER said, he wished to move—

“That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to insert Clauses empowering fishery district committees to issue licences to persons to capture salmon in unchartered territorial waters.”

He had reason to believe that since the Second Reading of the Bill the Secretary for Scotland had changed his opinion as to the introduction of his (Mr. Anstruther's) clauses dealing with salmon fishing in the sea. On that occasion the right hon. Gentleman expressed the opinion that if means could be found to enable fishermen to catch salmon in the open sea, he would give every assistance in his power to it. He made this Motion now in order to know from the Secretary for Scotland as to why it was he could not now agree to the proposals which he (Mr. Anstruther) foreshadowed on the Second Reading. He had, however, received an intimation the other night that the Government could not hope to carry the Bill through Committee at this period of the Session, unless he was willing to abstain from pressing the clauses dealing with the salmon fishing which stood in his name. His constituents were greatly interested in this part of the Bill, and he was bound to move the Instruction in order to bring forward the clauses, and so to give the right hon. Gentleman an opportunity of explaining why he could not now assent to the proposals he had

foreshadowed on the Second Reading of the Bill. It was a great disappointment to him that the Committee stage of the Bill had only been brought on at this period of the Session and at this hour of the night. He begged to move the Instruction which stood in his name.

Motion made, and Question proposed.

“That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to insert Clauses empowering fishery district committees to issue licences to persons to capture salmon in unchartered territorial waters.”—(Mr. Anstruther.)

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Sir G. TREVELYAN, Glasgow, Bridgeton) said, he was of opinion that most Members present acquiesced in what had taken place at a meeting a few days ago in regard to this Bill, and that was that the measure should be considered as non-contentious. It was only on the condition that the Bill was non-contentious that it could be passed through the House. Under these circumstances, he must appeal to the hon. Member to withdraw his Instruction. The only chance of this Bill passing was that all Members should agree that all Amendments proposed should be absolutely congenial to the general provisions of the Bill. He believed that there was a very universal wish amongst Scottish Members that the Bill should pass; and, therefore, he asked hon. Members to make this sacrifice, beginning with his hon. Friend who had moved this Amendment.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

*SIR W. WEDDERBURN rose to move an Instruction with respect to foreshores, but—

*MR. SPEAKER ruled that it did not come within the scope of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question, “That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair,” put, and agreed to.

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 5.

*MR. HOZIER (Lanarkshire, S.) said, that as an assessment was to be levied on all seaboard counties, he would like to know what seaboard counties were?

SIR G. TREVELYAN said, it would be much easier to tell him what were not seaboard counties. They were Perth, Lanark, Peebles, Selkirk, and Roxburgh.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) said, he had given notice of a Motion for the omission of Sub-section 3 of Clause 6, relating to rates. The provision in the sub-section permitting the levying of a maximum rate of 3d. in the £1 had naturally caused some alarm in his constituency ; but he understood that the Government were prepared to reduce the maximum to 1d., and in that case he would not press his Motion.

MR. COCHRANE said, the vote would press heavily in the upland districts, and suggested that the burden should be borne in Scotland, as in Ireland, by the Imperial Exchequer.

SIR G. TREVELYAN wished to say at once that the Government were quite prepared to meet the wish of a large part of the Committee by placing the figure of 1d. instead of 3d. in the £1. That would bring in more than ample money to cover the amount required for the purposes of the Bill. It was true that the fisheries of Scotland had a claim on the Imperial Exchequer, but that claim was to a considerable extent met, because a larger sum was annually paid out of the Imperial Exchequer to the Scotch fisheries than was paid to the fisheries of England. He agreed that the fishing industry was in the interest of the many and not of the few, and that was the argument which lay at the root of asking the entire community to provide some of the funds. The public rate ought to be applied in the interest of fishermen just as well as for the purpose of small holdings, allotments, or roads, but in this case they asked the counties not to undergo a great expense but to guarantee a certain portion of the cost. The main expenditure would come from the mussel beds which, if properly worked, would, he was convinced, more than pay the whole cost of the Act.

Clause amended, by the substitution of "one penny" for "threepence" as the maximum rate.

Other Amendments agreed to.

Clause 8.

The following Amendment in the name of Mr. ANSTRUTHER was ruled out of Order :—

Clause 8, page 4, line 12, at end, add,—“ And the reasonable travelling and personal expenses of such member shall be paid out of the funds at the disposal of the Fishery Board.”

MR. ANSTRUTHER said, he hoped that the Government would hold out hope of giving effect on a future occasion to the object of his Amendment.

SIR G. TREVELYAN said, when the Estimate for the Fishery Board came on he would favourably consider the propriety of allowing the travelling expenses of those members not of the Fishery Committees, but of the Fishery Board, who were sent up by the Fishery Committees, and to whom the payment of their expenses might be rather a severe burden.

MR. COCHRANE asked if the right hon. Gentleman would not extend it to members of the Fishery Committees as well ?

SIR G. TREVELYAN replied that members of the English Fishery Committees had not got their travelling expenses, and he thought it would be far too large a question to consider for Scotland alone.

Clause agreed to.

SIR G. TREVELYAN proposed a new clause (Power to prohibit seine-trawling in certain localities).

Clause brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, “That the Clause be read a second time.”

MR. WASON (Ayrshire, S.) thanked the right hon. Gentleman for the introduction of the clause.

MR. COCHRANE asked what were the provisions of the clause ?

SIR G. TREVELYAN read out the clause, and explained that its effect was to enable the Fishery Board, if it chose, to apply provisions against seine-trawling in particular localities.

MR. A. G. MURRAY (Buteshire) pointed out that whilst under the Act of 1885 the Fishery Board were allowed to pass bye-laws reducing the stringency of the general law, the present clause would enable them to make bye-laws increasing the stringency of that law. He thought the Committee might fairly accept the clause as much better than none at all.

MR. MARJORIBANKS (Berwickshire) remarked that a new clause which had been suggested by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North-East Manchester (Sir J. Fergusson) would

have prohibited seine-trawling in the whole of the territorial waters of Scotland. There was, however, no complaint of seine-trawling except on the Ballantrae banks, and he, therefore, thought that the Government had proposed the best way of dealing with the question.

MR. ANSTRUTHER asked how it was that so much lighter a penalty was proposed than was provided for in the Amendment Act of 1889, where the penalty mentioned was a fine of £100?

MR. MARJORIBANKS replied that seine-trawling was carried on with a comparatively cheap instrument, whilst beam-trawling required expensive appliances, and a more costly vessel had also to be used.

Question put, and agreed to.

Clause read a second time, and added.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill, as amended, be reported to the House."

MR. ANSTRUTHER asked the Secretary for Scotland if he could hold out any hope that an early opportunity would be afforded of raising the question of salmon fishing next Session? Would the Government be likely to introduce a measure for the amendment of the Salmon Act?

SIR G. TREVELYAN: Early in the Session I said more than once that if we could pass the Sea Fisheries Bill this year I would do my best to introduce a Salmon Bill next year. I earnestly hope I shall be able to carry out that intention. I must own I should like to see a Private Bill of my hon. Friend on the Paper early next Session, whether the Government are able to supplement it with a Bill of their own or not.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill, as amended, to be considered Tomorrow.

SUPPLY—REPORT.

Resolutions [9th September] reported.

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE
DEPARTMENTS, 1893-4.

CLASS II.

1. "That a sum, not exceeding £36,059, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Board of Agriculture, and to defray the repayable Expenses to be incurred in matters of Inclosure and Land Improvement."

CAPTAIN NAYLOR-LEYLAND (Colchester) said, it was somewhat unfortunate that the Debate on this Vote was brought to a somewhat premature and abrupt conclusion. He trusted that the Government would understand that it was entirely owing to their own action that they had to listen to his remarks at a somewhat late hour. There were two reasons why the policy and administration of the Board of Agriculture should be thoroughly discussed. One was that they had to discuss not one year's administration, but two, as there was no discussion last year on the Agricultural Vote. The other was that a new President of the Board of Agriculture was in Office. The present was a period of deeper agricultural depression than had ever been known before, and it was accompanied by the depopulation of the country districts and the over-population of the towns. The crops were smaller this year than they had ever been before. While cattle, sheep, and swine had increased by about 700,000 head, the price of corn had gone down until it was now about 27s., and altogether the agricultural outlook was about as dark and disastrous as it could possibly be. Under these circumstances, it became extremely interesting to inquire what the President of the Board of Agriculture (Mr. Gardner) intended to do; what were his propositions and what was his policy; what had he done, and what did he intend to do? As far as could be understood from what the right hon. Gentleman said the other day, he had done nothing, and intended to do nothing; he had no policy, and had no propositions to put before the House. He was among those who at first thought it was not necessary to pay the salary of the President of the Board of Agriculture out of the taxpayers' money; but he changed his view when he saw the valuable work done by the late President, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire. Again, however, he had had to change his mind on the point, for the present holder of the Office had done nothing but transact Departmental duties. It had been asked what the right hon. Gentleman should have done, but it was not the duty of the Opposition to find a policy for him. There were, undoubtedly, a great many things left undone which he could have accom-

plished ; but, of course, he would be out of Order if he were to tell the House what he conceived would have been the right policy to have adopted. All the right hon. Gentleman had done had been to pass two small Bills—one as to pigs, and the other in regard to manures. He seemed to entertain some extraordinary views upon agriculture. The other day he told the farmers that the game of corn growing was practically up.

*MR. H. GARDNER : I never said anything of the kind.

CAPTAIN NAYLOR-LEYLAND said, he was quoting from memory, but that certainly was what the right hon. Gentleman said.

*MR. H. GARDNER : I never said anything of the sort, or anything that could be interpreted in that direction.

CAPTAIN NAYLOR-LEYLAND said, that the right hon. Gentleman's remarks were so interpreted by at least 400 people, and it was only an hour previously that he read an extract of the speech. But if the farmers were to give up corn-growing what were they to do? He supposed that they were to cultivate cucumbers, gooseberries, raspberries, and onions. If they took up that occupation they would be departing from agriculture altogether, and that certainly they would all deplore. He had to complain that the administration of the right hon. Gentleman had been out of all sympathy with agricultural interests. There were 100 measures he might have brought forward, but he had only produced two, one dealing with swine fever, and the other with the fertilisation of feeding stuffs. There were some diseases of animals to which he wished to draw attention. Two of them had spread considerably of late. The first was anthrax, which, as the right hon. Gentleman knew, was due to the entrance into the blood of a minute bacillus, which infested certain localities. He would like to know what the right hon. Gentleman was prepared to do with reference to that disease? Would he direct that the bodies of diseased animals should be burned in quick lime, instead of being cut up to the great danger of human beings? Would he bring in an Act, if necessary, to do that? Again, with reference to sheep, was the right hon. Gentleman prepared to give Local Authorities power to prevent the removal of sheep to places within their own

jurisdiction. They already had power to prevent the moving of sheep into their own district, but the extended powers were, he contended, necessary, and would do much to aid in the extirpation of certain diseases. Now, he found, on reference to the Estimates, that provision was made for an additional private secretary. The late President of the Board was content with only one private secretary ; the right hon. Gentleman wanted two apparently.

MR. H. GARDNER : Perhaps it will shorten the hon. and gallant Gentleman's discourse if I say I have only one private secretary.

CAPTAIN NAYLOR-LEYLAND : The Estimates show two. The private secretary to the right hon. Gentleman, and the private secretary to the secretary.

*MR. H. GARDNER : There is no private secretary to my secretary, but there is a private secretary to the Secretary to the Department, who is a permanent official. I may add, as the hon. Member is so interested in economy, that my private secretary only has £150 a year, while the private secretary to the late President received £300 per annum.

CAPTAIN NAYLOR-LEYLAND said, he was equally devoted to economy as the right hon. Gentleman, or he would not be speaking at that hour. There was still another grievance he desired to bring forward, and that was that the right hon. Gentleman had not a seat in the Cabinet, whereas his predecessor had. Surely, that showed that the present Government did not take as much interest in agriculture as the late Government. Why was it placed in such a position of inferiority this year, as compared with last year. In conclusion, he would ask the right hon. Gentleman, did he propose to do anything at all for agriculture, and if so what? Half a loaf was better than no bread at all, and they would cordially welcome any proposal he had to make.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (MR. H. GARDNER, Essex, Saffron Walden) : I deeply regret that the hon. and gallant Gentleman's remarks were cut short the other afternoon, but, at any rate, we have now had the pleasure of listening to him. I will reply to his criticisms to the best of my ability. With regard to my not having a seat in the Cabinet, I think the hon.

Captain Naylor-Leyland

Gentleman would have taken a rather strong course in moving to reduce my salary. Surely he ought rather to have moved a reduction of the salary of the Prime Minister. I had occasion when the Vote was under discussion to thank hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite for the kind sympathy shown me, both inside and outside the House, in my administration of the Agricultural Department, and I only regret that I have failed to give equal satisfaction to the hon. and gallant Member. With regard to anthrax, I issued an Order on the subject last December; since then I have issued cautions to County Councils and Local Authorities, and within the last few days I have sent out another Circular which I think will meet the views of the hon. and gallant Member. As to the diseases among sheep, I have not got the Orders by me at the present moment, but I will refresh my memory on the subject; and if anything can be done to carry out the views of the hon. Member I shall be happy to do it. Finally, as to the private secretaries, I may again explain that the second private secretary referred to is the private secretary of the Secretary to the Board, who, like all permanent officials of the same standing in other Departments, is allowed a private secretary.

Resolution agreed to.

"2. That a sum, not exceeding £21,674, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Charity Commission for England and Wales, including the Endowed Schools Department."—Agreed to.

"3. That a sum, not exceeding £25,853, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of 1894, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Civil Service Commission."—Agreed to.

"4. That a sum, not exceeding £33,467, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Department of the Comptroller and Auditor General."—Agreed to.

Resolution 5.

"That a sum, not exceeding £3,353, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Registry of Friendly Societies."

CAPTAIN NAYLOR-LEYLAND said that, in regard to this matter, he should

like to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer or the Secretary to the Treasury if some additional grant could not be made to this Office? He was told that if a further £500 or £1,000 were allowed the work could be done much more expeditiously, and afford greater convenience to all interested in Friendly Societies.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Sir J. T. HIBBERT, Oldham): If the hon. and gallant Member had been here on Saturday, he would have heard an explanation of the whole matter. He will find the report in *The Times*, and I must refer him to that.

Resolution agreed to.

"6. That a sum, not exceeding £9,917, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of the Commissioners in Lunacy in England."—Agreed to.

"7. That a sum, not exceeding £84, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Mint, including the expenses of Coinage."—Agreed to.

"8. That a sum, not exceeding £8,043, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894, for the Salaries and Expenses of the National Debt Office."—Agreed to.

"9. That a sum, not exceeding £12,042, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Public Record Office."—Agreed to.

MADRAS AND BOMBAY ARMIES BILL.

[*Lords*].—(No. 413.)

COMMITTEE.

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

*SIR R. TEMPLE (Surrey, Kingston) said, that he understood the Bill was not to be discussed. He objected to the whole Bill, but would not oppose it being carried through this stage. If, however, the provisions were to be modified, then it would be his duty to oppose every Motion having that object in view.

*MR. NAOROJI (Finsbury, Central) said, that when Lord Kimberley proposed the Second Reading of the Bill in the House of Lords he gave his reasons for submitting that the Commanding Officer should not continue to be a Member of

the Executive Council, and also stated that all his Civil and Military advisers were of that view. But that Lord Cross opposed him, on the ground that the Government of India was in favour of continuing the Membership. In the Committee of the House of Lords, Lord Kimberley again tried to press his view against the continuance of the Membership, and also urged that higher salary would have to be paid to the Commanding Officer if continued in the Council; but the House of Lords carried an Amendment proposed by Lord Cross. But since then the position had been very much changed. The Indian Government had deliberately decided in favour of discontinuing the Membership, and as the Secretary of State for India had not changed his view he thought Parliament should agree to the change, which the Indian Government desired, and which would also be a pecuniary relief. If that were refused, he thought it would be an unfortunate occurrence. He hoped that under the changed circumstances the Amendment would be accepted, and that the House of Lords would be induced to reconsider its decision.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 27, to leave out the word "continue," in order to insert the word "cease."—(*Mr. Naoroji.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'continue' stand part of the Clause."

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (*Mr. G. Russell, North Beds.*): I regret that I cannot accede to the suggestion of my hon. Friend. He is right in thinking that the Secretary of State for India, when he moved the Bill in another place, was favourable to the alteration which the hon. Member proposes, and it is equally true that after some changes the Government of India has come round to my noble Friend's opinion. We are quite aware of the responsibility we are incurring in running counter to the views of the Government of India. As to the point of expense, my hon. Friend is probably a little premature in his anticipation. Of course, it is true that if the Commanders of the Forces in Madras and Bombay were relieved of their seats on the Executive Councils, it might be possible to reduce their salaries; but it does not follow that such a decrease would of necessity take place.

Mr. Naoroji

*MR. NAOROJI: The noble Lord said so in the other House. I read his words.

*MR. G. RUSSELL: That was an *obiter dictum* of my noble Friend, and the mere fact that he said it does not render it necessary that the reduction of salary should take place. Bearing in mind that there is a strong concurrence of authorities in another place in favour of the Commanders of the Forces retaining their seats in the Council—remembering that men so well versed in Indian affairs as Lords Northbrook and Cross hold that view, and regarding also, as we do, the main object of this Bill as of great importance—we are not willing to run not merely the risk, but the absolute certainty, of losing this Bill. I understand that the House of Lords have decided not to take any further contentious business during the remainder of their Sittings, and, therefore, the Bill would have to be hung over till late in the year if we agree to this Amendment. Under these circumstances, I regret I cannot accede to the wish of my hon. Friend, as I have been so desirous of doing on previous occasions.

*SIR R. TEMPLE said, he desired to express his entire concurrence with the statement of the Under Secretary of State for India with regard to the Amendment which had been inserted in the Bill in another place. Of course, he was personally opposed to the Bill altogether; but if they were to have the Bill at all, he was anxious that this subsection should stand part of it, because the mischievous effect upon the Army, and of the Native Army in particular, which would result from the Bill would be *pro tanto* mitigated by the retention of the sub-section. Experience had shown that there should be a separate Army for each Presidency. That had been admitted by the Indian Government and by Her Majesty's Government. The separation of the Armies was, to some extent, impaired by the Bill; but that, again, was mitigated by the retention of the sub-section, because there would be some connection between the Presidency's Government and the Presidency's Army. The separation of the Armies was good for the native soldiers, especially as it secured their needs and requirements being attended to, as they were by race, by nationality, by language entirely distinct from the Bengal Army. Again,

the result of the Commander-in-Chief sitting on the Council would diminish somewhat the excessive centralisation. He believed that the great administrative danger which threatened that Empire was excessive centralisation at Calcutta and Simla.

*SIR W. WEDDERBURN (Banffshire) said, he was sorry that the Under Secretary of State for India had not been able to accept the Amendment before the Committee. He had been for many years Secretary to the Government of Bombay. He knew the inner working of the present system, and could say that if the Commander-in-Chief was made a Member of the Executive Council, it would not tend either to military discipline or to the good civil administration of the Presidency. The Bombay Board of Government consisted now of the Governor, the Commander-in-Chief, and of two Civil Members of the Council. Therefore, whenever the Commander-in-Chief voted for the Governor, that enabled the Governor to use his casting vote in the Council, and he could carry anything he liked with the help of the Commander-in-Chief as against the Civil Members of the Government. As a matter of fact, the Commander-in-Chief did not take a large share in ordinary civil affairs. He would only attend the Council to oblige the Governor, and, having obliged the Governor, he would expect the Governor to help him in any contest he might have with the Commander-in-Chief of India, and might thereby be able to counteract the policy established at Calcutta. Extra cost would be involved if the Commander-in-Chief was appointed to the Council, and the result would be mischief, instead of benefit. He, therefore, had great pleasure in supporting the Amendment.

*MR. EGERTON ALLEN (Pembroke, &c.) said, the Under Secretary of State for India had said he did not wish to run counter to the Government of India, but he was obliged to do so in order to satisfy another place. But the right hon. Gentleman, in refusing to accept the Amendment, was not only running counter to the Government of India, but to the Secretary of State for India. It was the Secretary of State for India who had originated

the idea of excluding the Commanders of the Forces in Madras and Bombay from the Council of the Governor. He telegraphed to the Viceroy, 21st March—

"Presidential Commands. Opinion here is adverse to retention as Members of Council of the Commanders of the Forces in Madras and Bombay; and unless you object, a clause excluding them will be introduced into the Bill."

To which the Viceroy replied—

"Madras and Bombay Commands. We have no objection to the proposals in your telegram of the 21st."

And it was this excluding clause which had been struck out of the Bill by the Lords, and which the hon. Member for Central Finsbury now endeavoured to introduce into the Bill again. On the 11th July, after the amendment of the clause made by the Lords, the Viceroy in Council wrote—

"We had, as we have reminded your Lordship in paragraph 2 of this Despatch, on a former occasion stated that we saw no reason why the successors of the then Commanders-in-Chief should not be members of the Local Councils. But a further examination of the question led us to doubt the correctness of this conclusion, and the Viceroy's telegram of the 24th March was accordingly addressed to your Lordship. We now desire to express our deliberate adherence to the view indicated in that telegram; and, although we attach so much importance to the early passing of the Bill now before Parliament that we should not be disposed to raise any points which might diminish its chance of becoming law, we have no hesitation in saying that we prefer, for the reasons stated above, the original draft of section 1 (3) to the section as altered by the Amendment introduced in the House of Lords."

There was no doubt that the best opinion was altogether in favour of the clause as it stood before amendment by the Lords, and the only reason for not following that opinion was because the House of Lords would not pass the Bill if their Amendment were disagreed with. If the Commons were to give way to a threat of that sort they might as well give up attempting legislation at all, because all the Lords would have to say in order to defeat a Bill was that they would not allow the Amendments of the Commons to pass. The question really was, whether the Amendment, which was supported by the weight of opinion, should be accepted, or rejected, because of a threat of the Lords?

*SIR R. TEMPLE: The Debate has become very contentious. I therefore beg to move, Mr. Mellor, that you report Progress, and ask leave to sit again.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(Sir R. Temple.)

*MR. G. RUSSELL: I have no objection to the Motion of the hon. Baronet. I did not think this contention would arise.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 57; Noes 37.—(Division List, No. 303.)

Committee report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

PUBLIC AUTHORITIES PROTECTION BILL [*Lords*].—(No. 270.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. MARJORIBANKS, Berwickshire) said, he hoped there would be no objection to the Bill, which was simply a useful and necessary codification of laws already existing.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) asked, were they to understand that this was not a new law?

MR. MARJORIBANKS: No.

MR. T. H. BOLTON (St. Pancras, N.): Entirely codification?

MR. MARJORIBANKS: Yes.

MR. T. H. BOLTON: Entirely?

MR. MARJORIBANKS: Entirely.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Bill be now read a second time," put, and agreed to.

Bill committed for To-morrow.

TRUSTEE (CONSOLIDATION) BILL [*Lords*].—(No. 439.)

Order for Committee read.

MR. T. H. BOLTON wished to know if this was entirely a Consolidation Bill?

MR. MARJORIBANKS: Entirely.

MR. T. H. BOLTON: There is no new law contained in it?

MR. MARJORIBANKS: No.

Bill considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; read the third time, and passed.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to—Consolidated Fund (No. 4) Bill.

Public Health (London) Act (1891) Amendment Bill.

Naval Defence Amendment Bill without Amendment.

Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs Bill, with Amendments.

LIGHT RAILWAYS (IRELAND) BILL. (No. 454.)

Read the third time, and passed.

BUILDING SOCIETIES (No. 2) (re-committed) BILL.—(No. 404.)

Order for Committee read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

EVIDENCE IN CRIMINAL CASES BILL [*Lords*].—(No. 315.)

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

FATAL ACCIDENTS INQUIRY (SCOTLAND) BILL.—(No. 415.)

Order for Consideration, as amended by the Standing Committee, read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE BILL [*Lords*].—(No. 444.)

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

BILLS OF SALE BILL [*Lords*].—(No. 280.)

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

STATUTE LAW REVISION (No. 2) BILL [*Lords*].—(No. 437.)

Considered in Committee, and reported without Amendment; read the third time, and passed.

LAW OF COMMONS AMENDMENT BILL [*Lords*].—(No. 442.)

Read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

SECONDARY SCHOOLS (TEACHERS' REGISTRATION) BILL.—(No. 87.)

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (EXEMPTION FROM SCHOOL ATTENDANCE) BILL.—(No. 189.)

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

House adjourned at Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 12th September 1893.

COMMISSION.

The following Bills received the Royal Assent :—

1. Consolidated Fund (No. 4.)
2. Naval Defence Amendment.
3. Irish Education Act, 1892, Amendment (No. 2.)
4. Public Works Loans (No. 2.)
5. Industrial and Provident Societies.
6. Contagious Diseases (Animals) (Swine Fever.)
7. Elementary Education (Blind and Deaf Children.)
8. Sheriff Courts Consignations (Scotland.)
9. Public Health (London) Act, 1891, Amendment.
10. Canal Rates, Tolls, and Charges Provisional Order (Leeds and Liverpool Canal.)
11. Canal Rates, Tolls, and Charges Provisional Order (Navigation of the Rivers Aire and Calder.)
12. Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (Grand Junction Canal.)
13. Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (Warwick and Birmingham Canal.)
14. Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 13.)

METROPOLIS MANAGEMENT (PLUMSTEAD AND HACKNEY) BILL.

Reported without amendment, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Tuesday next.

COUNTY SURVEYORS (IRELAND) BILL [H.L.]

Commons Amendment considered (according to Order), and agreed to.

REFORMATORY SCHOOLS BILL [H.L.]

Returned from the Commons agreed to.

STATUTE LAW REVISION (No. 2) BILL [H.L.]

Returned from the Commons agreed to.

VOL. XVII. [FOURTH SERIES.]

TRUSTEE (CONSOLIDATION) BILL [H.L.]

Returned from the Commons agreed to.

BURGHES GAS SUPPLY (SCOTLAND) ACT (1876) AMENDMENT BILL.

Returned from the Commons with the Amendment agreed to.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (SCHOOL ATTENDANCE) BILL.

Returned from the Commons with the Amendment agreed to.

LIGHT RAILWAYS (IRELAND) BILL.

Brought from the Commons ; read 1^a ; to be printed ; and to be read 2^a on Tuesday next.—(The Lord President [*E. Kimberley*]). (No. 269.)

House adjourned at a quarter past Three o'clock, till Tuesday next, Three o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 12th September 1893.

ROYAL ASSENT.

Message to attend the Lords Commissioners.

The House went ; and, being returned, Mr. Speaker reported the Royal Assent to several Bills. [See page 937.]

QUESTIONS.

THE LAND TRANSFER REGISTRY.

MR. GREENE (Shrewsbury) : I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether Her Majesty's Government are prepared to advise the application, and to apply public funds, and to what amount, for the purpose of establishing or maintaining, wholly or in part, registries and officers, or to provide for expenses and compensations so as to enable the provisions of the Land Transfer Bill to be carried out ; and whether Her Majesty's Government have computed the expense or have received or can furnish any estimate either of the cost to the public of establishing and maintaining the proposed system of compulsory registration of title or of the revenue likely to arise from the charges to be payable upon registration ?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EX-CHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby): The Government do not contemplate the necessity of applying public funds for the purpose of the Land Transfer Bill. A very low scale of fees (in lieu of existing costs of conveyance) will, in our opinion, suffice for covering office expenses, so great is the number of transactions in land.

TURNER'S DRAWINGS IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS (Birmingham, Bordesley): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will state about how many water-colour drawings by Turner are at present unexhibited in the National Gallery; and whether the Trustees are willing to prepare for exhibition in Provincial Museums and Art Galleries larger and more adequate Collections than are at present sent into the country?

SIR W. HARCOURT: Over 600 drawings by Turner, in water-colours or pencil, are on daily view at the National Gallery. No water-colour drawings remain unexhibited, but only some rough sketch notes, chiefly in pencil, on leaves of small pocket-books. In 1891 the whole of the then unexhibited portion of Turner's drawings was carefully sifted, and everything at all fitted for exhibition selected. Out of these it was found possible to form a Loan Collection, which is at present in the Ruskin Museum, at Sheffield. There are now four circulating Collections, each of which contains 50 or more water-colour drawings or sketches.

SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS: I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education what portion, if any, of the £3,500 increase in the Vote for South Kensington Museum under Sub-head F (Purchases for Museum and Circulation) will be devoted to the acquisition of original objects for the permanent Collections of Provincial Museums?

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Mr. ACLAND, York, W.R., Rotherham): The increased amount taken for purchases is a restoration of the amount taken off the Estimates in 1892-3. This Vote is not for the ac-

quisition of objects for the Collections of Provincial Museums, but for objects for the South Kensington Museum, many of which are constantly in circulation outside London. I have taken special care that a full proportion of the objects purchased with the sum now added to the Estimates will be circulated in the Provinces.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS: I beg also to ask the right hon. Gentleman if he will state the number of Museum keepers and assistant Museum keepers at the South Kensington Museum, the nature of their duties, and rates of payment?

MR. ACLAND: There are at the South Kensington Museum, as will be seen by reference to the Estimates—four Museum keepers, with salaries rising from £500 to £600; three Museum keepers, with salaries rising from £410 to £500; (second grade) eight assistant Museum keepers, £100 to £400. The keepers receive 5s. per hour, and the assistant keepers 3s. per hour, in addition to their salaries, when they are required to be in attendance after 6 p.m. on the nights when the Museums and Libraries are open to the public. The total amount paid for this service last year was £415 12s. The keepers are charged with the general supervision of their respective divisions, including the registration and arrangement of the objects, in which work they are assisted by the assistant keepers.

WORK FOR ABLE-BODIED DESTITUTE PERSONS.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (West Ham, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he can now state the extent of the powers possessed by the Boards of Guardians for acquiring land and opening workshops to enable them to set able-bodied destitute persons to work at reasonable wages; whether employment so given necessarily pauperises and disfranchises the recipients; and whether he will cause a Circular to be issued to Boards of Guardians setting forth these powers, and how far the Local Government Board is prepared to co-operate with the Guardians in putting them into operation?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. H. H. FOWLER, Wolverhampton, E.): The

Law Officers of the Crown have advised that the powers which were vested in overseers of parishes under the 43 Eliz., cap. 2 (passed in 1601) and the 59 Geo. III., cap. 12 (passed in 1819) are, by virtue of the Poor Law Amendment Acts of 1834 and 1835, vested in Boards of Guardians, subject to the control of the Local Government Board. The result appears to be that Boards of Guardians have power to purchase or rent land not exceeding 50 acres for any parish, and to open workshops for setting destitute able-bodied persons to work, and to pay such persons reasonable wages for their labour. The Law Officers further advised that wages so paid would be parochial relief, and would involve the same disfranchisement as other relief under the Poor Laws. The Law Officers are also of opinion that the provisions of the 43 Eliz., cap. 2, enabling the overseers to require or to appoint persons to work, and, if they refuse, to cause them to be committed to the House of Correction, are still in force. Although these various powers still remain on the Statute Book, there can be no doubt that during a long period of years they have been regarded as obsolete, and since the passing of the Poor Law Act in 1834 they have not been acted upon by Boards of Guardians. The principle by which Boards of Guardians have been governed in the administration of out-door relief to destitute able-bodied persons has been that in each case such relief should be given by them as the necessities of the case require, work being provided merely as a test of destitution. The adoption of schemes for the provision by Boards of Guardians of work at wages would involve an abandonment of what has hitherto been regarded as the principle of the new Poor Law, upon which the orders as to out-door relief which have been in force during the last half-century have been based. Whether so grave a change in the policy and administration of the Poor Law is desirable, and, if so, whether it should be made without legislative authority, are questions on which I could not express an opinion without the sanction of my Colleagues. In the meantime, the fullest and most careful consideration of the Local Government Board shall be given to the whole subject.

MR. KEIR HARDIE : Arising out of the very full and satisfactory answer of the right hon. Gentleman, I wish to ask him whether in cases where two or more parishes are combined in one Union the Union has power to acquire 50 acres of land in respect of each parish or only 50 acres for the combined parishes ?

*MR. H. H. FOWLER : We are advised that it would be for each parish. Therefore, if there were three parishes, the Union would have power to acquire 150 acres.

RAILWAY RATES IN STAFFORDSHIRE.

MR. JASPER MORE (Shropshire, Ludlow) : I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been drawn to the excessive character of the railway rates charged by the North Staffordshire Railway for the carriage of Clee Hill stone ; and whether the Board of Trade will use the powers conferred upon them by Section 31 of "The Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1888," for the purpose of inducing the Railway Company to reduce the rates to a reasonable amount ?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. MUNDELLA, Sheffield, Brightside) : The Board of Trade have communicated with the North Staffordshire Railway Company with reference to their rates for Clee Hill stone, and they have received a letter from the Secretary which I shall be happy to show the hon. Member. If any person receiving or sending stone by this railway makes a complaint to the Board of Trade of unreasonable treatment the Board will use the powers conferred upon them by Section 31 of "The Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1888."

THE GENERAL REGISTER OF SASINES.

MR. PAUL (Edinburgh, S.) : I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether it is the fact that writs given in at the General Register of Sasines during the month of May last were not given out till August ; and whether, in view of the great inconvenience caused by the delay in the recording of writs, to those engaged in the winding-up of Trusts and other legal business, he would state if the working hours of the clerks in this Office are less than those recommended by the Ridley Commission, and generally adopted in the Civil Service ?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Sir G. TREVELYAN, Glasgow, Bridgeton): It is the fact that several of the writs given in for registration during May last were not given out till August. But I must point out that no fewer than 9,150 writs were lodged for registration in May, being the largest number in the history of the Register. It has not been found possible to introduce the seven hours' system, because the Treasury cannot accept that system until the present staff of clerks, now in the course of reduction, is reduced still further to meet the additional cost in salaries which the seven hours day involves. But I may add that the pressure in the work takes place at the terms of May and November, and that a special sum of £600 is allowed by the Treasury to provide additional temporary clerical assistance, in order to meet this pressure.

SALFORD AND THE MANCHESTER SHIP CANAL.

MR. KNOWLES (Salford, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that the nuisance arising from the Manchester Ship Canal has become dangerous to the health of the inhabitants of the county borough of Salford and the neighbourhood; and whether, as suggested by the Council, he will direct a Government inquiry to be held as to the best means of dealing with the subject?

***MR. H. H. FOWLER**: I do not find that the Local Government Board have received any communication from the Town Council of Salford as to the condition of the Manchester Ship Canal. I will, however, very carefully consider any representations from the Town Council, or suggestions by them with regard to the means of remedying the nuisance to which reference is made; but at present I do not see that any sufficient advantage would arise from a Government inquiry.

PROCEDURE UNDER "THE ASSIZES RELIEF ACT, 1889."

MR. POWELL WILLIAMS (Birmingham, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that difficulties have arisen in relation to procedure under "The Assizes Relief Act, 1889," certain of Her Majesty's Judges holding that,

notwithstanding the provisions of this Act, prisoners triable at Quarter Sessions ought to be committed for trial to the Assizes, and other Judges holding otherwise; whether he is aware that, in consequence of such decisions, great doubt exists as to the proper course to be pursued by Magistrates in relation to such committals; and whether he will take steps to provide for a uniform and authorised system of procedure?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. ASQUITH, Fife, E.): I am aware that the divergence of practice to which the hon. Member refers exists, and that it gives rise to difficulties in the administration of justice by Magistrates. The matter is one of some complexity, and it is under the consideration of the Lord Chancellor.

YORK CAVALRY BARRACKS.

MR. BUTCHER (York): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the Government contract for the painting of the Cavalry Barracks at York has been sub-let; whether the sub-contractor, to whom such contract has been sub-let, is paying his workmen employed in doing the work contracted for by such contract wages, which in many cases are considerably below the wages generally accepted as current in the trade for competent workmen; and, having regard to the Resolution of this House of the 13th February, 1891, what steps the Government propose to take in the matter?

***THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE** (Mr. WOODALL, Hanley): Inquiry was made into this matter, and the result appeared to be satisfactory; but, in consequence of a letter received this morning from the hon. Member's Colleague in the representation of the City of York, a further and more searching inquiry has been ordered.

***MR. BUTCHER**: Can the hon. Gentleman say whether the contract has, in fact, been sub-let?

***MR. WOODALL**: The contract has been sub-let without the permission that ought to have been asked for; but I will make a further explanation hereafter.

ABERDEEN UNIVERSITY.

MR. BENSON (Oxfordshire, Woodstock): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland when it is proposed to make an appointment to the new Chair of Literature in Aberdeen University?

SIR G. TREVELYAN: The Draft Ordinance relating to the Chalmers Chair of English Literature in Aberdeen University is, I am informed by the Secretary to the Universities Commission, awaiting consideration of objections when the Commission resumes its sittings in October or November, and cannot be laid before Parliament till the Autumn Session. I do not, therefore, see that the Ordinance can be laid before the Queen in Council till March, 1894, and fear the appointment to the Chair must be deferred till after that date.

DRAWBACK ON BRITISH CIGARS.

MR. R. PRICE (Norfolk, E.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his attention has been directed to statements made by *The Cigar and Tobacco World*, to the effect that by enforcing an old Statute (26 Vict., c. 7), which has remained in abeyance for 30 years, and which provides that no drawback can be allowed on exported tobacco of British manufacture which contains a greater quantity of inorganic matter than 22 per cent., the Board of Customs have put a stop to the export of British cigars, which was returned last year at over £112,000; whether it is not a fact that tobacco leaf from which cigars are manufactured contains more than 22 per cent. of inorganic matter; and whether, in the interests of an important British industry, he will at once give instructions to revert to the practice which has hitherto been in vogue pending the repeal of the Statute in question?

SIR W. HARCOURT: The Statute in question has always been in force. The only difference is that cases in which the cigars presented for drawback have contained inorganic matter and sand to an extent exceeding the limit prescribed by the Statute have occurred in considerable number during the last few months, whereas before they had been very infrequent. I have satisfied myself that some amendment of the law is desirable in the interests of the trade, and in the next suitable Bill a clause will be inserted

legalising the grant of a reduced amount of drawback in such cases. Pending such legislation, I have no power to suspend the operation of the Act.

PARLIAMENT AND THE UNION JACK.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Belfast, W.): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether Her Majesty has been pleased to accede to the request conveyed to Her by the Lord Great Chamberlain that the National Flag should be hoisted upon the Palace of Westminster during such time as Parliament is sitting and Her Majesty is not within the precincts; and, if so, whether Her Majesty's Government will provide the necessary funds to purchase and maintain the National Flag?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (MR. SHAW LEFEVRE, Bradford, Central): The Queen has intimated her consent to the application made to her by the Lord Great Chamberlain, prompted, I presume, by the hon. Member, that the Union Jack should be hoisted on the Victoria Tower when Parliament is sitting. I am informed that the cost of maintaining a flag large enough for such an elevated position, and the labour of a man in going up and down 700 steps twice a day, will come to about £25 a year. No provision is made for this in the Estimates of this year for the Department of the Lord Great Chamberlain, which is included in the Vote for the House of Lords. But I have no doubt the matter will be carefully considered by the Treasury in the preparation of next year's Estimates, on the application of the Lord Great Chamberlain.

GIBRALTAR COAL STORES.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the statement recently made by the hon. Member for the Normanton Division at a meeting of the Miners' Federation, to the effect that the coal stores at Gibraltar were cleared out, was accurate; and, if so, whether the statement applied wholly or in part to the coal stored for the use of the Royal Navy; and if he can state what is the amount of coal at present in store at Gibraltar, in the Naval and Commercial depôts respectively?

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Sir U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH, Lancashire, Clitheroe): The Admiralty store of coal at Gibraltar it not cleared out. On the contrary, it now contains the full stock usually maintained there. There is always a large stock in commercial stores, but it would be contrary to policy and practice to state the amount of coal at Gibraltar.

THE "VICTORIA" COURT MARTIAL.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he is now able to state when the Minutes of the *Victoria* Court Martial will be laid upon the Table of this House; and whether there is any prospect of these Minutes being in the hands of Members before the discussion on the Navy Estimates is resumed?

SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: We have at last received proofs of the printed evidence from the printers. But the proofs of the lithographed plates will not be ready for some days. Without these the evidence would be incomplete, and there would be no advantage in presenting it. Under these circumstances, I fear that the Blue Book cannot be distributed to Members before the Adjournment of the House for the Recess.

THE COMPANIES WINDING-UP ACTS.

SIR A. ROLLIT (Islington, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, and when, the Report of the Committee of the Board of Trade on the administration of the Companies Winding-up Acts will be presented to the House and circulated; and when the Annual Reports of the Board of Trade on Bankruptcy and Winding-up, respectively, will be presented and circulated, and to what date they will be brought up?

MR. MUNDELLA: The Annual Report on Bankruptcy was presented on the 4th instant, ordered by the House to be printed on the 5th instant, and will be circulated shortly. The Statistical Tables for the Report on Winding-up are in print, but it will not be possible to present the Report till the Autumn Session. Both these Reports will be for the year ending 31st December, 1892.

SMALL-POX IN THE METROPOLIS.

MR. BENN (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I beg to ask the President

of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that a very large proportion of the cases of small-pox admitted of late into the hospitals of the Metropolitan Asylums Board have been of the vagrant or casual class; and whether his attention has been directed to the Report of the Medical Officer of Health for Southwark as to a Salvation Army shelter in that district; if so, whether, in view of the serious risk to the public health and the heavy cost to the ratepayers consequent on such a state of affairs, he will take steps to give the Sanitary Authorities such a power to inspect charitable refuges as is already possessed by the Metropolitan Police in the case of common lodging-houses?

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Sir W. FOSTER, Derby, Ilkeston): I believe that it is the case that a large proportion of the persons suffering from small-pox admitted into the hospitals of the Metropolitan Asylums Board have been of the vagrant or casual class, and I am aware of a Report which was made by the Medical Officer of Health of St. George the Martyr, Southwark, as to the Salvation Army shelter at Blackfriars Road. The provisions of the Public Health (London) Act with reference to overcrowding and the sanitary condition of premises apply to these shelters in like manner as to any other house used as a dwelling. The Act gives the right to members of the Sanitary Authority and any officer authorised by them of entering, at any time between 6 a.m. and 9 p.m., any premises for the purpose of examining as to the existence thereon of any nuisance liable to be dealt with summarily under the Act referred to. In the event of a refusal to admit, an order may be made by a Magistrate requiring the admission, and where a house is alleged to be over-crowded so as to be a nuisance, an order of a Magistrate may authorise the entry at any hour of the day or night specified in the order. I cannot at present give any undertaking to propose legislation on the subject.

THE CASE OF ABRAHAM MITCHELL, OF DUMBARTON.

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR (Dumbartonshire): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland, with regard to the proceedings at the trial of Abraham Mitchell, re-

cently sentenced by Sheriff Lees, at Dumbarton, to 30 days' imprisonment, with hard labour, whether he is aware that Brown, the principal witness, admitted at the trial that he stole the book in question; that accordingly his evidence was stated by the Sheriff to be receivable only with suspicion; that Craig, the only other witness, was materially contradicted in other evidence; that this was also admitted by the Sheriff in giving judgment; and that, on the other hand, there was no proof that the book was of value, nor that Abraham Mitchell, the accused, was ever seen with the book, or ever directly or indirectly made use of the book to the detriment of his employers or for any other purpose; whether he is aware of the following facts—namely, that the competing firm, in whose interests it was suggested at the trial that the theft was committed, have extracted a public apology from Messrs. Stirling and Sons for that unfounded imputation, and that Mitchell had been in the firm's employment for 14 years, had occupied public positions in the locality, but had recently differed from their representatives there on public questions; why Brown, who admitted the theft, was not prosecuted for that crime; and whether, under the circumstances, he can see his way to allay the intense public dissatisfaction with the outcome of this prosecution by ordering the immediate release of Mitchell the accused?

SIR G. TREVELYAN: In answer to my hon. and gallant Friend, I must reply that I cannot enter into a discussion of particular points of the evidence. The evidence, if believed by the Court, was in point of law sufficient, and no one who did not hear the evidence and see the witnesses is in a position to form a judgment on it as against the presiding Judge. I have read the correspondence between Messrs. Stirling & Sons and Messrs. Steiner & Co.; but Messrs. Stirling deny that they imputed anything to Messrs. Steiner. I have no doubt that my hon. Friend's statements as to Mr. Mitchell's antecedents are correct. The essence of the charge was that Brown, in taking the book, had acted under the impulse of Mitchell. I cannot go back on my former decision.

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR: This being a question of the credibility of evidence,

what remedy is there available for those who think that this man has been wrongfully convicted?

SIR G. TREVELYAN: The time for a remedy has passed. There were three days during which the agent might have appealed on a question of law, but the opportunity was not taken advantage of. I am bound to say that in the course of the proceedings there were occasions on which the accused might have given explanations, but he failed to do so. I am afraid it is quite impossible for me to interfere in the matter.

*MR. HOZIER (Lanarkshire, S.): Was the prosecution instituted by the Procurator Fiscal on instructions from the Crown Authorities in Edinburgh?

SIR G. TREVELYAN: I have already once answered that question in the affirmative.

EYE TESTS FOR THE ARMY.

MR. JEFFREYS (Hants, Basingstoke): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that G. M. Nicholson, a candidate for the Army, was twice passed sound by the medical examiners, but at the last examination, when he passed second for the Cavalry, the medical examiners refused to pass him on account of a slight congenital defect in one eye; whether he is aware that this candidate has never experienced any inconvenience from the alleged defect in his eye; whether G. M. Nicholson has served as an efficient officer in the Hampshire Artillery Militia; whether he is aware that this candidate's eyesight has never altered in the slightest degree, nor, according to the doctors, is likely to alter; and whether, under these circumstances, he will consent to refer the matter to an independent medical authority?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling, &c.): The facts are in the main as stated. The result is that Mr. Nicholson has been found to fall short of the minimum standard of sight required for the Army, and I have no power to make any exception; nor would it be right in any case to do so, as the general opinion of my Professional Advisers is that that minimum is already too low.

MR. JEFFREYS: Considering the hardship of this case, and that this

candidate was twice passed as sound by the Medical Authorities, and that it was only on a third examination, when there had been no change in his eyesight, that he was rejected, cannot some exception be made in his favour?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN : I am sorry to say not. Mr. Nicholson went to a London specialist, who confirmed the opinion of the Medical Board that the eye did not come up to the minimum of sight required. I should have been glad if it had been possible in any way to relax the rules, but it is not.

ANTHRAX.

MR. JEFFREYS : I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture if there have been any fresh attacks of anthrax in the United Kingdom ; and what steps he is taking to suppress this dangerous and infectious disease?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. H. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.) : My right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Agriculture has requested me to answer this question in his absence. The number of outbreaks of anthrax reported during the three weeks ending the 2nd instant have been 11, 18, and 13 respectively. The business of enforcing the provisions of the law, and the Orders issued thereunder, rests, in the case of anthrax, not with the Board of Agriculture, but with the various Local Authorities under the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts. I have, however, addressed a Circular Letter to those authorities advising them as to the nature of the disease and the best means of preventing its spreading, and I have also issued a leaflet, for general circulation amongst stockowners, describing the symptoms of the disease and the steps which ought to be taken on its appearance. I shall be happy to supply the hon. Gentleman with copies of these documents.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) : May I ask my hon. Friend whether, considering the persistent vitality of this bacillus, he will press the Local Authorities to insist on the burning of the bodies of all animals affected with this disease?

MR. H. GLADSTONE : That is not a matter which comes within the

jurisdiction of the Home Office ; but I have no doubt my right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Agriculture will consider it.

THE COAL STRIKE RIOTS.

MR. NUSSEY (Pontefract) : I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that there was at Castleford, on the occasion of the recent regrettable riot, considerable delay in obtaining the presence of a County Magistrate, thus augmenting the disturbance ; whether he will communicate with the Lord Chancellor, with a view to the appointment of more Magistrates in that district ; and whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to hold an inquiry into the recent unfortunate occurrences at Castleford, and as to how far the persons killed and injured were those who took part in the destruction of property?

*SIR C. W. DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) : I have just received a telegram from the hon. Member for the Normanton Division desiring me to ask a further question—namely, why the troops were brought from Bradford when there was a force at Pontefract only two miles away ; whether the troops were sent at the request of the local Magistrates ; and whether they had any right to interfere with the crowd without the presence of a Magistrate, and before the reading of the Riot Act?

MR. ASQUITH : I cannot say why the troops were brought from Bradford rather than from Pontefract. The troops were sent by orders of the local Magistrate. I am aware that there was considerable delay on the occasion in question in obtaining the attendance of a Magistrate, but I cannot say whether the delay augmented the disturbance. The presence of a Magistrate is necessary before the Riot Act can be read, and by the Queen's Regulations an officer in command of troops acting in aid of the civil power is forbidden to order his men to fire unless distinctly required to do so by a Magistrate. But the military are not obliged to wait for the presence of a Magistrate before they take active steps to prevent outrages upon property and person. I have received complaints in the course of the recent disturbances in the West Riding of the difficulty of

obtaining the attendance of Magistrates at times and places where their presence would have been useful, and I am in communication with the Lord Chancellor on the subject. It would be premature to answer the last part of the question until the inquests on the men who were killed have been concluded.

EARL COMPTON (Barnsley) : May I ask whether the Home Secretary has received any information respecting the action of the Magistrates in Barnsley in preventing a large meeting of miners being held in that town yesterday ; whether he is aware that the meeting was convened to express, in the first place, its strong disapprobation of the lawless proceedings which had taken place at Barnsley in the previous week, and to call upon all miners and law-abiding citizens to do their utmost in assisting to prevent a recurrence of the same ; and, in the second place, to protest against the action of the authorities in importing military into the town, believing that there is no necessity for their presence, and demanding their withdrawal ; and whether the right hon. Gentleman can take any steps to cause the withdrawal of the Magistrate's prohibition ?

MR. ASQUITH : I have no information on the subject beyond what appears in the newspapers this morning. Of course, not being aware of the local circumstances, it would be very improper in me to pronounce any opinion, at this stage at any rate, upon the action of the Magistrates. I have already taken steps to have this question submitted to them for observation, and I will reply to it when I have got their answer, in the course of a day or two.

REPORTED OUTRAGES IN THE EAST.

MR. PAULTON (Durham, Bishop Auckland) : I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if his attention has been called to a statement made recently in the Press, that a number of headless bodies had been washed ashore near Salonica ; and if he can say whether there is any foundation either for the report or for the suspicions which are alleged to have been aroused by it ?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir E. GREY, Northumberland, Berwick) : I did see the statement to this

effect in the Press, but I am glad to be able to say, in answer to my hon. Friend, that it is absolutely without any foundation in fact.

THE WESTMINSTER CHOLERA CASE.

SIR H. ROSCOE (Manchester, S.) : I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether his attention has been called to the fact that the house in which Mrs. Bailey resided in Westminster was found to be in an insanitary condition ; and whether he will make representations to the Westminster Sanitary Authority as to the necessity of improving the admittedly unsatisfactory condition of the Westminster drains ?

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE : I have learned only from the papers what the hon. Member has stated as to the insanitary condition of the premises where Mrs. Bailey resided. I have, however, decided on more general grounds to make representations to the Westminster Authorities with reference to their drainage. I have been in communication with the London Council on the ventilation of the main drain under their charge, and have almost come to a conclusion with them ; but I am informed by them that the arrangements will not be complete without an improvement in the drains under the charge of the Westminster Sanitary Authority.

THE REJECTION OF THE HOME RULE BILL—FEELING IN IRELAND.

MR. SEXTON (Kerry, N.) : I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can give any particulars of the origin and extent of disturbances in Belfast and some other places in the North of Ireland on Saturday and Sunday last ?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. J. MORLEY, Newcastle-upon-Tyne) : As to the origin of these disturbances, such as they were, there can be no doubt that their immediate cause was the rejoicing of the Unionist Party on learning the result of the Division on Friday night in another place. The outcome of the different demonstrations has not been very important. No serious personal injury appears to have been sustained, and injury to property has been confined in the main to the breaking of a few panes of glass. In Belfast, if my hon. Friend

wishes further and better particulars, large crowds assembled at the newspaper offices on Friday night, and when the result of the Division was announced they dispersed quietly. Some Nationalists tried to get through a police cordon, and being refused stoned the police. One pane of glass was broken in a Catholic public-house, some trivial assaults took place, and I have just received a telegram to the effect that two persons have this day been sentenced to one month's imprisonment each for assaults, and that proceedings are pending against others. At Lurgan a number of windows were broken, the damage being estimated at about £5. It is believed by both parties that these injuries were committed by bands of young lads. It is reported this morning that two houses in Lurgan were fired into on the 10th instant, and that shots were fired at another house, but, striking a wall, they did not penetrate to the interior. At Londonderry a large number of people assembled, but there was no disturbance. A couple of panes of glass were broken in the house of a Nationalist, and also in the Protestant Sunday School. At Coleraine windows were broken in the Catholic Church, and in six private houses, including the house of the hon. Member for South Fermanagh. Stones were also thrown at the police. There were demonstrations, but no disturbances, at Dungannon and Cookstown. At Omagh and some other places slight disturbances occurred. Windows were broken in some 17 houses in Magherafelt, but no one was injured. That, I think, is all that will interest my hon. Friend and that is worth stating. [*Laughter.*]

MR. SEXTON: It is not exactly a laughing matter. I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he has heard of a violent attack made upon a trade procession at Belfast on Saturday, and of serious injury inflicted upon the members of one of the bands; whether the hon. Member for Battersea (Mr. J. Burns), who was one of the speakers at a labour meeting in the city, was threatened with violence, and was pursued from the place of meeting by a disorderly crowd; and whether in any part of the 28 counties in which the Nationalists have a majority of the population there were any disturbances in consequence of a political event at which they had more

reason to feel resentment than the Unionist Party?

MR. J. MORLEY: I am glad to be able to say, so far as I have heard—and I have Reports from most parts of Ireland—there was no attempt whatever on the part of Nationalists to indicate their vexation, if they felt vexation, at the political event that happened. As to the attack upon the trade procession at Belfast on Saturday, I understand the stones were thrown at two of the Nationalist bands, but I have not heard of anything that happened to the hon. Member for Battersea.

MR. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he has reason to believe that vexation is felt anywhere in Ireland at the political event referred to?

MR. SEXTON: You will find that out.

THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S DEVONPORT COMMAND.

MR. KEARLEY (Devonport): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he can state what was the total number of days upon which H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh was absent from his duties on leave or otherwise during each of the three years of his tenure of the appointment of Admiral of the Port at Devonport; and what was the total number of days upon which his predecessor was absent on leave or otherwise during each year for a corresponding period of time?

SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: I stated last week that during the time that H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh held the appointment of Commander-in-Chief at Devonport he was subject to, and complied with, the Regulations with regard to leave. The Admiralty were responsible for the leave which was granted, and it did not interfere with the efficient performance of the duties of Commander-in-Chief. Under these circumstances, I must respectfully decline to answer the first question of my hon. Friend. With regard to the second question, the predecessor of the Duke of Edinburgh was granted all the leave for which he asked. Answers cannot be given to questions which propose to institute comparisons between the leave granted to one officer and another, especially when there is no doubt as to the fact that both discharged

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their duties to the entire satisfaction of the Admiralty.

MR. KEARLEY : Arising out of the answer, may I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he is aware that the public journals, Service papers, and others, have stated that during the two years and ten months His Royal Highness held the post of Commander-in-Chief at Devonport he was absent no less than 379 days ?

SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH : No ; I am not aware that the public journals have stated anything of the kind, and such statements would be entirely contrary to the facts of the case.

THE CASE OF GEORGE KINE.

MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston) : I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the fact, as stated in *The Star* of the 7th instant, that George Kine, a boy who is now 13 years of age, was in March of last year charged at the Stratford Petty Sessions with playing truant and sentenced to be detained for four years in the industrial training ship *Shaftesbury* ; that after being so detained for 12 months he was, without the knowledge of his parents or friends, drafted into the band of the First Royal Warwickshire Regiment ; that the boy has since written several letters to his friends complaining of the way in which he was entrapped into the Army and begging of them to buy him out ; whether he will state what the Rule is in regard to the transference of boys from industrial schools into the Army ; and whether if boys of tender age consent to enter the Army such consent has to be given in the presence of their parents, guardians, or friends ?

MR. ASQUITH : I am inquiring into this case, and would be glad if my hon. Friend would further postpone this question for a week.

BAKEHOUSES IN THE METROPOLIS.

MR. CREMER : I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the startling revelations which have recently been made concerning the insanitary state of bakehouses in various parts of London, the filthy conditions under which bread is made, the terribly prolonged hours of labour of the opera-

tive bakers, and their low rate of wages ; whether the power to order a careful inspection of all bakehouses in the Metropolis, and to compel their owners to put them into a perfect sanitary condition, rests with the Local Authorities or with the Home Office ; and whether the Local Authorities are making any efforts to remedy the evils ; and, if they are not, whether he will forthwith take the necessary steps for ascertaining the truth concerning the condition of the places in which the food of so many millions of people is prepared, and also the condition of the operative bakers who prepare it ?

MR. ASQUITH : The jurisdiction of the Home Office over bakehouses was transferred by Parliament in 1883 to the Local Sanitary Authorities. In London the matter is regulated by Section 26 of "The Public Health (London) Act, 1891." Whether the Local Authorities are performing their duties is a question for the Local Government Board. If that Board represents to me that there is in any district a failure of duty on the part of the Local Authority I shall consider whether I ought not to exercise the powers conferred on the Secretary of State by Section 1 of "The Factory Act, 1891."

DUBLIN DRAINAGE WORKS.

MR. JACKSON (Leeds, N.) : I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether any money has been borrowed by the Corporation of Dublin under the powers given by Section 2 of "The Provisional Order Confirmation (No. 10) Act, 1892 ;" and whether any of the works authorised by that Act for improving the main drainage of Dublin have been carried out ?

MR. J. MORLEY : No money has been borrowed by the Corporation of Dublin under the section of the Act referred to ; and with regard to the inquiry in the second paragraph of the question of the right hon. Gentleman, I understand that none of the works referred to have been carried out or begun.

IRISH POST OFFICE PROPERTY.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall) : I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will have an estimate made of the value of the property of the Post Office in Ireland ?

SIR W. HARCOURT was understood to reply in the negative.

Fiji.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether a successor has been appointed to Sir J. B. Thurston as Governor of Fiji; and whether it is intended to extend his term of office there?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. S. BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): The subject has not yet come under consideration.

MASHONALAND.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any confirmation has been received of the alarming news which appears in the evening newspapers from Mashonaland, to the effect that the Matabele impis are raiding on the border of Mashonaland?

MR. S. BUXTON: No confirmation of the statement has been received from Sir Henry Loch. Perhaps I may be allowed to say I think that the House and the hon. Member ought not to attach too much credence to sensational reports which come from Mashonaland.

YACHTING ACCIDENT ON THE TAY.

MR. W. WHITELOW (Perth): I beg to ask whether the Government has received any further information with regard to the sinking of a yacht in the Tay?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have received a Report from the General Officer commanding in Scotland, who has carefully inquired into the matter. He states that the yacht sank close to the Lady buoy, at right angles to the line of fire, so that it is impossible that it could have been struck by a shot from any gun.

MR. W. WHITELOW: I have further information which I will communicate to the right hon. Gentleman.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—COMMITTEE.

SUPPLY,—considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1893-4.

1. £74,400, Yeomanry Cavalry, Pay and Allowances.

MR. HANBURY (Preston) said, he wished to put two or three questions to the Secretary of State for War on the subject of this Vote. There had recently been considerable modifications in the Yeomanry Force, and he should like to get from the right hon. Gentleman some clear statement as to the exact nature of the changes introduced. He understood that one result was to include the Force in the mobilisation scheme, from which it had hitherto been excluded. He desired to know why the establishment of the Force had been reduced from 14,000 to 11,800 men, for he considered a drop to that extent was a matter of very considerable importance. He believed that as a fact the number of men who went up for training last year was something like 9,000, and he was anxious to be informed how it was that the Force was so much below its proper standard? Then he understood that considerable reductions had been made in the permanent staff. He was informed that the number of adjutants had been reduced from 39 to 18, and the number of Staff sergeants from 239 to 148. By these changes a saving of £14,000 a year was to be effected; and what, he asked, was to be done with that money? Having served in the Force for a period of nine or 10 years, he was bound to say that he considered these changes a step in the right direction; but he wanted to make sure that the money to be saved by the reduction of the staff would not be lost to the Force, but would still be received by it in the form of extra allowances. In regard to the reduction of the establishment, did the right hon. Gentleman anticipate that it would never be possible to work the Force again upon the old establishment? That was a very despondent view to take, and one which would not be realised if the Force got the encouragement it deserved.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling, &c.): The changes that have been introduced are based mainly on the recommendations of Lord Brownlow's Committee. The result of the organisation by brigades and squadrons is that a certain number of adjutants and sergeants were rendered unnecessary. The permanent staff has been reduced from 39 adjutants and 239 sergeants to 19 adjutants and 148 sergeants. This is no doubt economy,

but the economy thus effected is neutralised by reason of the extra sum required in consequence of the grant of additional contingent allowances, subject to certain conditions of efficiency, especially in musketry. The adjutant of each brigade which contains a second regiment will have an assistant who will receive pay for the days he is on actual work. The present establishment is that which we expect to be able to maintain in future.

*SIR C. W. DILKE said, a Parliamentary Paper which had been published gave the whole effect of these changes. He doubted whether value was obtained for the money spent on the Yeomanry. At the present moment they were drilled on the basis of an understanding that they would be used to charge in the field, and whilst that idea obtained the country would not get full value for its money. The Yeomanry would, he believed, be most useful as a defensive force accompanying a defensive army if they would learn other Cavalry work than that of charging in the field.

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, he had always held views similar to those to which the right hon. Baronet had given expression.

CAPTAIN BAGOT (Westmoreland, Kendal) said, that under the new system Yeomanry sergeant-majors would have to look after two troops instead of one. These troops would often be separated by a distance of 30 or 40 miles. In order to ensure their efficiency it was necessary that the sergeant-major should visit each of them at least once a week, and as they were only allowed travelling expenses sufficient to cover four or five visits in a year they would be subjected to considerable hardship. Would it not be possible to increase their travelling allowances?

CAPTAIN NAYLOR - LEYLAND (Colchester) pointed out that the sum asked for for the Force this year—£74,000—was exactly the same as last year's total, and he asked an explanation of that in view of the fact that the establishment had been reduced, and a large saving effected by cutting down the permanent staff. Why was the Force to cost as much as last year when it was weaker to the extent of 2,300 men? They had been told that two or three regiments were to be combined for brigade administrative purposes, but even in

that case a Yeomanry brigade would be no stronger than an ordinary cavalry regiment, so was it not ridiculous to call it a brigade? Then he had to ask—was it intended to carry out all the recommendations of Lord Brownlow's Committee? It was of no use carrying out the brigade system unless they also adopted the squadron system, and he would remind them that the gist of the Report of the Committee was that the Yeomanry should be organised in squadrons. Then in regard to the reduction of the staff, it appeared to him that they were going to leave the whole of the "cocked-hat gentlemen" just as they were, and the result would be that they would have more cocked hats in a Yeomanry brigade than in a whole regiment of Cavalry.

*MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN said, the question of sergeant-majors' travelling allowances had been considered, and the concession asked for by the hon. and gallant Member had already been granted. It was intended to enforce the squadron system; the same amount of money would be spent on the Force this year as was expended last year, and at the end of 12 months the whole question would be reconsidered. As to the last complaint of the hon. and gallant Member for Colchester, he would remind him that the Force was not one with which the Government had a perfectly free hand to deal with it as it liked, as local considerations were often involved.

*SIR A. HAYTER (Walsall) said, he also should like to point out that according to the Estimates there was only one doctor to each regiment—or 39 in all. Chaplains were honorary officers, and were not, consequently, on the same footing as pay officers. He thought that the Government had done perfectly right in reducing the establishment. It was much better to have an establishment of 11,600 men, of whom 10,000 were absolutely enrolled Yeomen, and of whom over 9,000 presented themselves for drill. A real force was much better in fact than a sham one.

Vote agreed to.

2. £786,000, Volunteer Corps, Pay and Allowances.

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I wish to make an announcement which

I am sure will be gratifying to the Committee—namely, that the Queen has been graciously pleased to give her sanction to the bestowal of a decoration or badge upon non-commissioned officers of a certain length of service and approved character for their zeal and efficiency in the Force. Every one must have felt—and I certainly did strongly feel—that when the right hon. Gentleman opposite was last year able to confer a decoration on officers, it almost followed as a matter of necessity that the claims of non-commissioned officers to something analogous should be considered; and therefore I am glad to be able to make this announcement, because I know that there are many non-commissioned officers who have done as hard and as successful service for their corps as any commissioned officers.

MR. BRODRICK (Surrey, Guildford) said, he was sure the Committee had heard the right hon. Gentleman's announcement with the utmost satisfaction, and would regard the decision as the complement of what was done by the Secretary of State for War in the last Administration. He wished to make a few observations as to the efficiency of the Volunteer Force. He believed he was right in saying that at the present moment the Force was 1,500 officers short. This was a serious state of affairs. They were informed, when Lord Harris's Committee investigated the question and the circumstances of the Volunteer Force generally in 1886, that one of the reasons of the great lack of officers and the indisposition of men to come forward who might otherwise take commissions was the enormous expense involved. They were told, further, that there was a deficit in the funds of nearly every corps, that there were heavy charges for prizes, and that unless a man had a liberal sum at his disposal he could hardly be expected to join the Force as an officer. But all this had been changed. In 1888 a large addition was made to the Capitation Grant, the House subsequently sanctioned a considerable expenditure for equipment, and he believed he was justified in saying that with economy the present allowances could be made sufficient to cover necessary expenses. Yet there was still a deficiency of officers, and there were many regiments which, if they were called

upon to take the field, would be practically inefficient, in consequence of the want of officers. The announcement made by the right hon. Gentleman was rather a two-edged sword in one respect. It was, of course, extremely desirable that non-commissioned officers should be encouraged to continue to give their services, but one inducement for them to become officers had now been taken away, as they could gain the same honour by remaining non-commissioned officers.

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: A similar honour.

MR. BRODRICK said the House of Commons could hardly be expected to go on year after year paying a large sum for the Volunteer Force unless it was satisfied that sufficient money was voted to secure the object aimed at, and the question was, would a slight additional grant ensure a more effective service? One of the grievances of Volunteer officers was the great expense they were put to in regimental and brigade camps, where they only received the same allowance as privates and non-commissioned officers—namely, 2s. a day. Last year more than £40,000 was voted for these camps, or double the amount voted in 1887. True, officers might gain as much as £2 10s. in the way of grant, but all that went to the regiment and not into their pockets. He was not suggesting that Volunteer officers ought to be paid, but, seeing that the House had already recognised the principle of relieving the Volunteer of the expense of clothing and of maintaining him in camp, surely they might consider whether it was not possible to give similar relief to the officers, who had to find their uniform and equipment, at an expense varying from £20 to £30, whereas the private's uniform was found for him. Again, when the officer went into camp his expenses were at least from 5s. to 10s. per day. Now a special allowance of 10s. a day was made to the officers of the Volunteer submarine miners, and that had got rid of the difficulty experienced some years ago in inducing them to come up for training. Could not a similar policy be adopted in regard to Volunteer officers attending brigade and regimental camps? He was aware the Secretary of State for War was not labouring under a surplusage of funds, but probably by making

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economies in other directions it would be possible to give the officers this relief, and a sum of £5,000 would probably suffice to cover the cost. He did not know what it would cost to provide uniforms for the officers, but probably the right hon. Gentleman could give the Committee an approximate estimate of the total sum required to make an allowance of, say, £20, whether for four or five years, to enable officers to obtain the necessary articles of equipment. He hoped the Secretary for War would consider these questions; for, unless they got rid of the deficit of officers, they could not regard the Force as in a state of efficiency.

*MR. T. H. BOLTON (St. Pancras, N.) said, they must all recognise the importance of having a full and efficient staff of Volunteer officers, and it was most unsatisfactory that so many regiments should be deficient in that respect. He was sure the House and the country would cheerfully incur any expense that might be involved in relieving these officers of the burdens now cast upon them. But he believed there were other means by which suitable gentlemen might be induced to take commissions in the Force, besides the plan of relieving them of expense. The decorations recently bestowed constituted a compliment which was, no doubt, highly appreciated; but he would suggest that similar privileges as to joining the Regular Army should be given to Volunteer officers as were now enjoyed by Militia officers. This plan would do much to raise the status of the Volunteer officer, would be greatly appreciated by the Force generally, and would act as an inducement to young men to seek Volunteer commissions.

*COLONEL BROOKFIELD (Sussex, Rye) said, he was grateful to the hon. Members for St. Pancras and for the Guildford Division of Surrey for emphasising on that occasion what the friends of the Volunteer Force had often brought forward—namely, the extreme dearth of Volunteer officers. He was tempted to ask the Secretary of State for War what course he and the War Office would adopt supposing they found that they had no officers at all? Passing from this point, he desired to call the attention of the Committee to a rather broader question, in which the whole existence of the Volunteer Force was concerned. He wished to ask the right

hon. Gentleman a very simple question, that was, what Volunteers were for—what definite place they filled, either for defence or offence, in the military system of this country? The sum of money voted (£786,000 for 260,000 men) might, it appeared to him, be either a very small or a very large sum. It would be small if the services of the Volunteers were available in any national emergency or in time of war. But they were not available. It was a fact, which he thought the country did not sufficiently realise, that in time of war the Secretary of State for War had not the power to call out the Volunteers. Under the circumstances, it was a reasonable thing to ask—if they were not to be employed in time of war—what purpose were they maintained for? He was afraid that, if they were maintained only to take the place on paper of a reserve to release the Militia and Regular Forces from their duties in the field, the sum of money voted was a great deal larger than it should be, and the sooner the Force, under those circumstances, was disbanded the better it would be for the safety of the country. A few months ago he laid stress in that House on two subjects connected with the Volunteers. One was the subject to which he had just referred—the unreality of the status which the Volunteers occupied, and the other was that of the paucity of officers. But, in connection with this unreality of status, there was a great difficulty—a difficulty that increased as the Volunteers were brigaded with Regular troops—and that was the question of discipline. In reality, it was no exaggeration to say that no discipline existed in the Volunteer Force except what the Volunteers themselves chose to impose on each other. When Volunteers were brigaded with Regular troops they were nominally under the Mutiny Act, and subject to all the punishments which would be inflicted on Regular troops; and he would take one illustration to show how little reality there was in this state of things. Suppose a Volunteer brigaded with the Regular troops under canvas were to commit what was almost the most serious offence the soldier could commit—that was, to sleep on his post—would he be tried by Court Martial or subjected to any practical punishment, except being dismissed from his corps, which, perhaps, would be no punishment

at all? In his opinion, the Volunteers had always had to contend with two classes of enemies in this country, the class of old-fashioned soldiers, who were constantly finding fault with them, and saying they could never do right, and the much more numerous official class, who were always glossing over their faults, and telling them they were the finest fellows alive. Yet they had more than once heard unpleasant stories showing the non-existence of any practical system of discipline in the Volunteer Force. Those stories never reached them from official quarters. They were always glossed over, the same pernicious practice was pursued; and the Volunteers were still told that they were equal to the men of the Line, and perhaps rather better. He ventured some time ago to make a suggestion—to which the right hon. Gentleman promised careful consideration—for improving the discipline of the Volunteer Force without causing any personal inconvenience to individual members of the Force. That was, to take the simple course of putting the Commanding Officer himself under the Mutiny Act. Then, at all events, he would know what the wishes of the authorities were—whether he was pleasing the authorities or not in the manner in which he carried out the instructions he received. On this point he believed that if the authorities would exercise a little care in the selection of Commanding Officers, and not simply take, as he was afraid they did now, any name that was submitted to them, paying very little regard to the age or any other qualifications of the gentleman proposed, they would then have no need to fear administering slightly more stringent discipline. He felt loth to pick holes in a Force to which he belonged himself, but those who never found fault with the Volunteers were not their best friends. Some time ago he put a question to the right hon. Gentleman on the subject of practical joking, which went on in the camp at Shoeburyness, and the right hon. Gentleman treated the subject very lightly. Everybody knew that in camp as long as men were only larking in their shirt sleeves it was a good thing for themselves and everybody else. But when it came to men dressing themselves in full dress, taking their arms with them, and

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going through the travesty of a military funeral they had a right to say that the corps to which these men belonged was in a bad state of discipline, and that the Commandant who was over them should have been held responsible for such a gross irregularity. With very little difficulty he could cite many more cases, though he was happy to say that they were not cases which had come within his personal experience. With regard to the dearth of officers, he was glad to hear the hon. Member for St. Pancras make one suggestion which he (Colonel Brookfield) made some time ago—a suggestion which had been in turn commended by several of the right hon. Gentleman's predecessors. It was, that there should be commissions in the Line given to Volunteer battalions. He believed that at the present time the difficulty of finding officers was really not due to the expense to which officers were put, but arose from a want of public spirit amongst the young men to whom they looked, and looked in vain, for the taking up of these commissions. It was also very much a matter of fashion and prejudice. It was now the fashion for young men of good family to take commissions in the Yeomanry, but there was a sort of social boycott in respect to taking commissions in the Volunteers, and the first really useful thing would be to remove that prejudice. This would not be done by making the officers hold their commissions on eleemosynary conditions, but by making the Force more a part of the defences of the country—a Force to which it would be more a credit to belong. He had alluded to the fact that he had raised this question of the Volunteers on a previous occasion. Before sitting down he would therefore remind the right hon. Gentleman of three definite suggestions which he made, but of which he had since heard nothing. One was the suggestion that Commanding Officers should be placed under the Mutiny Act. Another was, that the Volunteers should be rendered liable to three days' permanent duty on the same footing with the Yeomanry, who were, he believed, liable to six days' duty every year. The third suggestion was, that the right hon. Gentleman should do a thing which he could do at once by a mere stroke of the pen—namely, prohibit meetings of Volun-

teers taking place for the purpose of passing "rules" or carrying amendments to rules. Such gatherings were utterly destructive of even the most elementary notions of discipline. Whilst referring to this subject, he might say that he had seen it announced in a newspaper that a Masonic Lodge had been authorised in one of the Volunteer corps. He appealed to any hon. Member who had served in the Army to say whether regimental Masonic Lodges were not entirely subversive of discipline, and whether it had not in the Army been found desirable gradually to get rid of them. Speaking as a Volunteer and a Mason also, he could not but express the opinion that Volunteer discipline and the existence of a Masonic Lodge in a battalion were incompatible things, and he greatly regretted that the right hon. Gentleman should have sanctioned the establishment of such a Lodge, if indeed his permission had ever been asked at all. He thanked the right hon. Gentleman for the intimation which he had given as to the extension of a decoration to non-commissioned officers. The non-commissioned officers of Volunteers were an excellent body of men, who, if officers were not forthcoming, might have to take the sole command. But while he was thankful for this concession, he would be still more thankful, and indeed the country itself would be more grateful, if he would put the Volunteer Service on a more satisfactory basis, and at once turn his attention to the lamentable dearth of officers.

MR. E. STANHOPE (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): My hon. Friend has referred to the Volunteer Act and to the matters of discipline in regard to which it has not been found to work properly. That is a matter which he usefully brought forward on a previous occasion, and it is one to which I gave a considerable amount of attention. When I was at the War Office I felt some difficulty in passing a new Volunteer Act through the House, because it was calculated to raise questions of considerable difficulty, and no Government could undertake such a task unless it had a large amount of time at its disposal. But the question might be dealt with in another way, and I would suggest that the right hon. Gentleman should appoint a Committee to consider the Volunteer Acts. This

Committee might propose amendments, and a Bill brought in founded on the recommendation of the Committee would pass through the House with comparatively little difficulty. I think it is impossible to exaggerate the importance of the dearth of Volunteer officers, because, although it is only in the lower ranks that it occurs, it is desirable to induce good men to take commissions in the Service. Several attempts have lately been made in that direction. First, there was the grant of the decoration; and, in passing, I may say I am glad my right hon. Friend has thought it desirable to ask Her Majesty to extend some form of recognition also to the Volunteer sergeants. Something might still be done in the direction of exempting Volunteer officers from serving on juries. I am aware that that proposal has been rather thrust aside because some of my hon. Friends asked for a good deal more—namely, total exemption of Volunteers generally. In that I think they are asking too much, but I believe if the Government were to bring in a Bill next year granting the exemption to officers they would be doing a good deal to make the Service more attractive. I know it was the intention of the late Government to proceed with a Bill of this kind, and the Lord Chancellor of that day was willing to give his assent so far as Volunteer officers were concerned. We may have to consider the question of giving some payment to officers in the shape of defraying a portion of their expenses. I confess I do not view such a proposal with unmixed approval, although we may have to come to it. I am afraid it may tend to lower the status of men who seek Volunteer commissions.

*MR. BENSON said, he had been for six years trying to find some one to succeed him in the command of a Volunteer company; he had been unsuccessful in all his attempts; but he did not think that expense was, in any case in his experience, the serious difficulty. He concluded by remarking that the tactical examinations for Volunteer officers were not of a practical character. He thought that any money the War Office could spare could be more beneficially applied than in grants to officers.

COLONEL MURRAY (Bath) said he desired to make a few observations on the refusal of a firm of Government

contractors to allow their men to join the Volunteer Force. When he put a question in the House on the subject a few weeks since, the Secretary of State for War read an explanation from the firm in question, to the effect that in a large factory such as theirs the absence of a number of men involved the stoppage of the machinery, and inflicted great hardships on other men, and on women and children as well, by making them idle, and consequently diminishing their wages. He did not think the firm had in any way justified its action, because it was a well-known fact that Volunteer drills were conducted in the evening and on Saturday afternoons after working hours, and therefore there was no necessity for stopping machinery. The firm to which his question referred was one which made serge for the Army; and it was making a living, and probably a large fortune, out of the country by supplying clothing for the Army and Volunteer Forces. A second letter said that for 20 years the head of the firm was an officer in the corps, and was still one of its strongest supporters. He had given his permission to his men to join the Volunteers, but on his retirement his successor as head of the firm was scrupulous in regard to supporting soldiers—though he had no objection to making money out of an Army contract—and refused the permission. The Secretary of State for War had said that he did not feel called upon to interfere with the relations between an employer and his workpeople, still the right hon. Gentleman might interfere between the employer and his profits by withholding these Army contracts. With regard to the discipline of the Volunteers, there had been many letters in the Press of late criticising the conduct of the men at Aldershot. Only yesterday a gentleman, writing from the camp to *The Times*, said—

"I have witnessed scenes of insubordination and riotous conduct showing absolute want of control of the men on the part of Volunteer officers which has never yet before had a parallel, to my knowledge, within the precincts of a Volunteer camp."

Whether these statements were true or not it was right to draw attention to them, so that some explanation might be given by the Secretary of State for War. The Volunteer Force was a fine one, and if any weaknesses

were detected it in they should be cured. Perhaps it would be well to stiffen it by brigading it with Regular troops. Instead of going into large Army Corps they might go into Brigade camps attached to their territorial regiments of Regulars.

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am sorry that the hon. Gentleman should, on the faith of an anonymous letter, have impugned the value and efficiency of the Volunteer Force. No doubt the Force must always allow themselves to be open to criticism. The General Officer commanding at Aldershot, in his Report this year upon the Volunteers in camp, attaches very little importance to the stories which have appeared in the newspapers as to their state of discipline. The Commanding Officer introduces some qualifications; but, on the whole, he speaks exceedingly well of the Volunteers—not only with respect to their zeal, but of their behaviour. There is a difference, no doubt, in the regiments; some are excellent, and some are far from being excellent; but, on the whole, the Commanding Officer speaks in the most satisfactory terms of them. The hon. Member suggests that the Volunteers should not go to Aldershot, but I think it would be a great pity if they did not. As to the firm of contractors referred to, I manifestly cannot interfere between them and their staff. One member of the firm was a friend of Volunteers, and was himself an officer; but on his retirement the remaining partners had notions of their own as to the employment of Volunteers. If it were a question of punishing only the employer by withholding contracts, the suggestion might be worthy of consideration. But the punishment would fall upon the War Office, for it happens that this firm are most excellent contractors and business men. I am not, therefore, prepared to take the steps suggested. With regard to the scarcity of officers, I must say it is not the blighting mischief indicated. There is one thing about it which is satisfactory so far as it goes. The scarcity is getting no worse, and there is no greater deficiency now than there was a year or two ago. The hon. Member for Guildford made two suggestions with the view of inducing gentlemen to take commissions in the Volunteers.

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One suggestion was that some aid should be given in the shape of camp allowances, and the other was that some aid should be given in the matter of outfit. I am quite willing to consider both of these suggestions, and anything I say now must not be considered as a final judgment in regard to them. As to allowances for going into camp, I think it would be undesirable to make the allowances personal allowance to individuals, and also undesirable in these days to accentuate the differences between officers, non-commissioned officers, and men. With regard to the expenses of the outfit, that no doubt runs into a good deal of money, but we have not anything like a unanimous opinion expressed on the part of the Volunteers that this is a critical difficulty. Some gentlemen who are acquainted with the circumstances of the Volunteers tell me that the outfit is really the great impediment to obtain officers, while others say quite the reverse. Supposing each officer receives £20 on obtaining a commission, the cost to the State would be something like £16,000 a year. That is a very large sum, and I confess I was somewhat surprised when I heard the large cost of the outfit of a Volunteer officer. I doubt very much whether all that cost is necessary, and I suspect that a good deal of uniform is mere fanciful adornment, unnecessary to the discharge of an officer's duty. The proposal to alter the condition of the employment of Volunteers from cases of actual or of apprehended invasion to cases of imminent national danger has been before the House of Commons, and has shown that there is considerable difference of opinion on the subject. And the same may be said with regard to making Volunteers liable to three days' permanent duty, to interference with their holding public meetings, and to other similar questions of discipline in connection with the Volunteer Force raised by the hon. Member for Rye. I am obliged to the right hon. Member for Horncastle for his suggestion that a Committee of the House should be appointed next year to consider the various matters which come broadly under the Volunteer Act. That is a reasonable suggestion. Whether I shall be able to carry it out is another matter, but I do not see any particular difficulty in the way. I have seen a full

account of the mock funeral at Colchester. None of the officers regard the matter as serious. It was merely the arrangement of a mock scene for an amateur photographer—a silly piece of play, no doubt, but not worthy of being described in the serious terms laid down by the hon. Member (Mr. Brookfield). I have not heard of the existence of a Masonic Lodge in any corps. As to the proposal that officers of Volunteers should be exempted from serving on juries, no doubt if the claim were conceded it would not make a large difference in the number of citizens of the country available to serve on juries; but if all Volunteers were to be exempted, who would be left? In these days, too, some exception might be taken to making invidious distinctions between classes in the community if officers were exempted from this service and not privates. Therefore, I cannot see my way, as Minister for War, to take any part either for or against the proposal for this year. As to the proposal that the Volunteer Force should be made a bye-way for admission into the Regular Army, I confess that I am not very much enamoured of the bye-road through the Militia, and I am not disposed to open up another bye-way. There is a most elaborate system of examination for a commission in the Army. Parents are put to very great expense, and boys to infinite torture, in order that they may be fitted for this examination, and yet we are asked to establish sideways by which young men who have never been subjected to this severe test may enter the Regular Army. There is something to be said for the double entry, and if we leave the Militia as it is it will be enough.

*MR. BUTCHER (York) said, the country would receive with satisfaction the statement of the right hon. Gentleman that it was the intention of Her Majesty to bestow on non-commissioned Volunteer officers similar decorations to those conferred on commissioned officers. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman, however, to consider the advisability of extending this mark of favour to Volunteer privates. Probably it would not affect a large number of men, because a Volunteer who had served the requisite number of years would, in all probability, have risen to the rank of

an officer or a non-commissioned officer. Still, there were men who, after long service, for one reason or another, continued in the ranks, and he thought it desirable that they should not be excluded from this mark of favour. The right hon. Gentleman had pointed out that there were many matters in respect of which it was not desirable to make a difference between officers and privates, and he would venture to urge on the right hon. Gentleman that this should be regarded as one of them.

*MR. T. H. BOLTON said, the Volunteers of the country would observe with surprise, if not with some indignation, the tone of the Secretary of State for War in dealing with the suggestion of commissions in the Army for efficient Volunteer officers.

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN : I am sure I adopted no objectionable tone.

*MR. T. H. BOLTON said, that if it was right to render the Militia an avenue through which officers could enter the Army, it could not be wrong to render the Volunteers a similar avenue. If this privilege was desirable with a view of encouraging officers to join the Militia, it was surely desirable from the same point of view in connection with the Volunteers. The Volunteers would regard with dissatisfaction—[“No, no!”]—the slight which the right hon. Gentleman had thought proper to cast upon that body in the answer he had given. Volunteer officers who spent their time and money in the Public Service had a special right to consideration. Right hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench might ridicule the claim of Volunteer officers to be placed on the same footing as Militia officers—[“No, no!”]; but this suggestion had been made before, and it had been favourably received, and it was reserved for the right hon. Gentleman to throw cold water upon it. It might be that officers of the Volunteers did not come from quite the same social strata as the generality of officers in the Regular Army, but that was hardly a reason which should prevail with the right hon. Gentleman. That such a reply should come from the War Minister of a Radical Government was quite unexpected.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES thought it right that Volunteer officers should be

treated in this matter exactly on the same footing as the Militia. It was not a question of adding another bye-way into the Army, but it was a question of letting the Volunteer officers in by the same door as that by which Militia officers entered the Army. He doubted if there was any difference in the class from which the officers of the various branches of the Auxiliary Services came; and even if there were, it would not be very pertinent to the matter. Volunteer officers did not, like Militia officers, join the Service as a profession, but out of their enthusiasm for the defence of the country; therefore, it seemed to him that the door for their admission into the Army should, by preference, be opened even wider to them than to Militia officers. These were the very class of men it was desirable to get into the Army. Though the right hon. Gentleman was put up to say things against the present proposal, he could not fail to be in favour of it. In connection with another matter, he trusted the right hon. Gentleman would stiffen his back against the suggestion for the exemption of Volunteers from service as jurors. It was said that the whole object of the laws of England was to get 12 men into a box. He agreed that that was the main object, but one of the most important things was that these should be good men and true. He knew no better man than the Volunteer officer, unless it was the Volunteer private; and even if they exempted such inferior animals as lawyers and Members of Parliament, he thought they ought to have Volunteers in the jury box. He did not think that Volunteers would wish to shirk their responsibilities in this respect.

MR. WARNER (Somerset, N.) said, the hon. Member who wished as an inducement to gentlemen to become Volunteer officers to see the same facilities for entering the Regular Army extended to those officers as were extended to Militia officers seemed to forget that the Militia were as short of officers as the Volunteers, and the Militia was the more important body, as it could be called out in the event of war, whereas the Volunteers could only be called out in the event of an invasion. He should have liked the Secretary of State for War to have given a little more consideration to the subject of putting the Volunteers in a better position by making them

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liable to serve not only in the event of invasion, but in the event of this country being at war.

MR. A. C. MORTON said, the Volunteers had been sneered at at the Horse Guards, but they knew very well that the Force was of immense advantage to the country. The Secretary of State for War would, no doubt, consider the desirability of opening the door wider for admission into the Army of Volunteer officers, and then probably the three great commands of Portsmouth, Bombay, and Aldershot could be given to Volunteers. As to decorations, he did not trouble much about them. He did not regard them as of much consequence; but the Volunteers did, and their feelings and opinions had a right to be considered. He was glad, therefore, that it was intended to confer these decorations on non-commissioned officers. But he did not see why there should be any difference between non-commissioned officers and privates. He thought we owed a great deal to the Volunteers, and was of opinion that the State should bear the whole expense of equipping and maintaining the Force.

GENERAL GOLDSWORTHY (Hammersmith) thought that the grant made in respect of the Volunteers ought to be sufficient to enable the Force to pay for what was required, and to prevent it suffering pecuniarily. As to what had fallen from the hon. Member for St. Pancras (Mr. T. H. Bolton), he did not think there would be any harm in giving a few commissions in the Army to Volunteer officers. On the contrary, he thought it would be an encouragement to persons to join the Volunteers. A large number of the Volunteer officers were of the same social position as officers in the Army. Anything that could be done to popularise the Service and to show the Volunteers that the War Office and the Horse Guards appreciated their efforts would tend to fill the ranks with men and would also tend to produce a sufficient number of officers. He did not see why officers of Volunteers should not have the same chance of getting into the Regular Army as officers of the Militia had. He was certain it would redound to the credit of any Government to make concessions which cost very little, but which would have a great effect on the country, and

would improve the Service whose interests they all had at heart.

*MR. BUTCHER (York) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman in giving the decorations would distinguish between non-commissioned officers and privates of 20 years' standing?

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have already said I propose to give the decorations to non-commissioned officers only. A private of 20 years' standing has generally either not been zealous enough to obtain promotion to the rank of a non-commissioned officer, or has remained in the corps for the purpose of obtaining shooting prizes. What we want to do is to encourage those who really take an active part in promoting the efficiency of Volunteer corps, and who are officers, on the one hand, or non-commissioned officers on the other.

MR. A. C. MORTON remarked that he had known privates of long standing who objected to become either non-commissioned or commissioned officers on account of the expense. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would re-consider the question in the interests of the Force.

COLONEL NOLAN inquired whether decorations were confined to officers and non-commissioned officers in any Army in the world? In England the very essence of the Volunteer Force was that the private was supposed to be on the same social footing as the officers.

MR. GODSON (Kidderminster) said, he knew two cases of privates who had served for 20 years, who had declined any promotion, and who were not very great shots. He asked the Secretary of State for War whether, before fully making up his mind, he would get a Return of the number of privates to whom such a decoration would be granted for long service? He thought the right hon. Gentleman would find that it would cost the country practically nothing to extend the decoration to such privates.

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston) said, he wished to know whether the Government intended to act up to the spirit as well as the letter of the provision made by the House of Commons two or three years ago for the equipment of the Volunteers. When, as sometimes happened, a battalion had been below its authorised strength, but had been brought up to its full strength, the War Office declined to

make any addition to the Equipment Grant. One corps with which he was acquainted had been for three or four years or more below its Establishment; but a new Commander was appointed, and in consequence of the energetic steps he took the corps was brought up to the proper numbers. The Colonel then applied for an Equipment Grant similar to that which would have been allowed if the corps had been up to its full establishment when the grant was originally made. He was told that the Equipment Grant could not be given in cases where such an addition was made to the numbers. The corps he had particularly in mind was known as the Border Regiment. If at the time the Equipment Grant was originally made this corps had been recruited to its full strength a Capitation Grant would have been received for the whole of the men. Now that the regiment had been made efficient it was in a position of disadvantage as compared with other corps which were also efficient.

***MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN :** The matter has been explained a great many times in this House, and I think the hon. Gentleman perfectly understands it. I do not know that any further explanation is required.

MR. TOMLINSON said, in that case he would move to reduce the Vote by £100 in order to call attention to the question. He concluded that the War Office were, to a certain extent, breaking faith with those who were called upon to administer the Volunteer Forces by declining to increase the Equipment Grant under the circumstances he had mentioned.

***MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN :** I have already pointed out that the Equipment Grant was given by my predecessor to all the men who were then serving. The allowance was given annually to each man. Everyone who has received a great-coat or an equivalent grant has to wait for a further grant until the coat is supposed to be worn out. The great-coat allowance is given for the men who are enrolled on the occasion of any addition to the Establishment, because in that case you have practically a new corps constituted. Unless there is any addition to the Establishment, any increase in the numbers of the corps within its present Establishment is

expected to be provided for out of the funds already given. The annual allowances are not given to individuals, but are added to the funds of the regiment, and it is the business of the regiment to so manage the fund that there shall be a sufficient amount available to meet expenses of this kind. If it cannot meet them immediately the regiment can recoup itself out of the allowances in years to come.

MR. TOMLINSON said, the right hon. Gentleman's explanation showed that those corps which increased their numbers were placed at a disadvantage.

Vote agreed to.

3. £623,000, Transports and Remounts.

MR. JEFFREYS (Hants, Basingstoke) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War could give the Committee any information as to the proportion of horses to men in the Cavalry regiments? It would be very useful to know whether there was a sufficient number of horses to mount the men? He believed that if in case of war we had to send abroad a number of our regiments there would be the greatest difficulty in supplying the men with a sufficient number of horses.

***THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE** (Mr. WOODALL, Hanley) : No.

MR. JEFFREYS said, he was glad to hear the hon. Gentleman's denial; but the opinion he had stated was popularly held in the country, and was also entertained in some of the Cavalry regiments. He wished to know from whence were the horses drawn for remounts for the Cavalry? Formerly a great many came from Ireland, but he had heard that a good many had since been purchased in Canada. He wished to know whether any efforts had been made to encourage the breeding of horses in England so as to obtain remounts for the Cavalry of horses bred in this country? It used to be the custom for officers to go round the country towns in order to see whether they could purchase horses for the Cavalry, but he did not think that system was now pursued. No doubt the 10s. registration fee paid for 14,000 horses was a very valuable provision, but he imagined that the horses so registered were to be used merely for trans-

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port purposes. He wished to know whence these horses were to be drawn? Most of them, he believed, were omnibus and tramway horses, and a Cavalry regiment could hardly be mounted with horses which were accustomed to go in harness.

MR. HANBURY thought the Committee ought specially this year to be keeping their eye on the War Office in order to see that the proper number of horses was kept up. In a year when the cost of forage was so high there would probably be a great tendency on the part of the War Office to cut down the supply. If, as he was informed, the amount estimated for was £4,000 less than last year that rather showed that the fear he had expressed had some foundation. He should like to have an explicit assurance that no such false economy as he had suggested had taken place. He rather grudged the considerable expenditure on part of this Vote, because he felt that a great many of our regiments when moving from one station to another in England might be marched through the country more than they were. There were large districts in England which never hardly saw a soldier, and the result was that the people in country districts were losing all their interest in the Army, and we were failing to get the recruits which used to be forthcoming from the country districts. As his hon. Friend (Mr. Jeffreys) had pointed out, horses were not bought from the farmers to the same extent as they used to be, and the result was that the interest which the farmers formerly took in the Army was being lost. Consequently, too much of our recruiting was now done in the large towns. On the question of allowances for transport, he had had complaints made to him of the heavy expenses which fell on officers of the Umpire Staff and the Staff generally at the Manœuvres. The officers had to find horses at their own expense, and also transports for their baggage without receiving any compensation whatever. He wished to impress upon the right hon. Gentleman that this point was a simple one, and that the grievance ought to have attention, if that could be given to it. Then there was another point as to troopships. Upon that he had to say that the question of troopships required looking into. The *Assistance*, for instance, was a very bad

case, and it was often employed for conveying troops. The overcrowding in that case was very considerable. He had facts before him on the subject. He did not know about the troopships going to India—they might be fairly well off; but certainly that was not the case in regard to the ordinary troopships between this country and, say, Ireland. A great many complaints were made in regard to them. He had personally received a great number of complaints—some containing statements to which he did not give entire credence, but, allowing for that, he could not discount a great deal that was said as to overcrowding and diet, and as to the general treatment of the soldiers, and as to the character of the vessels themselves. Those statements required attention. They had been previously raised in this House, and had been promised attention. They might have received consideration; but that was all that was promised, and he would ask the right hon. Gentleman to go further and deal with them in a manner that would be more satisfactory to the House and to all who were concerned in the question.

*MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN said, the hon. Gentleman declared that these complaints had received no attention.

MR. HANBURY: Consideration; they have not been attended to.

*MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN said, the complaint was that nothing had been done. Well, he could say that he had himself given time and attention to this matter. In the case of the *Assistance*, he admitted that there was good ground for believing that she was not suited for this work. In the case of a recent voyage it was alleged that she had carried a larger number than she was entitled to. The matter was examined into by the Admiralty and the War Office, and it was found necessary to reduce the number she was entitled to carry.

MR. FORWOOD (Lancashire, Ormskirk): By what number?

*MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN said, he was not prepared to say at the moment; but the number had been reduced. It had also been resolved to use their coastwise services in a more moderate measure than hitherto, and to provide, where there was a long distance to be covered, that, if possible, it should

be done by land, and to do all that possibly could be done to avoid discomfort. The hon. Gentleman had made a suggestion that horses had been improperly reduced owing to the high prices of forage. He seemed always to start on the supposition that everybody was trying to do something that was not right, and then he appeared surprised that he was not justified in the supposition. There had been no reduction of the kind indicated by him.

MR. HANBURY said, a Member of the late Government told him to look into this question, as it was a thing all Governments were likely to do.

*MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN said, the fact that the hon. Gentleman was told by someone else did not alter the position. He wished to say that they had sufficient horses for the First Army Corps. Every man did not require to be mounted. They had a sufficient number for all purposes—

COLONEL NOLAN: Are they bought in Canada?

*MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN said, he could not state all the places at which the horses were purchased, but a large number were bought from owners and private breeders.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that the private proprietors from whom such purchases were made existed in reality, and not merely on paper?

COLONEL NOLAN said, he would like to point out that Canadian horses were much dearer than Irish horses, and that they should do what they could to encourage the Irish in the breeding of good animals. There were countries where they had artificial production. [*Laughter.*] Yes; he had come across it himself in Russia. They ought, at any rate, to encourage the Irish people in the rearing of horses. It was absurd to say they should have a horse for every man. They ought to consider the method of training, and the fact that a man could not train two horses and do it properly—at least, he would suffer himself if he was engaged in so much work. The system regarding the purchase of three-year-olds was expensive. The French adopted a like system. In his opinion, they would get them far cheaper if they got them as four-year-olds. Another point was the amount of money spent

Mr. Campbell-Bannerman

on the officers and staff who bought horses. Did they buy from farmers or from dealers? Those that came from dealers were the more expensive; and he knew, from his own experience in Irish fairs, that they could be had at a cheaper rate from the farmers. These were questions upon which they should have information from the Military Authorities.

*MR. FORWOOD said, he was very glad to hear the right hon. Gentleman state that it was intended to use the *Assistance* less frequently than heretofore, because he thought a more unsuitable ship, or one less adapted to modern requirements, could not be found. But, as she was to be less frequently used in future, he would expect the expenditure to come down; yet he found that £10,400 was to be expended in transport work this year against £11,100 last year. If they were not going to use this vessel as often as before, he thought they might consider, as he would strongly recommend, that she should be done away with altogether. He happened to know that the vessel would require very considerable overhauling and repairs, and if the right hon. Gentleman's military advisers did not think she should be used as often, he did not think a large amount should be spent on her for that purpose. He wished to know whether the Admiralty could not be consulted? He also wished to confirm what had been said by the hon. Member for Preston about the overcrowding of troopships. If they took the *Himalaya*, that vessel carried altogether 1,385 souls, but only 900 persons ought to be put on board. He did not think that because a vessel belonged to Her Majesty she should be allowed to carry 400 persons more than she was capable of carrying.

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, the question regarding the *Assistance* had only been decided during the present Session. It was a question upon which the Admiralty would require to be consulted if anything was to be done in the direction stated; for himself, he had an open mind upon the question.

MR. HANBURY said, they now had an admission that there was overcrowding.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I did not say so.

MR. HANBURY said, they had it from the late Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Forwood). He wanted to know where this responsibility rested—with the Admiralty, or with the Military Authorities? Which Department fixed the number? He started with the fact that ships were overcrowded, and he thought they should have a definite answer to show with whom the responsibility lay? It must lie with either one Department or the other.

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, the Admiralty alone could decide upon the point, and, on the representations made to them, they had modified their opinion on the question.

*MR. FORWOOD said, some of these vessels were over 30 years old. When they were built the troops were regarded from a different point of view; and he had no doubt that if an examination were made in each case a very large reduction would be made.

*MR. T. H. BOLTON (St. Pancras, N.) said, he would like a little more information showing how the horses were procured, whether from private owners or from 'bus and tram companies? His opinion was that no private individual would take the trouble that would be involved in registering a horse on the terms given—namely, 10s. a year. He could, therefore, only imagine that the horses were supplied by these companies, and, if that were so, the choice of selection was very considerably reduced. They were told by a distinguished Cavalry officer in that House that only a short time was necessary to make a horse broken to saddle and bridle available as a charger, and it might be necessary to increase this grant, so that they could have a larger number of horses fit for chargers. He could not help thinking that some additional inducement should be held out to private owners to avail themselves of the grant.

MR. E. STANHOPE (Lincolnshire, Horncastle) said, what was intended was that the horses should be capable of doing what was expected of them; and that made a considerable difference. Private owners might be able to supply the horses, but there was the question of inspection, which involved considerable trouble. Last year a number of small owners did enter; but he would point

out that there were always difficulties in carrying out inspection in these cases.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD: Were they inspected last year?

COLONEL NOLAN wished to know whether the horses were procured from dealers, or from individual owners?

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, he could not give the proportion, but he was aware that a number had been bought from private owners.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD: Are they inspected?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Yes.

Vote agreed to.

4. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £6,622,400, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for Provisions, Forage, and other Supplies, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894."

COLONEL NOLAN said, he would like to have some information regarding the quality of the meat and provisions. The soldiers should have their wants adequately attended to in these matters. What he should like to hear was the terms of the contractors, and what was the quality of the food supplied?

MR. HANBURY said, he would like to add a few words to those which had fallen from the hon. and gallant Gentleman. This was one of the most important Votes in connection with the Army, and the question was one of which they heard considerable complaint—that was, as to the way in which their soldiers were fed. A great deal had been done by the late Secretary for War (Mr. E. Stanhope), but he thought much still remained to be done. There was, for instance, the case of the cooking. There was no complaint at Aldershot; but they should know what was passing in other parts of the country. But there were one or two other questions which he would ask on this Vote. He did not know how far the question of forage would affect this Vote; but he knew that in France the additional cost led to a Supplementary Estimate for over £500,000—on account of the additional cost of hay and straw. He did not know what the extent of the additional cost was here, but it had, doubtless, been an-

anticipated in some measure. He saw there had been no rise in the Estimate on this Vote; but that might have been provided for, and he thought they should know, as in many cases any increase must mean an addition to the burdens of the taxpayers. There was the case of fixed allowances. It appeared to him to be a very hard case that men who had such allowances in a year of such an exceptional character as this had been should get only the same allowance as in any other year when the cost was a great deal less. He did not know whether an allowance was being made to meet the circumstances, but he considered that there was a fair grievance on the part of those men. It might be said that the man having a fixed allowance took his chance—that he must take the good year with the bad—but it was to be remembered that the standard was not always the same; that they had not always the lowest prices, and, if that were so, the cost of forage this year must fall heavily upon these men. One other point. The right hon. Gentleman would remember that a month or two ago he called his attention to the advertisements appearing in local papers inducing young men to join the Army on the grounds that they would be get good clothing and good food. The Minister for War promised him that he would see that the advertisements were altered. The idea suggested to the ordinary man by reading in those advertisements that he would be well fed was that the whole of his food would be supplied by the country, which, as they all knew, was not the fact. He should like to know whether the promised alterations had been made in the advertisements? It was absolutely necessary that a man should not be drawn into the Army by such inducements. The whole truth, and nothing but the truth, should be told, and a stop should be put to the practice of getting men to join the Army, he would not say on false pretences, but through advertisements which lent themselves to a false interpretation. Then he would like to direct the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to the question of the appointments of regimental master cooks. He had been told by military officers that it was very important that those men should be made to understand their work. Lance corporals who had gone through some

training in cooking at Aldershot were offered those appointments, and they were accepted principally on account of their smarter uniforms. The men, however, were really not qualified for the posts, and as the cooking fell upon them to a great extent it was of great importance that they should be properly trained in their duties. He was doubtful whether the quantity of food supplied to the men was sufficient; but, at any rate, the complaints had principally been against the quality and the cooking of the food. If the authorities could not get good cooks inside the troops they should get them from outside. He was glad to notice that at Woolwich and other military centres garrison bakeries had been started. There used to be great complaints of the bread, and it used to be thrown away wholesale by the men; but, as a consequence of the starting of these bakeries, the quality of the bread was now much better. The hon. and gallant Member for North Galway had raised a most important point in regard to the meat contracts. Undoubtedly the contract prices for meat were very low. The average price last year was as low as 4½d. per pound. The men must get the very worst portions of the animal for such a low price. The allowance of meat per man was only three-quarters of a pound, bone included; and, that being so, the men should get some of the best portions of the animal and not the worst. He also thought the soldiers ought to be fed on English meat. He was afraid the practice of using frozen meat imported from abroad was growing in the Army. It was very false economy indeed to give the soldiers badly cooked food of a bad quality, and he was inclined to divide the Committee on that point. He was afraid also that the soldiers did not even get the best bits of this imported meat. He believed that it was the practice of Quartermasters and officers to buy their meat at contract price, with the result that they get the best bits and the rest went to the men. That practice was most unfair to the men, and should be stopped. Although the question did not rise on this Vote, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would find means of supplying the men with separate dining rooms, instead of compelling them to eat in their living rooms as at present. With regard to contracts

Mr. Hanbury

generally, he thought the system of long contracts for food was most disadvantageous. Even though the contract prices for meat were very low, they were paying much more than they ought to pay, because they might depend upon it that when a contract was made for two or three years the contractor guarded himself well against any contingency that might arise. A very good custom had been set up in some military centres, in the buying of fodder, of doing away with the middleman and dealing with the producer. He hoped that system would be extended, as the result where it had been tried was a considerable economy.

GENERAL SIR F. FITZWYGRAM (Hants, Fareham) said, that with regard to the feeding of horses, the system in the Army was to give the animals the smallest possible portion of corn and the highest possible portion of hay that would keep them in condition. The allowance was 10 lbs. of corn and 12 lbs. of hay. In the best training and hunting stables horses were allowed as much corn as they liked, which was generally 15 lbs. of corn and 4 lbs. of hay per day. As hay was likely to be dear this year, it would be a good change if the Secretary of State ordered a supply of 14 lbs. of corn and 4 lbs. of hay for the horses. With regard to the question of the meat supply, it had been said that the best parts of the meat were reserved for the officers. If that were so, it was not the fault of the contractors, but the fault of the responsible officer. The contractor knew the amount of meat required, and he brought a whole ox, or the side of an ox, a whole sheep, or the side of a sheep, as the case might be, which gave about 40 lbs. more meat than was needed. The Orderly Officer was generally in a hurry; the contractor had two men with him, one began to cut the fore part, and the other the hind part, leaving about 40 or 50 lbs. of the middle, or best part of the animal, to be carried away by the contractor. There was now a school at Aldershot for the instruction of officers and quartermasters in matters connected with the feeding of the men, and if attention were directed to putting a stop to the practice to which he had referred, there would not in the future be any complaint that the soldiers did not get their fair share of the best part of the joints. He also thought that it

would be a great advantage to the troops if the Secretary of State took the supplying of groceries into his own hands, instead of leaving it to contractors. He had noticed that in some regiments the men looked in good condition, while in other regiments they seemed to be underfed, and he ascribed the difference in the appearance of the men to the manner in which their food supplies were attended to.

MR. J. W. SIDEBOTHAM (Cheshire, Hyde) said, that he had received a letter from a correspondent, who complained that a regiment that had been sent down to Bedford for musketry practice was supplied with blankets which were so filthy and covered with vermin that the men refused them. He hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would make inquiries into the matter, and administer a reprimand to the officer responsible for such a scandalous state of things.

GENERAL GOLDSWORTHY (Hammersmith) agreed that if the Secretary of State supplied groceries to the troops a great improvement in the rations of the soldiers would result. With regard to the cooking of the rations, he did not find, on inquiry, that young officers at Sandhurst were trained in the inspection of meat and other food supplies. It depended entirely on the opinion of the officers as to whether the supplies were good or bad, and, of course, if the officers had not the requisite knowledge and experience, they were likely to pass things that were not good. Cooking was also a matter of great importance, and he would suggest that a large number of men in each regiment should be trained in cooking, in order to be ready for emergencies in the time of war. The Commission which had been appointed by his right hon. Friend the late Secretary of State for War, to inquire into the subject of rations, had recommended that the loaf of bread, instead of being cut into four pieces, should be divided only into two. He thought, however, that each soldier should have his loaf baked separately. That would mean an increase in the cost; but it would also mean less waste, more material, and the bread keeping in better condition. He would also urge that the soldier should be provided with full rations by the State.

*MR. WOODALL said that, with regard to the statement of the hon. Member for Hyde, he could only say that it was surprising. If the hon. Member would furnish him with the particulars he would have a most searching investigation into the matter. He could assure hon. Members the character of the meat supplied to our troops had received, and was still receiving, the most careful attention from the Military Authorities. He was surprised to hear it even suggested that the contracts were for second-class meat. The contractors were required to give assurances that the supply of meat for the troops was of a high quality.

COLONEL NOLAN: What are the words used in the advertisements—"first class" or "choice"?

*MR. WOODALL said, he was not specifically familiar with the details of contracts, but he would be glad to furnish the hon. and gallant Gentleman with the information he asked for. After steady and increasing trials, the opinion of those most competent to speak on the subject was much more favourable in regard to the quality of refrigerated meat than that of the hon. Member for Preston. The contracts for refrigerated meat extended only over a period of eight months in the year, and they did not apply to more than 60 per cent. of the supply, as 40 per cent. must be fresh English meat. The meat was as nutritious, and as satisfactory in every respect as could be desired; and the War Office in using it were only pursuing the same course as other large Institutions throughout the country. Great attention had been given to cooking in recent years, and better apparatus had been provided and instruction given, with the result that, on all hands, there was testimony that not only was the food of better quality than it used to be, but that it was better cooked. There was a class at Aldershot for the instruction of officers and others in matters appertaining to the supply of food. Quartermasters, he might point out, were not able, though the contrary had been suggested, to select from the food supplied tit-bits for themselves. The orders of the Quartermaster General prevented this. With respect to forage, the Military Authorities, in common with other people, had experienced some difficulty

in obtaining hay this season. The contractors, however, had been enabled to fulfil their obligations with an allowance of about 20 per cent. on the price originally agreed upon. But whilst the War Office had had to pay a higher price for hay they had profited by the lower price of oats. Complaint had been made that recruits were likely to be deceived by the promises held out in recruiting advertisements. There was, he believed, no danger now of any deception, because the recruiting advertisements had been severely revised, and no recruit could suppose that he had been promised anything more than was provided. There was nothing connected with enlistment which received more attention than the question of the general food and treatment of the common soldier, and he believed the result was satisfactory to the Army generally. He thought the Committee would agree with him in that opinion.

MR. JEFFREYS (Hants, Basingstoke) said, he did not want to occupy the time of the Committee; but he thought the Financial Secretary should state how it was that no less than 60 per cent. of the meat consumed in the Army was frozen meat, and the remaining 40 per cent. frequently consisted of imported cattle. The forage consisted of foreign oats; and compressed hay and straw, now that it was a little dearer in this country, came from abroad. Therefore, when the British taxpayer voted over £2,500,000 for food and forage for the Army, three-fourths of the articles came from abroad. He considered such a thing was scandalous. If bought in large quantities—as it necessarily must be—English meat could be purchased as cheaply as frozen mutton. He wished some pressure could be brought to bear upon those responsible for the present state of matters. With regard to forage, he certainly thought they should have the supplies, as far as possible, from this country. But, as a matter of fact, the supplies appeared to be provided from abroad. He only wished to bring these matters before the Committee and the country. They were questions that, in his opinion, required attention.

*MR. WOODALL said that, as far as possible, of course, the Government had been glad to avail itself of home-grown produce; but the hon. Member seemed to

forget that this country was incapable of producing more than half the food required for its sustenance. Large powers, however, were now given to officers to make their orders locally and independently; and, in the exercise of those powers, the General Officer at Aldershot had been able to make his own purchases of hay and oats, as far as possible, from the farmers round about. That policy had been largely extended during the last few years.

COLONEL NOLAN said, on the general question, he should like to know how the officers and private soldiers liked this foreign meat? It had occasionally been tried in the Dining Room of the House, and there was an impression that it was not up to the English standard.

MR. HANBURY said, he would move a reduction of the Vote by £1,000, as a protest against the system of feeding the soldiers with meat 60 per cent. of which was refrigerated—meat which hon. Members would not eat themselves—a system which was unjust to the English producer as well as to the soldier. Seeing that he only had three-quarters of a pound of meat a day, the soldier should have the best article which could be procured for him, and not be supplied with frozen meat. He was told that the odd 40 per cent. of the fresh meat supplied was not English, but Spanish; and he did not see why some preference should not be given to English beef, and so confer some benefit on the English producer. The English farmer was not so prosperous that he could afford to dispense with such aid as this would give him. He begged to move the reduction of the Vote by £1,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed, “That a sum, not exceeding £2,621,400, be granted for the said Service.”—(*Mr. Hanbury.*)

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, he could not agree either with the doctrine or the conclusion of the hon. Gentleman who had moved this reduction. It was not attempted to give the soldier anything extravagant or beyond the ordinary character of the food of the masses of the people. He said a certain proportion of refrigerated meat was a perfectly legitimate food. No complaints were made; and the soldiers, so

far as he was aware, were perfectly satisfied. Enormous attention was given to the cooking of the meat, and the soldier got twice the enjoyment and twice the sustenance out of his ration now that he did half-a-dozen years ago. If the soldiers were canvassed he believed no complaint would be lodged as to their food, but that surprise would be expressed at the goodness of the rations they received. It was all very well for the hon. Member to say soldiers must have this and must have that without any regard to the large cost which would be imposed on the taxpayers. But if the men were canvassed, he thought it would be found, as he said, that they had no reason to complain, and that they did not complain.

MR. BRODRICK (Surrey, Guildford) said, he thought upon this question his hon. Friend had gone too far in his remarks about the character of the meat supplied. He should be sorry to have it go forth that their soldiers were fed with inferior meat. A question had been raised with regard to whether there was a shrinkage in cooking in the case of refrigerated meat. If there was a shrinkage, and the soldier received less in weight than he ought, then the country would not be carrying out their bargain with him. But he believed the right hon. Gentleman was in a position to tell the Committee that that was not so, and that in refrigerated meat the soldier received the full amount to which he was entitled.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Hear, hear!

MR. BRODRICK said, yes; they were, he understood, receiving their fair amount at the present time. Then there was the question of refrigerated meat. The whole Army ought to be fed on this meat. He agreed that if the supplies for the Army could be procured of English farmers at the same price as was paid for foreign meat, they should have the preference; but that was not an easy matter to arrange, and he was satisfied that the frozen meat was good, and gave satisfaction to the soldiers. The hon. Member for Basingstoke said that all the supplies could be got in England—so he understood him to say. That was not the case, and he could only repeat what he had said already on that point. He hoped the Committee would support the Government, not because he wished to

see an extension of the system of buying abroad, but because he thought the best supplies ought to be got. The country could not afford to spend £400,000 or £500,000 a year more in buying at home, though, if all things were equal, the home producer should have the advantage.

GENERAL GOLDSWORTHY (Hammersmith) said, probably the Secretary of State for War would be able to tell the Committee the difference in cost between home-grown meat and refrigerated meat. He thought if it would not increase the cost largely, the money ought to be spent among their own people.

*MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet) said, he had only one or two remarks to make. He had heard the expression "buying abroad" made use of by the Secretary for War and other Members. He wanted to know where the meat came from. Did it come from Her Majesty's Colonies? He wished to know whether, although the word "foreign" had been used with regard to the frozen meat, it came from the British Colonies? If it came from the Colonies that expression ought not to be used. If it did not come from the Colonies—if it came from South America, for instance—

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN : It comes generally from Australia.

*MR. J. LOWTHER said, he regarded buying from Her Majesty's subjects, in whatever part of the world they resided, as very different from buying abroad. In his judgment, Her Majesty's subjects ought to have the first pull. His vote would depend very much upon the question of where these supplies were drawn from, and he must protest against the indiscriminate manner in which supplies from abroad were spoken of in the same breath as supplies from portions of the British Empire; and he confessed he regarded the general tone in which this matter had been treated, both by the Government and his hon. Friend near him (Mr. Brodrick), as affording occasion for vigilance upon the part of the Committee.

MR. POWELL WILLIAMS (Birmingham, S.) said, he hoped the hon. Member for Preston would not divide the Committee, because it would be unfortunate if it were to go out to the country that there was any considerable body of

Mr. Brodrick

Members of the House who thought the British soldier was not properly fed. There was no ground whatever for the suggestion, and the soldiers were quite contented with their food. Complaint had been made of the foreign meat, and of its failure to satisfy, in the House; but the fact was, that if the hon. Gentleman who made that complaint was in the habit of having his household supplied with British meat, he had had the same quality of foreign meat supplied under that name over and over again. He would repeat that there was no ground for complaint, and that the Motion ought not to be pressed.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said, when the Front Benches fell out honest men got their own—[*Laughter*—well, he need hardly indicate the converse—that when the Front Benches agreed, Tommy Atkins was in great danger. Instead of the British soldier having the roast beef of Old England, he had the frozen beef of old South America or old Spain. As the occupants of the Front Benches were so enamoured of frozen meat, would they pledge themselves to live on it for the rest of their lives? Would they undertake to give it to their servants? [*Cries of "Divide!"*] They knew perfectly well they would do nothing of the sort. They were told that the cooking was very good—so he understood from the right hon. Gentleman. That, he supposed, was one of the reasons why the frozen meat was endured by the soldier. The goodness of the cookery concealed the badness of the meat. Another argument, to which he would direct special attention, was that this frozen meat was produced on a labour-sweating principle, and by using it they were encouraging that system. He objected also to the supplies of hay and straw from abroad. These were reasons why they should, he thought, agree to the reduction.

COMMANDER BETHELL (York, E.R., Holderness) did not dispute the fact that refrigerated meat was good, but he thought they might well protest against large purchases of meat outside the United Kingdom that was intended for the Army in chief; and in that sense, if his hon. Friend went to a Division, he would divide with him.

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes 31 ;
Noes 141.—(Division List, No. 304.)

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

“That a sum, not exceeding £790,600, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for Clothing Establishments and Services, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1894.”

*MR. BROOKFIELD (Sussex, Rye) moved the reduction of the Vote for the purpose of calling attention to the absence of any Regulation regarding the wearing of distinctive uniforms for advertising and other purposes in the streets. With the permission of the Committee he would refer to a letter recently addressed to the editor of *The Army and Navy Gazette* by an Australian who had noticed with astonishment the wearing of Army uniforms in the streets. This gentleman asked if there was no person connected with the Army who had influence and energy enough to crush out the insult offered to the British Army by peripatetic advertisers. He said—

“Every day in the Strand may be seen gangs of scarecrows wearing British Infantry uniforms,”

and he ended his letter by thanking God he was not an Englishman. He (Mr. Brookfield) believed that this matter had been brought to the personal attention of the right hon. Gentleman, and no doubt the right hon. Gentleman felt some sympathy with the grievance of which he (Mr. Brookfield) complained. Though in the matter of advertising he thought this had been carried to the greatest length, it was not at all confined to that particular form. He himself once attended a meeting at Macclesfield where there was a band performing, which was attired completely in the uniform of a most distinguished regiment, the 17th Lancers. As this was such a distinctive dress, he thought the offence was rather increased. There they were wearing the peculiar button with the inscription “death or glory,” the white facings, cap lines, and so on, and they wore it for no other reason than because they thought it was a handsome dress, and that it was amusing to wear it. This was not fair to the soldier, who was told on joining the Service that it was

an honour to wear this particular dress. He would give one still more remarkable instance, which might strike the imagination of the Committee, and that was the case of a convict recently executed, a murderer of the name of Deeming. This person, in the course of his career of crime, used to wear the full uniform of an officer in the Indian Army, and though it imposed on very few persons indeed, the fact remained that there was no remedy whatever for this insult and outrage which was perpetuated at the present moment by the figure of Deeming being exhibited in the Chamber of Horrors dressed in this brilliant uniform, to which he had not the smallest right or title. The right hon. Gentleman, when such matters had been brought to his notice, had generally contented himself with saying he believed the evil was confined to what he called “travesties” of uniform. He did not see that that made any material difference. Regiments and soldiers ought to be protected by the right hon. Gentleman from travesties being made of the dress they were taught to respect. The right hon. Gentleman said it was impossible to do anything, and asked what they would have him do. [“Hear, hear!”] An hon. Gentleman below the Gangway cheered that, and he (Mr. Brookfield) might answer he would have the right hon. Gentleman do what was done in every other European country; and what was so exasperating in the matter was that the right hon. Gentleman, when his attention was called to it, seemed to join in the wonderment expressed at such a thing being allowed; but it never seemed to occur to him that he was primarily responsible for letting it go on. Some time ago the right hon. Gentleman supplied him (Mr. Brookfield) with a Return obtained from the military *attachés* at Foreign Courts as to the Regulations in force in these foreign countries to restrict the wearing of military and naval uniforms. He would inform the Committee that the offence in Austro-Hungary was punished by the Penal Code with a fine of £5. In France, on the other hand, the punishment was from six months’ to two years’ imprisonment without the option of a fine. In Germany the punishment was six weeks’ imprisonment, or a fine of £7 10s. In Italy the punishment was six weeks’

imprisonment, or fines ranging from £2 to £40. And there were also in all these countries punishments provided for another class of offence that was very common, and that was the improper assumption of military titles. This country stood alone in this, as in so many other matters, in persisting in what involved the greatest injustice to all military men. He ventured to submit to the right hon. Gentleman that he should follow the example of these other countries and should, at all events, make it an offence, punishable by a fine, for a person to wear the distinctive dress of any regiment in the Service if he was not entitled so to do. The right hon. Gentleman might not only make it a punishable offence, but he might make it almost impossible for those who were not soldiers to obtain clothing of this kind. The simplest plan would be to make it an offence either to buy, or to sell, or to make unauthorised uniforms. It appeared to him that this plan might also be adopted. First, to provide Regulations under which all uniform articles, without distinction, should be given in to store at the end of a man's service with the colours. In the second place, if the uniform became a man's own property, let the State or the regiment buy it from him, instead of allowing him to go to a pawnbroker or a marine-store dealer by whom he was invariably cheated. The only other plan was to keep the uniform in store to be issued occasionally for fatigue purposes; then if they had to sell it, then let them make it unrecognisable by the simple process of cutting off the buttons and throwing the whole thing into a dyer's vat and making it black instead of scarlet. That, at least, was a practical way of preventing the evil of which he complained. Whilst on this subject he might say he thought one sure way of making the uniform of the soldier more respected in the streets and elsewhere (as it certainly was not at the present moment) would be for commissioned officers to wear their uniforms more constantly than they did now. The Regulations, Section 12, paragraph 5, left to the discretion of the General Officer commanding the district the dispensing with uniform for purposes of recreation. That discretion seemed to him to be invariably exercised in one direction.

Mr. Brookfield

He also thought that an example might be set to the rest of the Army if the distinguished officers at headquarters and the Horse Guards would wear uniform more often. He should move the reduction of the Vote, but he trusted the right hon. Gentleman would be able to announce to them that he would endeavour to provide some remedy for the evil of which he complained, and which he was sure the right hon. Gentleman must regret, in common with every well-wisher of the Army. He therefore would move the reduction of the Vote by £1,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £789,600, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Brookfield.*)

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping) did not wish to take up much of the time of the Committee, as he considered it was rather a disgraceful question, that of wearing the uniform of the Services about the streets for advertising purposes. He had understood there had been some Order issued on the subject, but he was afraid he was mistaken. He confessed it was very disagreeable—to officers especially—to see these men walking about in various conditions of misery, and with the small remnant of respectability in the shape of Her Majesty's uniform in shreds and tatters. Still, he confessed that it must be a difficult matter for the right hon. Gentleman to deal with, and it was hardly fair to find fault with the existing custom if one was not prepared to suggest a remedy. One thing he would suggest was this: Though he could not think it would be possible to dye the various uniforms all black, he thought perhaps some Regulation might be made whereby the buttons, facings, and collars of the various uniforms should be cut off. Perhaps the new Director General of Clothing might be able to make a better suggestion than that, though he fancied it would have the effect of so destroying the uniform that they would not have the disagreeable sight they so often met with now. Another question he wished to bring forward had reference to regimental badges, upon which he asked a question some time ago. The question related to the right of soldiers to wear national badges on national days. A

notice had been issued giving Commanding Officers discretion to allow soldiers to wear the rose, the thistle, the leek, or the shamrock. He was afraid that would lead to disagreeable results and bad feeling in large garrison towns, as some Commanding Officers might be willing to give the permission and others might not, and he would suggest that the discretion be left with the General Officer commanding in the garrison, as that would insure uniformity, and would get rid of any disagreeable feeling there might otherwise be.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) thought the hon. and gallant Gentleman, and the hon. Member who brought this grievance forward, must be members of a particularly sensitive regiment if, as officers, they could not bear to see the old regimental coats upon the backs of sandwich men. If he understood the effect of their grievance they must have a very slight sense of humour in their composition. But what he would point out in reference to this particular part of the subject was that they had not shown them any way by which they could prevent old regimentals being manufactured for the purpose. They might prevent the sale of old regimentals to the parties who wished to provide sandwich men with such uniforms, but he did not see how they were to prevent the manufacture of old regimentals. To cut off the buttons, facings, and collars, and to dye them all black, would be to deprive the old regimentals of all value and prevent some old soldiers who did a good business in old regimentals from earning an honest penny. What he wanted to point out to hon. and gallant Gentlemen opposite was that they had not taken half a white glove view of the matter. If they wanted to protect British officers from this degradation they must request the War Office to extend its ægis all over the wilds of South Africa, of Australia, and even over South America. He could not speak with regard to the bushmen of Australia, but he could speak for South Africa, and he could assure hon. and gallant Gentlemen they could not go anywhere in South Africa without seeing the natives dressed up in our old cast-offs. He had seen dozens and scores of them standing about with scarlet uniforms clothing the upper half, and their understandings without any

clothing whatever. He could conceive nothing more ridiculous than to object to this, or more likely to bring the scarlet coats of the British Infantry soldier into contempt. He thought it was hardly worth the hon. and gallant Gentleman's while to waste the time of the Committee upon this subject. To speak of it as likely to increase the energy of the War Office was ridiculous.

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN : said, this was not a very large question, and he should not have any difficulty in answering the hon. and gallant Gentleman. He (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) went about a good deal himself, and he was bound to say that the evil, if evil there was, did not assume the proportions attributed to it. On one occasion, of which he had personal knowledge, the uniform worn was not that of the Regular Army, but that of a Volunteer. He agreed with the hon. and gallant Gentleman that it was degrading to the Service to have the uniform of any branch of the Army used in this way—it was certainly unpleasant and vulgar. But how were they to prevent it? The hon. and gallant Gentleman referred them to France and Germany, and the punishment inflicted there. Did he really think that they in this country could introduce a Bill, and pass it here?

MR. BROOKFIELD : Certainly.

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, the hon. and gallant Gentleman said, "Certainly." He (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) would be very glad to see him bring in such a Bill. He had, therefore, the cure for anything that was wrong in his own hand, and perhaps he would set it forth that the House might deal with it. He (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) did not feel that he would be justified in interfering. Then it was said that they should issue a new Regulation. What happened at present was that when a man left the Colours his uniform became the property of the State. The first thing done to it was that the distinctive marks were taken off it, and then it was disposed of; but under a new arrangement it was probable that the uniform would be the property of the soldier—at all events, it would be disposed of to the benefit of the soldier and not given to any clothes-dealer. In that case also attention would be given to the disappearance of distinctive marks. Further

than that, he did not know how anything was to be done. As he had said, it was an unpleasant thing to have such uniforms worn in the manner described, but there was only a certain length to which they could go in this country in the matter of interfering with the liberty of action of the individual. He did not see any advantage that would be gained by adopting the suggestion of the hon. and gallant Gentleman.

MR. HANBURY rose—

THE CHAIRMAN: Is this on the same point?

MR. HANBURY: On the same point, Sir.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order!

MR. HANBURY thought his hon. Friend was entitled to thanks for the way in which he had brought forward that which, so far as regarded the honour of the British uniform, was of great importance.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; Committee counted, and 40 Members being found present,

MR. HANBURY said, the hon. Member had complained of the way in which the British uniform was allowed to be worn by sandwich men and others in the United Kingdom, by which means it was exposed to ridicule and contumely. Various foreign countries had attached severe penalties to the degradation of the national uniform; and although he did not think that this country would ever go that length, there could be no doubt that the matter was very important and worthy of serious attention. But he would remark to the Secretary of State for War that we had in this country a check upon that abuse which existed in no other country, because all these uniforms were sold practically to one contractor and under a most peculiar form of contract, which showed the unbusiness-like character of a great deal that was done in the War Office. It was a fact, which was almost incredible, that every three years, in the month of March, all the disused clothing of the British Army, a great deal of which at the time had not been actually made—perhaps it was not even cloth—was for three years ahead put up to auction and bid for by a ring of Jew merchants. No fewer than 250,000 articles were sold in one year—articles coming from the United Kingdom, from

Mr. Campbell-Bannerman

abroad, and from the Colonies—for a mere song. He believed there were only two conditions attached to the sale of disused clothing—firstly, that it should not be allowed to be sold in England. It might go to the Colonies. It might be sold to the bushmen, and he saw no objection to that. If the bushman liked to swagger about in it, and if it increased his sense of importance, well and good, but the Regulations ought to be more stringent than they were. He had seen British—at places like Havre—handsmen and circus *employés* dressed in the red tunic of the British Infantry, and he considered it a scandal. The limitation in the Rules as they at present stood was not sufficient, and he hoped the hon. Member who had charge of the contracts would put a stop to the existing system. If the clothing, some of which was unused, having been issued to officers' servants, cooks, and so on, was sold in smaller lots in different parts of the country there would be more people to bid for it, and better prices would be realised. It might be sold to the shoddy mills and put to uses of that kind. The second limitation attached to the purchase of the old uniforms was that all the buttons and distinctive marks should be taken off. But this Regulation was not complied with, for he himself had bought old Army overcoats for charitable purposes, and had found the buttons and regimental marks still upon them. Though in these matters they should not punish the people who bought and wore the uniforms—as was done in foreign countries—still, some closer control should be exercised over the contractor. With regard to the ridiculously low prices at which these articles were sold, he found that Messrs. Moore, of Lauderdale Buildings, Aldersgate, advertised ordinary scarlet tunics for use by coolies and other native labourers at 1s. apiece, and the “very best selection” at 1s. 3d. apiece. Blue cloth overcoats were quoted at 3s. 11d., and grey cloth overcoats, lined, with capes, at 5s. 11d.—“very best selection” 7s. 11d. This showed the small price the original contractor gave for the goods when, after passing through the hands of several middlemen, the articles could be sold at these low rates. Something had been said about this disused clothing becoming the property of the soldier himself. That

would, to a certain extent, do away with the scandal he had mentioned. At the beginning of the Session he understood the matter had been definitely settled by the late Secretary of State for War, but only an hour ago the present Secretary of State for War told them that no decision had been arrived at. After all this incubation he should have thought that the right hon. Gentleman would have been able to give them some official information. He should have thought the right hon. Gentleman could have made up his mind on such a simple point in a few hours. He was bound to say that, if only to avoid the scandals to which he had alluded the Secretary of State for War might have settled the matter long ago. With regard to the sea-kit and Indian clothing of the troops, he had some suspicion that, though there were a great many grievances connected with the clothing of the British soldier at home, the only concession which would be made would be in connection with the Khaki uniforms, for the reason that the burden would fall not upon the British taxpayer, but on our Indian fellow-subjects. ["Oh, oh!"] "Oh, oh!" said an hon. Member, but no one would deny that if a concession were to be made to the soldier in regard to his sea-kit and Indian clothing, the Indian and not the British taxpayer would suffer.

MR. E. STANHOPE said, he desired to deny that either on one side of the House or the other was there a wish to gain any advantage for this country at the expense of the Indian taxpayer.

MR. HANBURY said, his statement was that the two concessions made would fall upon the Indian taxpayer, and he desired to see a similar burden borne by the British taxpayer. He now wished to call attention to another point, about which he confessed he did not feel much certainty, as the information which had reached him was somewhat contradictory. He was informed that recruits were very often obliged to find considerable sums of money out of their own pockets to replace clothing worn out, on account of the extra amount of work and drill that fell to the lot of recruits. He should like some definite information on this point. The subject of advertisements he had referred to on a previous Vote. It

was announced in the ordinary advertisements that the man who joined the Army was to be well fed. The recruit was also informed that he would be well clothed, which would be naturally understood to mean that there would be a free kit supplied. They knew, however, that a number of articles of clothing had to be paid for by the men themselves, and he desired to see that fact set out in the advertisements. Probably these matters had been already dealt with, but subjects had been overlooked before, and he wanted to make sure that at any rate these things should be thoroughly impressed on the mind of the Secretary of State for War. The next point on which he wished to make a few observations was as to the reserves of clothing. Looking at the Appropriation Account, he found that the reserves fell off to the extent of 20 per cent. in 1891-2. He was sorry to see that, because one thing which struck him very forcibly was that our reserves of clothing for an emergency were very small indeed. We had a reserve of ordinary clothing for 50,000 men, and of hot climate clothing for 30,000 men. This was a very small amount, having regard to the fact that the Reserves now amounted to 76,000 men. They knew, as a matter of fact, the Pimlico Clothing Establishment would not be ready to meet an emergency if it arose. He was one of those who had always objected to the Pimlico system. He had always thought that it would be better to adopt the Continental system, under which the clothing was made up by the regiments or battalions themselves—a system which had been in vogue with our own Cavalry. The clothing for the Infantry was sent down from Pimlico in assorted sizes, and instead of the uniform being made to fit the soldier the soldier was made to fit the uniform. That was a ridiculous system, and a very costly one, because the soldier grumbled when his clothes reached him, and great cost had to be incurred by the regiment in getting them made to fit. The one redeeming feature had been that, as he had said, the Cavalry regiments were allowed to make up their clothing for themselves. But that was to be done away with. He did not know what reforming genius suggested this—whether it was the brilliant idea of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Horncastle Division or

of the present Secretary of State for War. Whoever it was, he heartily congratulated him upon it, and he hoped the Cavalry soldier would glory in the new uniform. There was one important fact, however, that ought to be borne in mind. Our Army contained proportionately more married soldiers than any other Army in the world. Many of the wives of the soldiers were by no means in a prosperous condition, more especially those unfortunate women who had married soldiers without leave. In Prussia many of the soldiers' wives did a great deal of the work of making and repairing uniforms, and up to the present time the wives of our soldiers had done a good deal in that direction. He thought it a thousand pities that such work should be taken away from them, and that all of it should be concentrated at the central dépôt in Pimlico. He had always contended that the Pimlico Establishment was a bad one. In the first place, it was situated in the worst possible spot in London. He believed that if the site were sold it would bring in a very large sum indeed to the British taxpayer, as it was in a more or less fashionable locality where building land was valuable. It was also in a neighbourhood where wages were exceptionally high. The uniform of the British Army cost at present something like 50 per cent. more than the uniform of the German Army. Surely a uniform that was good enough for the German Army was good enough for us. The British uniform, besides being costly, was unserviceable. If we were to go to war to-morrow he believed we should adopt a totally different uniform from that which our soldiers were wearing now. If the smokeless powder was to be adopted our present uniform would be about the worst we could possibly have, because it would be more visible than any other in Europe at the present moment. In order to show the difference in the cost he would compare our uniforms with those worn in the German Army. The Cavalry uniform in the English Army cost £4 18s., whilst the German Cavalry uniform cost £2 18s., or very nearly 50 per cent. less. The English Infantry uniform cost £3 14s., whilst the German Infantry uniform cost £2 11s., or about 30 per cent. less. At the same time, the German uniform was required to last a

great deal longer than the British uniform. He confessed that in the German Army the period the uniform was required to last was something ridiculous, and he should be very sorry to ask our soldiers to wear their clothing for such a long time. Still, as a matter of fact, the German uniform did last a great deal longer than the British uniform. He felt bound to complain about an appointment recently made at Pimlico. Once more a civilian with practically no knowledge of the particular subject he had to deal with was placed at the head of the Army Clothing Establishment. He believed this gentleman had been a most valuable public servant at the War Office, and he did not wish to depreciate his services as a War Office official; but he contended that, distinguished public servant as he was, he could have no knowledge whatever of the Army Clothing Establishment at Pimlico. He very much regretted the appointment, and thought a great opportunity had been lost; but the mischief was now done, and he was not going to move a reduction in consequence. He had laid stress on the fact that there were very small reserves of clothing for the Line, whilst there was absolutely no reserve of clothing for the Reserve. If the Reserves were called out to-morrow we should have no uniforms to put on their backs. This was a somewhat awkward state of things. There was one peculiar feature in connection with this matter about the Pimlico Factory. In all the other factories in case of an emergency we could depend upon the men doing their work, because they were on the Establishment and entitled to pensions; but if an emergency arose which would necessitate a large manufacture of clothing, we should not be in a similar position with regard to Pimlico, because at Pimlico there was practically no Establishment, and very few of the men drew pensions. The result might very well be that at an important crisis a strike might take place at Pimlico, and we should either have to raise the wages considerably or do without the supply of clothing needed. The main point he had in view, however, in addressing the Committee was to call attention to the system of disposing of disused clothing, and he hoped that his hon. Friend opposite (Mr. Woodall) would do what he could to put

Mr. Hanbury

an end to a system which was certainly not advantageous to the British taxpayer, and which was unjust to the British soldier.

*MR. WOODALL said, his hon. Friend who had just sat down had so completely departed from the Amendment before the Committee that he might take it that the Committee was now discussing the Main Vote. His hon. Friend had travelled from China to Peru, and had dealt with a very large range of subjects. With reference to this disused clothing, it was, no doubt, impossible for the War Office under the present system to guard against the dangers of rings of contractors constituted for the purpose of making the objects of the sale realise less than they were worth. All he could say was that under the old system the worn-out clothing was offered for sale in the most public manner, and was disposed of under certain restrictive conditions for the highest tenders. It was quite true that sometimes good clothing was sold with the bad, but, on the other hand, the contractor got a great deal of clothing that was absolutely worthless. As to the great-coats which had particularly attracted the attention of his hon. Friend as having been sold very cheaply, they originally cost £1, and did not reach the hands of the contractor until they had been worn for five years. The ingenious contractor probably made one good garment out of a number of old ones. The War Office had, however, done something to change all this. His hon. Friend thought it was strange that the Secretary of State for War should have been so long in making up his mind as to the expediency of adopting a new system, but his hon. Friend knew perfectly well how a change of such importance involved many intricacies, besides necessitating the assent of the Treasury. He (Mr. Woodall) believed he was betraying no confidence when he said it had now been determined, as was recommended and advised in the first instance by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. E. Stanhope), that the clothing of a soldier should become his own property; that he should have every opportunity of economising, and that at the conclusion of his term of service he should be at liberty to make such a sale of it either to his comrades or within the walls of the

barracks as was consistent with the Regulations.

*MR. BROOKFIELD: Will he be able to sell it out of barracks?

*MR. WOODALL said, he would not. As to the clothing used in India, the system used to be for a soldier on landing in India to bear the expense of an outfit of Indian clothing. A change had now been made, and at present the whole expense of the necessary garments was borne by the Indian Government. As to fatigue clothing for the recruit, he thought the change he had just mentioned would meet the difficulty suggested by his hon. Friend. From the time a man was recruited he would become the owner of his uniform, and there would be every possible inducement to him to economise his clothing. He would be able either to buy clothing from his comrades, or to use such portions of his own uniform as might not be quite fitted for parade. A very grave charge had been made with regard to the clothing of the Reserve. On that point also he was able to give his hon. Friend the fullest and most satisfactory information. He had been unable to follow his hon. Friend precisely in detail, but he could assure him that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Stanhope) fixed the quantity of clothing it was necessary to have in reserve, and that the Regulation laid down by the right hon. Gentleman had been carefully carried out. He would repeat unreservedly that the Regulations laid down by the former Secretary of State for War had been carefully observed. The practice of manufacturing the articles from certain models at Pimlico, and then having the clothing adjusted by the regimental tailor, was a system which had been attended with very advantageous results. As to the objections which had been raised against the selection of Pimlico as a site for the Clothing Factory, he could only say that the responsibility did not attach to the present nor to any recent Government. But it must be admitted that they experienced no difficulty in obtaining labour on fair and moderate terms. With regard to the recent appointment to the Directorship of the Clothing Factory at Pimlico, the Government were of opinion that, in view of the system which prevailed, and possessing, as they did, the admirable service of expert and practical

men, it was desirable to place at the head of that Department a man of administrative training and official experience, enjoying the confidence of successive Secretaries of State. Such a man they had secured in Mr. Fleetwood Wilson. He did not think the Committee would expect him to go into the comparison between the cost of the clothing of an English soldier and that of a Continental soldier. They had to deal with a system that was in the strongest contrast with the Armies of the Continent. Our Army had to be made attractive in the matter of clothing as in other matters, and it was absolutely necessary, following upon that, that it should cost us a little more per man than was the case in other countries with an entirely different system. A comparison might as well be made between the appearance of our workmen and the workmen of the Continent as between our soldiers and Continental soldiers in the matter of clothing.

MR. E. STANHOPE was not going to follow the hon. Member for Preston into the whole of the matters he had raised, but there were one or two points with which he should like to deal. With regard to the reserve of clothing, when he went to the War Office he felt that this was one of the first things they ought to deal with, so that they might have such a reserve of clothing as would enable the troops to take the field without any delay. He accordingly consulted with the Military Authorities and the Director of Clothing, and an agreement was arrived at by which they took into account not only the actual clothing in store, but that also which was in process of manufacture. They considered that the moment any apprehension arose of a war, that clothing in process of manufacture could, in a very short period indeed, be actually converted into wearing clothing. They also took into consideration the actual resources of the country, and they laid down the absolute requirements of the Army as to what ought to be in store in order to enable the military forces of the country to take the field without delay. That quantity was laid down, and was maintained during the period he held Office, and he firmly believed if that store of clothing was constantly maintained in the same condition as heretofore, the difficulty as

to reserve of clothing would have been practically got over. As to the question of Pimlico, the hon. Member for Preston was very foud of attacking Pimlico. Hon. Members of that House had an opportunity of going to see the factory at Pimlico any day they pleased, and if they went there and examined for themselves the method of manufacture carried on there, he should be surprised if they then endorsed the accusations made by the hon. Member for Preston.

MR. HANBURY: My complaint was as to the site—

MR. E. STANHOPE declined to give way to the hon. Gentleman. The hon. Member had made many complaints of Pimlico as a whole, and he (Mr. E. Stanhope) was not going to be put aside by that statement. He asked hon. Members to go to Pimlico and judge for themselves, and when the hon. Member made his speech next Session they would have an opportunity of knowing what its merits were. As to the site of Pimlico, that was not a matter for which any recent Government could be blamed—if, indeed, there could be said to be any blame in the matter at all. As a matter of fact, Pimlico was one of the most convenient sites in the world. The moment war was declared hundreds of tons of clothing could be sent away at once. Pimlico was within easy reach of all the Railway Stations, and within 48 hours all the requisite clothing could be despatched from there to its destination; therefore, although there might be some disadvantages, on the whole the site of the factory was convenient and well chosen. As to the appointment recently made to the Directorship of the Army Clothing Establishment at Pimlico, he believed it was an admirable one, and one which was likely to lead to the advantage of the Public Service.

MR. WADDY (Lincolnshire, Brigg) said, the point which commenced this controversy seemed to have been forgotten—namely, the assertion that a great number of uniforms of our soldiers were to be found in this country and other countries under circumstances which were by no means reputable or creditable to our management of the Army. If that were true, it was a monstrous shame. He understood the Secretary of State for War to deny that these uniforms were so sold, but the hon. Member

Mr. Woodall

for Preston, in the most detailed fashion, stated the circumstances under which they were sold, and which were not, as they understood, for the purpose of destruction, but they were sold to certain contractors without any limitation or condition against re-sale.

MR. HANBURY said, the condition attached was that red uniforms might not be sold in this country or India without the buttons being taken off.

MR. WADDY said, the limitations were of such a character that the contractors could immediately after advertise them for public sale in Houndsditch and elsewhere, and that was done as a matter of trade, as had been shown by the Circular read out by the hon. Member for Preston. It was perfectly clear that these uniforms ought not to be sold when they were in such a condition that they could be used for the purpose for which they were originally intended. They should be used so long as they could be reasonably used, and no longer, and then they should be sent down to the West Riding or some other place, where that instrument known by the uncanny name of the "devil" would tear them up in such a way that they could no longer be worn.

*MR. WOODALL said, he had already stated that important changes with regard to clothing were about to be brought into operation, and the War Office pledged themselves to look into this question, in order to guard against the abuses which had been brought forward.

MR. WADDY said, if that was to be done he was quite satisfied, and all that was necessary for him to say was that it ought to have been done long since. They ought to be grateful to the hon. Member for Preston for giving them information on many important points.

COLONEL NOLAN desired to know what proportion of clothing was now made in Limerick? He expressed the fear that central establishments, such as Pimlico, would be likely to cut out provincial establishments which employed a large amount of labour. Of course, as the clothing for the Army had to be manufactured rapidly it was necessary to keep up a central establishment; but they should not go to the other extreme, and concentrate everything in one Public Department, to the injury of private firms.

*MR. WOODALL said, that although it had been necessary to establish Government factories, the plan of the Government was to keep actively alive the outside trade. He believed that of the Army clothing required, fully one-third in value was obtained from outside firms, and that among the many competing factories which participated in that portion the factory at Limerick, which had always been held in the very highest regard, obtained a fair share. With respect to the employment of women, he thought the Committee would be pleased to know that 300,000 shirts annually required for the troops were made by the wives of soldiers, widows of soldiers, and pensioners.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES believed the old argument which had been used by the right hon. Gentleman, that it was necessary to have the uniforms attractive so as to make the Army popular, was unsound. Which did the right hon. Gentleman consider the more attractive of the two Services—the Army or the Navy? The Navy never had any difficulty in getting recruits, but there was constant difficulty in getting recruits for the Army. Therefore, if they had no difficulty whatever in getting men for the Navy whilst they had for the Army, it was a proof that the Navy was the more attractive Service of the two, as undoubtedly it was. That was a sufficient answer to the argument that it was necessary to make the uniform attractive. But it was perfectly possible to make the uniform attractive, and at the same time a working uniform, which the present uniform of the soldier was not. The men in the Navy made their own clothes, and he could never understand why the soldiers, first of all, should not have a working uniform; and, secondly, having so much less to do than sailors, why they should not make that working uniform themselves, and thus save a vast amount of money to the country. He hoped they would not hear again the excuse for this lavish expenditure on clothing that it was necessary to make Tommy Atkins look beautiful in the eyes of the servant-maids. The sailor was just as popular as the soldier, although his uniform was much cheaper, and he made it himself, an example which the Army Authorities might

see followed by their branch of the Service.

*MR. BUTCHER remarked that when a soldier joined the Army he was given a uniform which he was told to keep clean. To do so he required certain materials, such as pipe clay and other things, every one of which he had to buy out of his own pocket. It might be said that this was a very small hardship; but these small things produced much discomfort to the soldier, and ought to be abolished.

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I promise to look into the matter referred to by the hon. Member for York.

Question put, and negatived.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

6. £114,400, Establishments for Military Education.

MR. HANBURY wished to bring before the notice of the Secretary of State for War a statement which he had received from an officer of high reputation in reference to the Artillery College. He was informed that the number of Artillery officers occupying posts in the different factories was becoming smaller and smaller, and that this College, with its highly paid staff costing £5,000 for the training of these officers, was now more or less unnecessary. During the last 26 years the average number of students who had annually obtained certificates was three; and as the period of residence was two years, these students had cost £2,000 each to the country, and at present there were only five officers studying for these certificates. He would also like to know whether it was the fact that the posts in the manufacturing establishments, to train officers for which the College had been founded, were now open to civilians? If that were so, then the need for the College was at an end.

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I admit that the Artillery College, which was established for the teaching of the higher Artillery studies, is an expensive institution, as the number of students is necessarily limited. I am quite sensible of the fact that it can no longer be confined to Artillery officers, and accordingly, with the view of enlarging the field of selection, not only for appointments in the Manufacturing Departments, but for appointments in the Inspection

Department, I issued a new Regulation admitting members of other branches of the Service to the College on the condition that before entrance they passed a test examination in order to show that they had sufficient knowledge of the scientific subjects to enable them to profit fully from the instruction given in the College.

COLONEL NOLAN said, he knew the Artillery College well, as he had spent two years in it, and he insisted on its great usefulness. The small number of students was due to the fact that officers went there at a pretty advanced age, between 30 and 40 years, in order to equip themselves with the highest possible scientific attainments. Artillery was not like Cavalry—all dash—or like Infantry, in which the chief qualities required were zeal and courage. The Artillery required those qualities also, but it won chiefly by science. The point, therefore, was whether they would grudge those couple of thousands of pounds a year when they had in return for the expenditure a few Artillery officers of the highest scientific attainments in every brigade? Another reason why the students in the College were few was that the officers who passed through it were badly rewarded. He thought an inducement should be held out to officers to go through the College by rewarding those who passed through it creditably with good appointments. He thought the Secretary of State for War should pause before he opened the Artillery College to Infantry officers, because it would mean an entire change in the course of study.

*SIR A. HAYTER (Walsall) said, he desired to call attention to certain defects in the system of education pursued at Sandhurst—defects which all visitors agreed were very serious. He was sure it would be a surprise to Members to be told that the hours of study per diem at Sandhurst were only a little over four in summer, and less in the winter. There were no lectures on Saturdays, with the result that a great many of the students left the College from Saturday to Monday, not much to their own advantage, and certainly to the great expense of their parents. Some of the studies were entirely useless—such as military law and musketry, which had to be gone through again when the student joined his regiment. The study of tactics ought to be

Mr. Gibson Bowles

carried very much further, or abandoned altogether. It was proposed that there should be a better system of teaching military history and geography, both of which subjects were extremely useful. In the entrance examination at Sandhurst no fewer than 2,000 marks were given for French and German, and in the Vote under discussion provision was made for rewards for proficiency in foreign languages. Yet in the whole course at Sandhurst there was not the slightest inducement held out to continue those studies, which would be of the utmost value later on. It was a mischievous policy to induce young men to learn French and German before they entered Sandhurst, and afterwards to give them no opportunity of prosecuting the study of those languages. The expense which a cadet was forced to incur for uniform ought to be reduced. He was obliged to provide himself with four uniforms. The mess jacket might be abolished with advantage, and the tunic worn at mess instead. The helmet, which was very expensive and hardly ever used, might also be done away with. He hoped he had made out such a case as would induce his right hon. Friend to look into it, with a view to reducing the expenses at Sandhurst, which were very heavy on poor officers, and improving the system of education, which at that critical period of his career every young officer so much required.

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am obliged to my hon. Friend for having made this statement, for it shows that when I induced him to serve on the Board of Visitors I had got hold of the right man. I think that the recommendations of the Board of Visitors are very sensible. I cannot, however, at this moment say that they can be adopted; but I undertake to give careful and sympathetic consideration to all that my hon. Friend has said.

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston) thought that whatever change was made in the uniform in use at Sandhurst it would not be desirable to abolish the mess jacket and substitute the tunic instead, for if these young officers were required to have a full dress uniform it could not be kept in the condition for which it was primarily designed if used at mess. An inexpensive sort of mess jacket might be devised.

MR. HANBURY said, the statement of the Minister for War that he intended to throw open the Artillery College to all branches of the Military Service reminded him that some weeks ago he had asked the right hon. Gentleman to throw open the College to Infantry officers, so as to enable them to get a training in their own small arms. Complaints had been made that small arms were inspected by Artillery officers. Infantry officers considered that small arms should be inspected by some of themselves. He, therefore, wished to know whether Infantry officers who passed through the College would be qualified for these posts of inspection?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Anyone who passes with credit through the College will be eligible for every post.

Vote agreed to.

7. £126,300, Miscellaneous Effective Services.

*CAPTAIN GRICE-HUTCHINSON (Aston Manor) said he, on a previous occasion, had called attention to the very inadequate contribution which the Government made to the admirable charitable institution, the National Society in Aid of Discharged Soldiers. The donation had been only £200, and the Government had generously increased it. Much might still be done in other directions. Just now there was a great demand for work by Reserve soldiers. According to the last Report of the National Society, 11,000 Reserve soldiers had sought employment, and the Society had been successful in obtaining 4,000 situations. The Report of Lord Wantage's Committee showed that a great deal more might be done for them than was done. As far as he could ascertain, not one of the recommendations made by the Committee had yet been adopted. The system of deferred pay was condemned by most of the witnesses who appeared before the Committee, it being their opinion that it bribed men to join the Reserve. There were many posts now filled by men who were kept on the active lists which should be given to Reserve soldiers, the employment in these positions being really civilian employment. On the question of technical education, a soldier should certainly have an oppor-

tunity given him, if not of learning a trade, at least of keeping up the one he might have already learned. This would be a great advantage to him when he left the Colours and joined the Reserve. He did not see why in the great camps, such as Aldershot and the Curragh, some system of this kind should not be inaugurated.

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, the contribution to the National Society for Old Soldiers had now reached the substantial figure of £500. When he was in Office in 1886 he had been the first to induce the Treasury to recognise the Society. At that time the contribution was, he thought, £20; it had since gradually increased till it reached £500, being higher this year than in any previous year. That was a substantial proof of their desire not only to encourage the employment of discharged soldiers, but also to aid this Society, which did so much in all parts of the country for that purpose. This question had been discussed several times during the present Session, and he had nothing to add to what he said on those occasions. He was most anxious to provide even better opportunities than now existed for the employment in various capacities of discharged soldiers and Reserve men, and everything he could do in that direction he would not fail to do.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER observed that, although the right hon. Gentleman had enunciated very sound sentiments on this question of the employment of discharged soldiers, he did not think all the right hon. Gentleman's Colleagues—and certainly not all the supporters of the Government—had taken precisely the same view. If the Government in all its various Departments were to offer opportunities for the employment of old soldiers, he believed more would be done than could possibly be accomplished by any private agencies. He would like to ask the Secretary of State for War had he succeeded in pressing upon his Colleagues the desirability of extending the system of the employment of Reserve soldiers throughout the different Government Departments? Until he had done that he did not think the right hon. Gentleman would have discharged his full duty in connection with this subject, in connection with which they were asked to make a specific Vote from the

pockets of the taxpayers. By practice and example the Government could do much more than they could do by the Vote of £500 to which the right hon. Gentleman had referred as having been due, in a great measure, to his own individual effort. He recognised that the right hon. Gentleman had done his duty towards this matter, and he hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer, when any of his Colleagues came to him for any augmentations of their Departmental resources, would impress upon them that they ought as far as they possibly could to assist in this great national work in which the Secretary of State for War, so far as he was able, had evinced a warm interest. Some hon. Gentlemen opposite, however, rather threw cold water on this subject, and seemed to think that some of their constituents might be shut out of the receipt of some jobbing appointment if this system were carried out. They appeared to think that the recommendations they might forward to the Departmental Chiefs might be set aside, and the places they sought for their constituents occupied by deserving persons who had served the Crown. He hoped the Government as a body would seriously consider this matter. The employment of old soldiers, he ventured to say, was a matter of urgent and vital concern. There were few inducements for men of good character to enter the Army and encounter what was, in many respects, a hard life. But if they were to realise that occupations would be prepared for them when they advanced in life and were unable to serve longer with the Colours, the inducement to enter the Service would be much greater, and the labours of the recruiting sergeant would be largely decreased.

MR. E. STANHOPE said, before they left this subject he wanted to call attention to a very important question. They had all, he hoped, endeavoured, as far as they could, to promote the employment of Reserve and discharged soldiers. He himself, while in Office, did all he could to encourage that employment; and in conjunction with the late Postmaster General established a system by means of which enormous encouragement was given to discharged soldiers in the Post Office and in the service of the Railway Companies. This Session ought not to be allowed to terminate without obtaining

from the Postmaster General a distinct statement of what he had done in this matter. If the right hon. Gentleman had done what was ascribed to him in the public Press, then he believed he had done that which was most calculated to interfere with the employment of discharged and Reserve soldiers in the Post Office.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Belfast, W.) called attention to the labours of the Ordnance Committee in reference to field-guns and siege-guns. He had seen two experimental 12-pounder guns for siege purposes started at Woolwich Arsenal up to the present time, and as far as he knew, they represented all the efforts of the Ordnance Committee. Three years ago he saw the practice with two experimental howitzers which were to be supplied to the Army by the Ordnance Committee, and these guns were still in the experimental stage. He had seen most extraordinary practice abroad with these guns. He had seen in every Army in Europe guns lighter in weight than our guns, at the same time carrying much heavier shell, and there was not a single one of the right hon. Gentleman's military advisers who did not know perfectly well that the present 12-pounder field-gun was utterly unsuitable, the very slight gain in the additional velocity being more than outweighed by the great disadvantage of the weight of the gun. At Aldershot the wheels of the guns were six inches higher than the wheels of the corresponding guns on the Continent; the weights were greater, and, what was worse was that, whilst our guns were confined to carrying 12-pound shells, the German and French had guns carrying 18 or 20-pound shells. They had been waiting year after year in this country for something to be supplied to the Artillery which would furnish them with what they required; but they seemed to be getting no nearer to this result. Their present field-guns were too heavy, and whilst as regarded howitzers they had only 12-pounder guns, Continental Armies were supplied with 30-pounder howitzers. He should like to know whether the Ordnance Committee had got beyond the experimental stage, and whether there was any hope that these howitzers would be furnished within a reasonable space of time?

COLONEL NOLAN desired to have some information from the Secretary of State for War as to the value of cordite. When it was kept in war magazines or otherwise knocked about, was there any change of velocity? He should like to hear some statement as to the permanence of this velocity.

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN regretted that the question respecting cordite had not been put on the previous night, when he had all the facts and Reports by him. He had every reason to believe that cordite would be safe at 120 degrees; but, on the whole, he believed it would be safer to base their calculation on 100 degrees. Although he had not the Reports at present, he could honestly state that all the information received by him in regard to cordite was favourable. It did not lose any of its energy by being kept. With regard to the question by the Member for West Belfast as to the lighter field gun, he was glad to say that most satisfactory progress had been made in that matter, and there was every prospect of an early adoption of a gun that would give satisfaction. He quite agreed there had been a long delay in the matter, but he hoped they were now near a solution.

*SIR C. W. DILKE desired to know if the Secretary of State for War could state what was the temperature at which cordite began to go wrong? Did it commence to go wrong at a temperature of anything like 100 degrees, because 125 degrees was not an uncommon temperature in the Bengal Service?

MR. HANBURY said, that certain experiments were to have been made at Okehampton with cordite. The day before that on which the tests were to be made an artificer went down to prepare the guns, but when he arrived he found he had not got the proper tools for the purpose, and the experiments could not, therefore, be carried out. He should like to have some information as to what did happen.

*MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN could not give a clear explanation as to the actual details of the case, but he believed what occurred was substantially what the hon. Member had stated. Some slight alterations were necessary in the mechanism of the guns before the experiments could be made.

MR. HANBURY : Will all the guns have to be altered for cordite ?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN : Yes.

*SIR C. W. DILKE : To what extent does it go wrong at 100 degrees ?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN : That I cannot say.

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston) : The experiments, I understand, were not carried out. Is it intended to complete them on some future occasion ?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN : No doubt.

MR. BRODRICK said, as to the sums voted for the employment of Reserve soldiers, he would like to know what number of men had now been received into the employment of the Railway Companies in accordance with the promise made by the Railway Companies to the late Secretary of State for War ?

THE CHAIRMAN ruled that question out of Order, as there was no matter relating to the Railway Companies in the Vote.

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN said, he had not the information which would enable him to answer this question ; and even if he had, he ought not to give it, as the Chairman had ruled it out of Order.

MR. HANBURY said, with reference to the Brennan torpedo, they had already spent enormous sums upon it. They started with £125,000, which they gave for the invention, but year after year large sums continued to be paid to Mr. Brennan. They had a further sum this year of £3,500. When were they going to finally pay for this wonderful invention ? With regard to barracks, he should like to know what were the duties of the Sanitary Committee ? They had had complaints from Ireland with regard to the insanitary condition of the barracks there, and now they had serious complaints with regard to the barracks at Windsor. He had received information which showed that the right hon. Gentleman was not quite accurate when he said the complaint was confined to the officers' quarters. As a matter of fact, the whole drainage system was bad, and the medical officer stationed there distinctly stated that it would be dangerous that these troops should be allowed to live

over these drains for six months. The money for carrying out improvements at these particular barracks had been put down in the Votes, and struck off, he supposed, for Treasury convenience. It was most important, however, that this matter should be settled. Further, with reference to the question of the employment of discharged soldiers, he wished to know whether facilities could not be given for their service in the Metropolitan Police by extending the age at which they could enter the Force ? They would be admirably suited, by their training, to discharge such duties.

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN would be glad if means could be devised of employing discharged soldiers in the Metropolitan Police, and he would consult his right hon. Friend the Home Secretary on the point. But he was afraid there would be some opposition to the proposal. He was himself a Member of the Committee which sat in 1876 on this subject. There was at that time a good deal of discussion on the question of these men entering the Police. A good deal could be said against it, and he would consult his right hon. Friend, and look into the whole matter. As to the Brennan torpedo, it was advancing in a very lively manner, and there was every reason to believe it to be a great invention. He was himself a witness recently of some most interesting and surprising experiments in working the Brennan torpedo from a movable base. He was sure that everybody who witnessed those experiments would be satisfied not only as to the extremely ingenious nature of the torpedo, but also as to its formidable character for the purposes of war. The hon. Member had asked him what were the duties of the Sanitary Committee. The Sanitary Committee were a consultative and not an executive body. They were called in by the War Office when any new barracks were to be constructed, or large enterprises of that sort undertaken. As to the barracks at Windsor, the hon. Member was wrong in saying that he (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) gave an inaccurate answer to his question. What he stated was that the smells complained of affected the officers' quarters. He was aware that the whole system of the drainage of the barracks was old-fashioned and bad, and should be altered, but that

was a very large undertaking. In the meantime, he was face to face with the fact that many other barracks required their drainage improving, and that the health of the troops at Windsor had been good for many years. He had seen a Return of the actual diseases, and there was hardly any disease in the barracks attributable to anything that could result from bad drainage, and the Director General of the Army Medical Department agreed that there was no reason to pronounce the barracks unhealthy, still less uninhabitable, although it was admitted that the drains were of an old-fashioned kind, and on a very imperfect system. What he (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) spoke of was individual complaints of offensive smells in the officers' quarters, and these had been traced, he thought with accuracy, to a foul latrine, and an escape of burning gas in the building. The sanitary officer of the Royal Engineer Department, a most intelligent and capable man, went down and applied the smoke test, and investigated the whole matter. That was the conclusion he came to, and both the Inspector General of Fortifications and the Director General of the Army Medical Department advised him that with a cure applied to these smaller evils there was no probability of danger in occupying the barracks until the time arrived for undertaking the much larger repairs which would undoubtedly be required.

MR. TOMLINSON urged the necessity of devising some system by which men who had been in the Army could join the Police Force for duty at barracks and at other permanent institutions.

SIR J. GORST did not see that there would be any insuperable difficulty in having discharged soldiers and sailors enrolled in the Metropolitan Police expressly for service in the arsenals and dockyards. Though they might not be fitted at their more advanced age for the very severe work which was required in the real Metropolitan Police, they might be quite fit and able to discharge those particular functions of the Metropolitan Police which had relation to the dockyards and arsenals, and he hoped the Home Secretary would consider whether it was not possible to enrol these men in the Metropolitan Police specially for service at the dockyards and arsenals.

MR. BRODRICK fancied the War Department had found it more convenient and economical to have members of the Metropolitan Police employed who were changed from time to time according to discipline. Unless he was mistaken, the total number of police employed by the War Department was only between 200 and 300, while the total number of Metropolitan Police who were old soldiers was between 2,800 and 3,000. If that were so, there were 10 Metropolitan policemen who were old soldiers for every one employed by the War Department.

Vote agreed to.

8. £1,385,400, Pensions and other Non-Effective Charges for Warrant Officers, Non-commissioned Officers, Men, and others.—Agreed to.

9. £156,700, Superannuation and other Allowances and Gratuities.

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS, 1893-94.

CLASS II.

10. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £90,621, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Local Government Board."

SIR J. GORST desired the President of the Local Government Board to afford the Committee some explanation, in addition to that he gave at Question time, of the proposal made by certain Boards of Guardians in the East of London to acquire land for the purpose of setting the unemployed to work upon it. He thought it was impossible to exaggerate the importance of a question of this kind, because if there was one thing more than another which the electors of the country really took an interest in it was in the reform of the Poor Law, and any experiment tried in the direction of a reform of the Poor Law was sure to excite the greatest possible interest on the part of the people of this country, and if any successful experiment could be carried out it would redound more than anything else they could do to the credit of the Minister and the Government under which it was conducted. He believed this question of the unemployed

was one which might at any time become acute, and give immense trouble and difficulty both to the Government and to Parliament, and it was one well deserving the careful and anxious consideration not only of the Government, but of the House itself. It appeared, from researches made and from information placed before the Local Government Board, that there was now under old Statutes which had long fallen into disuse power vested in the Boards of Guardians to acquire land not exceeding 50 acres for each parish, and upon that land to set unemployed persons to work at remunerative occupations and to give them reasonable wages. For many years past the London Guardians had practised a very clumsy kind of public employment. There was in every Union a most barbarous institution known as a stone-yard, and in that yard able-bodied men who applied for work were set to the work of breaking up stones for macadam. They were not paid according to the quantity of work they did, and it was a sort of labour test. The men had to break a certain quantity of stone in the day, and then they were paid not in proportion to the work they had done, but in the shape of outdoor relief according to their needs and to the number of their family. The system was objectionable, and had never answered in practice. It had had the effect of pauperising the recipients of the relief, and had certainly failed to relieve a great amount of distress. There was no idea more fascinating to anyone than that of a Public Authority like a Board of Guardians being able to give an honest man out of work, who was anxious to work and could not get it to do, to give him employment and pay him not in the relief which a pauper would receive, but to pay him what these old Statutes called reasonable wages for the work which he did. In social questions they must make a great number of experiments—and some experiments which would fail—before they hit upon a right mode of meeting the social difficulties with which they were surrounded. He did not at all enter into the feelings of a man who never tried anything because he thought it might fail. In science how many scientific men had tried experiments which had been failures; how many ideas had been adopted by men of science which, after trial and experiment,

had had to be abandoned! It was just the same in social matters. They should make a number of experiments and make an immense number of failures, and they should have to go through a period of trial and failure before they arrived at a solution of social difficulties. No doubt failures would be experienced; but when there were people willing to try experiments and entrusted by the ratepayers with power to do so, it seemed to him that the Government should afford them every facility that could be afforded consistently with the law. There were several unions in the East of London who anxiously desired to try the experiment of acquiring land for the purpose of setting the unemployed to work if the President of the Local Government Board would authorise them to do so. They could not do so without permission. He thought that Local Authorities were now too much interfered with by the Local Government Board. That was not fair, and he would press upon the right hon. Gentleman that, unless there were some very serious objections not yet publicly stated, he would allow these publicly-elected Bodies to try these experiments. He might point out that experiments of the kind had been tried for the last two years by the Salvation Army. He did not know whether those experiments had been an economical success; but anyone who would take the trouble to go down to the Army farm in Essex would see that, as a method of getting people actually to work—people recruited from the riff-raff of the East End of London—they had not been a failure. It seemed to him that in the light of those experiments Boards of Guardians might make most valuable experiments themselves, which could not possibly do any harm, which would certainly be productive of instruction, and might guide them in the direction in which this great social problem might be solved.

*SIR C. W. DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) said, those who were acquainted with the experiments referred to by the right hon. Gentleman would recognise the difficulties that existed in carrying out his suggestion. The vast majority of those who came under the care of Boards of Guardians were either old or sick. They could not be looked upon as able-bodied people, very few of

Sir J. Gorst

whom remained with them long. At the same time, he was entirely in accord with the right hon. Gentleman in his desire to see Boards of Guardians permitted to make experiments. Undoubtedly the tendency of the time was more and more in the direction of local control in these matters. With regard to the cholera epidemic, he had the most complete confidence in the Local Government Board, and he was of opinion that there was not the slightest cause for alarm. All, he was satisfied, that could be done had been done. But there was another and more delicate question to which he would direct attention. He wished to suggest to the Local Government Board that they should select their auditors from experienced auditors' clerks. He acknowledged that the President of the Local Government Board had heretofore exercised his patronage most carefully, and he had the fullest confidence in him; but he thought it right to bring this matter before him. He believed there had been only one such vacancy, and that the right hon. Gentleman had followed the course now suggested by him (Sir C. W. Dilke). He hoped he would continue to follow that course. And, again, the general Inspectors should be selected from the best class of auditors.

*MR. LONG (Liverpool, West Derby) said, he sympathised with the desire of the right hon. Gentleman for the employment of the unemployed, but he could not approve of his proposal. He did not think that anyone who was acquainted with the working of the Salvation Army farm would endorse his right hon. Friend's (Sir J. Gorst's) opinion. In saying that, he did not intend to refer to the Salvation Army itself; the farm colony was another matter altogether. He thought it had been made clear that, through the attempts of the Salvation Army to deal with this problem, considerable industries had been destroyed; and that in employing one set of people others had been submerged. It was the duty of the Local Government Board to so advise the Local Authorities that their action should be taken in the interests of the community as a whole, and not calculated merely to meet a difficulty which might be tem-

porary and local. He did not think that the Local Government Board were likely to hold out much encouragement in the direction indicated by the right hon. Gentleman (Sir J. Gorst), because if they were to encourage Local Authorities to find work for the unemployed that work could only be of two kinds. It must either be work which was unnecessary or work which was necessary and must be done. If the work was necessary it could only be done in the way indicated by the displacement of free labour.

SIR J. GORST: Not necessarily.

*MR. LONG said, his right hon. Friend said "not necessarily," but there must be displacement, and he would point out in addition that it would be a dangerous thing to raise hopes in the minds of the unemployed unless they were certain they could give practical effect to what they desired. As to what had been said by the right hon. Baronet (Sir C. W. Dilke) of the cholera scare, everybody who had any experience of the Local Government Board would have full confidence in the zeal and efficiency of its officers. He had also confidence in the Local Authorities. There ought, however, to be at the disposal of the Local Government Board, as the Public Health Department of the country, a larger power of spending money in emergencies, and the Sanitary Department ought to be better equipped in that respect. That Department was fortunate at the present time in having the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. H. H. Fowler) at its head, and, not merely that, but in having such distinguished officials and professional men to guide it. But when this country was threatened with the outbreak of an epidemic it ought to have larger power of spending money, and it should be provided with the means of indulging in experiments in any particular direction. The Department had, however, no funds at its disposal to undertake experiments. He believed the labour attendant upon holding local inquiries had greatly increased.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. H. H. FOWLER, Wolverhampton, E.): Doubled in four years.

Mr. LONG said, as the work had increased, increased power should be given. Again, he would point out that the staff of Medical Inspectors should be strengthened. He believed that there was no cause for alarm in reference to the outbreak of cholera. On the contrary, he thought the scare which had been created had proved a safeguard, as it had directed attention to the necessity of taking precautions. He was confident that, in the hands of the President of the Local Government Board and the permanent officials of the Department, they were as safe as human ingenuity could make them. He believed that the President would be able to give a satisfactory report to the House as to the present cases.

SIR H. ROSCOE said, he desired to express his hearty sympathy with what had fallen from the hon. Member for the West Derby Division. He had the highest opinion of the medical officers of the Local Government Board, but he agreed with the hon. Member that their number and the means at their disposal for carrying out important investigations were too small. The hon. Member had remarked that abroad the condition of things was very different, and he (Sir H. Roscoe), from his own experiences, also agreed with the hon. Member in that. Governments in other countries had large and important establishments for the very purpose of carrying out investigations which we attempted in a small manner to carry out under this important Department. The attention of the country ought to be drawn to the matter, for there was nothing in this country comparable to the institutions existing in Berlin, St. Petersburg, and Paris. They all had confidence in the President of the Local Government Board, and those who acted under him; and if the attention of the country were drawn to this matter, he was sure we should not long be behind other countries in these matters. He believed that the country was free at present from the danger of anything like a large outbreak of cholera. He had full confidence in the arrangements that had been made by the Department and by the Local Authorities.

Mr. POWELL WILLIAMS said, the hon. Member who had just sat down seemed to open a *non possumus* to what he did not think the right hon. Member for Cambridge University had suggested. The matter was of some importance in view of the condition of things which might be expected in the forthcoming winter. The unemployed could not be ignored, and the question of finding suitable occupation for them was one which must, sooner or later, be faced. In dealing with it, however, care must be taken—and he agreed with the hon. Member for the West Derby Division in this respect—to find work for the unemployed which would not drive the employed out of occupation. The suggestion to put the unemployed to the cultivation of land would be, perhaps more than any other proposal, open to the objection he had named. Of course, if they could find a considerable tract of land not at present under cultivation and put the unemployed on it, by such a policy no one would be thrown out of work and the occupation would be infinitely preferable to that of the stone-yard. Possibly, the solution of the question might be found in this direction. There were several objections to putting the unemployed into the stone-yard. In the first place, stone-breaking was skilled labour, and to put the unemployed upon it was to interfere with the skilled labourer. Investigation made into the subject in Birmingham had disclosed the fact that there was a certain way of striking the stone—a certain face on which it was desirable to strike it—in order to produce the best material for road-making. Moreover, the trades of many of the unemployed were delicate, such as the manufacture of jewellery. He knew a jeweller who, when unemployed, was put to stone-breaking, and the result was that on obtaining work again it was fully a fortnight before he had the proper use of his fingers. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean had told them that the unemployed largely consisted of persons who were aged.

*SIR C. W. DILKE said, he had made that statement in reference to the people who went before the Guardians, not with reference to the unemployed.

MR. POWELL WILLIAMS said, he had misunderstood the right hon. Baronet. On another point, they were informed the other day that the Local and County Authorities were liable to make good damage done through riots, such as they had had experience of during the past few weeks.

MR. H. H. FOWLER : I have nothing to do with that.

MR. POWELL WILLIAMS : But he would have to do with rioting on the part of the unemployed, who might require assistance from the Local Government Board.

MR. H. H. FOWLER : No.

MR. FORWOOD (Lancashire, Ormskirk) said, he was sure it was most satisfactory to hear the statement of the hon. Baronet the Member for Manchester on the subject of the cholera epidemic—to the effect that it was not likely to spread. He (Mr. Forwood) wished to say one word on behalf of the trading community of the country—especially as to the shipping trade. There had been a good deal of exaggeration, particularly in the newspapers, in regard to the epidemic, and he would counsel the President of the Local Government Board to guard against that exaggeration. Foreign Governments were very apt to take alarm at the slightest appearance of disease, and to put quarantine on British vessels, thus stopping the trade of this country. They had already had some experience of this, and if a scare such as got abroad last year occurred again it would be a very serious matter for the shipping trade and for the commerce of the country.

MR. TOMLINSON said, that with reference to the point raised by the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean in reference to the appointment of auditors, he considered it necessary that, in addition to a knowledge of accountancy, these officials should have a sufficient acquaintance with legal principles, and with the Acts that regulated the powers of the authorities to enable them to deal satisfactorily with the subject of surcharges. Many Local Authorities throughout the country were

dissatisfied with the decisions of the auditors. On another point, he thought the Local Government Board should do something in the way of setting up a standard of requirement in regard to local sanitary engineering. The public should not be left at the mercy of local engineers who liked to carry out theories of their own.

MR. MACDONA (Southwark, Rotherhithe) said, he had several times put questions to the Local Government Board on a question on which he felt warmly. He was of opinion that infectious diseases were brought to this country in old rags ; and in view of the spread of the cholera epidemic, he thought that something should be done to induce the Government to re-impose the prohibition against the introduction of these rags. He admitted that up to the present time the Local Government Board had done everything in their power to stop the cholera, and he knew that doctors differed as to whether or not infectious diseases were brought into the country by means of old rags. He, however, was of opinion that they were, and he therefore took this opportunity of making a further appeal to the Government on the question.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES—[*Cries of "Divide!"*]—said, he desired to move a reduction in the salary of the President of the Local Government Board, not as a personal matter, but in order to call attention to the Board itself. [*Cries of "Divide!" and "Agreed!"*] He considered the Local Government Board a Board of interference with those who carried on local government. He would not go through the whole gamut of the delinquencies of the Board, but when he had succeeded in getting an adequate amount of silence in the House he would give three illustrations. In the first place — [*Cries of "Agreed!"*] — he objected to the Board imposing auditors on localities when those localities were engaged merely in managing their own property and spending their own money. Now, why was this? Would hon. Gentlemen like to have auditors sent down to them to manage their private accounts? Certainly not. The fact that Local Government Board inquiries as to the

propriety of allowing Local Authorities to spend their own money had increased, instead of giving him that pleasure which the Government expected it would inspire in hon. Members, raised within him rather a feeling of shame to think that the Local Authorities should be thus interfered with in their domestic concerns. His second point was this—he did not believe very much in doctors, nor in the cholera. He was very much of opinion that whenever an easterly wind blew for a considerable time various mischiefs were blown to us, including revolutionary Radical ideas and the germs of various diseases. If these things were cured it would not be by doctors, but by a breath of westerly wind, which would blow them back again. [*Cries of "Divide!" "Agreed!" and interruption.*] He protested against the policy of interfering with the Local Authorities during the present cholera scare, and leaving those Local Authorities to pay all the expenses of the precautions the Local Government Board imposed on them. His third point was in regard to the establishment for vaccination. The President of the Local Government Board kept up a vaccination establishment with a doctor or two and a calf or two at a large and increasing expenditure. The expenses of this Department seemed to increase in proportion as vaccination decreased. It was known that the Vaccination Acts were in the agonies of death, the Royal Commission having recommended that the cumulative penalty should no longer be imposed. The moment, therefore, had arrived when the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board might re-consider his calves.

***MR. H. H. FOWLER:** The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge raised the question of the administration of the Poor Law as far as it relates not to existing paupers, but to the unemployed. He put to me questions as to the powers of the Local Government Board and the course I intended to pursue. I, this afternoon, answered a question addressed to me on that subject, and I would just remind the House of what my answer was—and that will be my reply to the

right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge University, and also to my right hon. Friend the Member for the Forest of Dean and the hon. Member for Birmingham. Few greater curses ever afflicted this country than the old Poor Law, and the reform of the Poor Law in 1834 was one of the greatest social reforms of this century. The old Act of Elizabeth empowered the Guardians and Overseers to put persons not able to get an honest livelihood—that is to say, destitute persons—to labour, and it also empowered them to find funds and raw material for that purpose. That was passed 300 years ago. In the reign of George III., about the beginning of this century, an Act was passed empowering Churchwardens and Overseers to acquire land to the amount of 50 acres in a parish, and to set indigent persons to work upon it. And the Act also empowered the Justices to commit to the House of Correction any of these persons who refused to work. No doubt it was the theory—whether correct or not—that these measures were repealed when the present Poor Law system was introduced, but the Law Officers of the Crown have advised me that, although obsolete in practice, they are still on the Statute Book and that action can be taken under them. Whether, however, this practically obsolete legislation, which would effect so great a change in our present system, should be revived I do not feel myself authorised on my own Ministerial authority to decide. The question must come before the Cabinet, and it will be for the Cabinet to consider whether it should apply to the Legislature for sanction to put into force powers which have not been exercised for many generations. That is my answer to those who ask what course we intend to pursue. I, of course, sympathise with all that has been said as to this difficult problem of the unemployed. I agree with the hon. Member for Birmingham that the question is one that statesmen of both Parties will have to face. For my own part, I have never claimed for the Local Government Board infallibility or unalterability. I have already recognised the importance of the subject by recommending the appointment of a Royal Commission to make inquiries as to the aged poor, and I think that it will probably be

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desirable to re-elect the same Commission or to appoint another to make investigations in regard to other branches of the Poor Law. With respect to the qualifications of auditors, I agree that to be a good auditor a man must be a competent accountant, acquainted with the law relating to the duties which he has to fulfil. The auditors of the Board, in my opinion, discharge their duties with wonderful ability and great impartiality. The number of appeals from them has this year been singularly few, and their decisions have but rarely been overruled. As to the qualification of these gentlemen, my desire is, and has been, that the persons appointed as auditors shall have been trained to the business. There is no part of my duty more distasteful to me than the exercise of patronage. I wish I had none to exercise. I cannot make a pledge, however, as to what I shall do in the event of vacancies arising in the offices of auditors and inspectors, for each case will have to be judged on its own merits. I have had only one auditor to appoint since I have been in Office, but in that case, I may say, I confined my area of selection to those who had served under auditors. The gentleman I appointed had been in the work of public audit since he was 16 or 17 years of age. I have to thank the hon. Gentleman opposite for expressing confidence in the Local Government Board. He expressed a desire that the Board should be given larger powers and more money to spend. Of course, I should be glad to have more money to spend—every Department desires that; and I should like to have it to spend on scientific inquiries, especially as to the difference between English cholera and Asiatic cholera, a matter in regard to which I have been in communication with Dr. Thorne. But it is due to the Treasury to say that every application for additional help which I have made to that Department this year has been readily assented to. The increase in the expenditure of the Board is some £5,000, and £4,000 of that amount was for the services of additional Medical Inspectors. They have granted me all I asked for. I asked for two permanent and four temporary Medical Inspectors, as it was

the opinion of Dr. Thorne Thorne that, with that addition to his staff, he would be able to grapple with all emergencies. The Treasury have granted me that aid, and, in consideration of the large number of local inquiries, they have assented to the permanent employment of two of the three Engineering Inspectors who had been temporarily engaged. I agree with my hon. Friend as to the danger of this cholera scare. We live in a very sensational age, and I am sorry to say the Press is very fond of sensational news, and there is a tendency to exaggerate the state of things. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ormskirk (Mr. Forwood) says the Local Government Board should be careful to avoid any exaggeration in the reports emanating from it. We have regarded it as important to state to the public the true facts of the case, neither extenuating nor exaggerating them. As far as our general proceedings are concerned, I do not think that more can be done than is being done. We have a most competent medical staff, presided over by one of the most distinguished men in the Medical Profession, Dr. Thorne Thorne, and I have the great advantage of having as Parliamentary Secretary an eminent physician of great experience. Everything is being done that can be done. I am bound to say that we are having the strongest support from Local Authorities, who are doing their duty to the utmost in this emergency. The only other question that has been raised is as to the importation of rags. I quite agree that if we were satisfied that rags were a means of importation of disease, it would be necessary to take very stringent precautions. But at the recent Conference at Dresden the opinion expressed by the scientists of Europe, and the result of the practical experience of Europe, was that there was no case known of cholera being communicated by rags imported under the circumstances in which we allow rags to be imported. I stated to the House the other afternoon that the importation of all rags is now prohibited except rags compressed by hydraulic force, transported in bales surrounded with iron bands and containing marks showing their origin and accepted by the authorities of the country of destination. I am informed by my advisers that some of the rags that are coming in now are rags

that were collected three or four years ago, and that if I want to prohibit the rags of 1893 from coming into England, the prohibition will have to be in force somewhere about the year 1896 or 1897. I may state in passing that that very eminent scientist, Dr. Koch, was of the same opinion as the other leading authorities present at the Conference at Dresden—namely, that in no case had cholera been traced to rags in the form I have mentioned. Having received that evidence, and the Conference having on behalf of all the Great Powers of Europe, including Great Britain, signed the Convention specifying under what conditions rags should be imported into the different countries, I do not think we should be justified in prohibiting the importation, there being no evidence of the public health being in danger. The only other speech addressed to the House was that of the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Gibson Bowles), who has been through what he called the gamut of wickedness of the Local Government Board. Well, Sir, I am responsible for that wickedness, and must plead guilty to it. I can answer his question as to auditors. It is in accordance with the Statute, and it is very much to the interest of the public, that there should be public auditors appointed to look after the ratepayers' money. I believe the tendency of public opinion is to extend the powers of Local Authorities to borrow money; and I am strongly of opinion that as the accounts of County Councils and Poor Law Guardians are audited, the accounts of Municipal Authorities ought also to be audited. That is, however, a question of legislation, and not of administration. I do not think I need go into the question of vaccination; but my hon. Friend (Sir W. Foster) will be able to answer any questions to which a reply may be needed. We are still waiting for the Report of the Royal Commission. No one is more anxious than I am to have that Report. I think the country is very impatient for it, and many of our operations are seriously interfered with by the fact that we do not know what the Report will be. I hope we shall receive it in the course of a very few weeks. I have to thank hon. Members who have spoken for the way in which they have referred to the Local

Government Board, and I can assure the Committee that in grappling with emergencies we shall feel strengthened by knowing that we have the confidence of Parliament. We shall not hesitate to take any steps that may be necessary, and I am sure this House will not hesitate to give the Local Government Board any additional powers that may be necessary.

Question put, and agreed to.

11. £30,000, to complete the sum for Mercantile Marine Fund (Grant in Aid).

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES remarked that the sum of £50,000 was made up of an ordinary Vote in aid of £40,000, and of an extra Vote this year of £10,000, given for the specific purpose of effecting communication between lighthouses and lightships and the shore. He submitted that, whatever might be the case as regarded the £40,000, the demand for the £10,000 could hardly be defended, inasmuch as the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) was already possessed of a fund that was sufficient for establishing the communications in question. The Mercantile Marine Fund was levied from light dues on ships to the extent of £520,000, and there was, in addition, £5,000 for the unpaid wages and the effects of dead sailors. Out of the £525,000 there was allocated to lightships and to matters connected with the Sea Service generally a sum of £400,000, leaving a balance of £125,000. It was proposed to allocate this money for other purposes, including £94,000 for the Mercantile Marine Offices. The Mercantile Marine Offices were always supposed to pay their own fees, but had not succeeded in doing so, and consequently the amount the right hon. Gentleman had in his hands, derived every penny of it from ships and sailors, was applied to purposes not germane to those for which it was intended. Under the circumstances, he thought the £10,000 should not be asked for. It seemed to him that the Mercantile Marine Fund might very easily be increased. Why should Her Majesty's ships and yachts be exempted from light dues, which were in the same category as rates,

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being payments for services rendered? Were this exemption removed a large accession of income would be secured for the Mercantile Marine Fund. The contributions made towards the provision of lifeboats, rocket apparatus, and so forth, should not, in his opinion, be charged to that Fund, but should come out of the national taxation. He did not at all deny that life-saving and the collection of statistics with regard to loss of life at sea were proper purposes on which to spend national funds, but he denied that they should be paid for by a special class of property. He was sorry not to see the late Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) in his place, because seven years ago his right hon. Friend absolutely promised that the subject should be carefully examined, and said it was evident that the finances of the Fund were in a most unsatisfactory condition. So far as he (Mr. Gibson Bowles) could ascertain, no change whatever had been made in the general treatment of the Fund. It was rather hard that the Committee should be asked for the £40,000, inasmuch as the Fund had £125,000 to spare, and still harder that they should be asked for the £10,000 for the purpose of a particular service with regard to particular lightships or lighthouses.

Mr. LODER (Brighton) entirely disagreed with the views of his hon. Friend who had just sat down with reference to the extra grant in aid. He only wished it had been £20,000 instead of £10,000. He regretted that the Government had not seen their way to carrying out more fully the recommendations of the Royal Commission who made a tour of the lighthouses last year, more especially as their Report was of a very moderate character. The total cost of establishing communications with the lighthouses and lightships recommended would be less than £30,000, and he was sorry to say that only about a third of that sum had at present been expended. The Royal Commission specially recommended that two lightships should be connected with the coast at the time that the Gunfleet Lighthouse was dealt with, but this recommendation had not been carried out. The Commission recommended that certain lighthouses should have their cables laid

at the same time as the cable was laid to Lundy. That had not been done, and the result was that the expense of the work would be increased. He was sorry also that the Fastnet Lighthouse, one of the most important on our coasts, had not yet been connected with the shore.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. MUNDELLA, Sheffield, Brightside): I think the hon. Gentleman who has just spoken fully appreciates the reason why we ask for this extra Vote of £10,000. There was no Fund to which this Supplementary Vote could be so properly applied as the Mercantile Marine Fund, because that Fund supplies the money for the whole of the light-houses and lightships on the coast of the United Kingdom. It was distinctly understood, when the Royal Commission was appointed, that any expenditure that was involved should not come out of the Mercantile Marine Fund.

*Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: Does the £10,000 not come out of the Mercantile Marine Fund?

Mr. MUNDELLA: No; it does not. As to the remarks of the hon. Member for Brighton (Mr. Loder), I can assure him that we are making as much progress as can be reasonably expected. The work cannot be carried out safely without being done tentatively. A great deal of work has already been done; certain lighthouses have already been connected with the shore, and we are now undertaking these three vessels and two lighthouses. I hope we shall be able to satisfy hon. Gentlemen that we are making as much progress as can reasonably be anticipated. There is no intention to come annually to the Treasury, or to increase the sum beyond the £40,000, except so far as it is necessary to complete works of real necessity, and for that purpose we must come to the Treasury on the distinct understanding that the Treasury shall provide the funds. I hope we shall now be allowed to take the Vote.

*Mr. A. C. MORTON was told by people who understood this matter—namely, Merchant Captains—that the French Government managed this service much better than it was managed

in this country, and at much less cost, the reason being that it was in the hands of the Government. Trinity House was an anomaly, and ought to be abolished, and the whole matter placed under responsible Government authority. He hoped that early next Session they would have an opportunity of discussing this matter at a reasonable hour, and when they could divide upon it.

Vote agreed to.

12. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £5,842, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Establishment under the Public Works Loan Commissioners."

Mr. T. W. Russell moved, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again;" but the Chairman, being of opinion that the Motion was an abuse of the Rules of the House, declined to propose the Question thereupon to the Committee.

Question put, and agreed to.

13. £30,659, to complete the sum for the Registrar General's Office, England.—Agreed to.

14. £280,232, to complete the sum for Stationery and Printing.

MR. M. AUSTIN (Limerick, W.) said, that in directing the attention of the Committee to the question of Government printing in Ireland, he had hoped from the discussion that took place a couple of weeks ago that some practical good would result. At that late hour it was not his intention to detain the Committee, especially as it would be repeating an old story of the violation of all Trades Union principles by long hours and low wages. In connection with the Queen's printers in Ireland, Messrs. Thom, his chief complaint was the large number of boys employed there and brought up to the printing trade in that establishment. While his mind was not narrowed by any Conservative principles in this matter, he felt, as a practical workman, that no more pernicious system as affecting our industrial working class could exist; and when he thought of the Resolution that was passed

by the House of Commons, which it was hoped would cope with such an evil, and the failure of that Resolution to be fairly considered, he was entitled to some reply from the Secretary to the Treasury. Another branch of the printing department was entrusted to a house (Messrs. Browne and Nolan) which confined its operations to ignoring the legitimate printers of Dublin, which house enjoined longer hours upon its *employés* and paid lower wages than other establishments. The Government, in its parental capacity in looking after the social well-being of the people, oftentimes neglected this important duty, and hence the strong agitation which had arisen during the past 12 months for the carrying out of that great principle. Then there was the important fact of the Government supporting, he might say solely, a paper in the City of Dublin, *The General Advertiser*, which was brought out under conditions that brought home to his mind some of the most important evidence revealed under the Sweating Commission. In bringing these matters before the Committee he was actuated by no spirit of hostility, but when he remembered the conditions of life under which working men had often to earn a living he would be unworthy of his position if on every opportunity afforded him he did not ventilate their grievances. He appealed to the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury for some declaration on this matter, so that the printers of Dublin might have their grievances attended to in the same prompt manner as was done in the case of the complaints made by the hon. Member for the Ince Division (Mr. Woods) on behalf of the printers of M'Corquodale and Co.

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT, in reply, explained that part of the work referred to by the hon. Member was under the control of the Treasury, and part under the control of the Irish Office. He could only speak so far as the Treasury was concerned, but he could assure the hon. Member that they intended to apply the same rule in Ireland as in England with respect to the matter, and that if he found a violation of the conditions it would be his duty to intimate to the firms that had been referred to that their contracts would not be renewed. This

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whole question would receive every attention.

*SIR R. TEMPLE desired to know what was being done about the Report of the Committee which sat upon the subject of reporting the Parliamentary Debates? He believed some action had been taken, and he hoped, if that action could not be reported to the House before the Adjournment, they might understand what had been done when they met again in November. He would venture to impress upon the Secretary to the Treasury that this *Hansard* record was of great importance in a Parliamentary and historic sense, and proper means ought to be taken to insure its accuracy. That could only be done if Members who made speeches had sufficient facilities for correcting the proofs. No doubt it was desirable that the speeches should be reported in brief—that was to say, that the report should be in some degree abbreviated and summarised. But if that were done the report should be written in the third person. He earnestly hoped there might be no repetition of the absurd process which took place last Session and the Session before—namely, of the speeches being abbreviated by one-third or one-fourth, and then the report written in the first person. All literary men would assure the right hon. Gentleman that such a process could only end in absurdity, and he, therefore, trusted there would be no repetition of it. He desired to take that opportunity of expressing his sense of the great improvement which had been made this Session over any previous Session in his experience in the important work of Parliamentary reporting. The efficiency, zeal, accuracy, and competency shown by the present staff in reporting the Debates was worthy of the highest commendation; and, as one having had some experience of the work, he thought it his duty to bear public testimony to the efficiency of the present reports.

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT: I can assure my hon. Friend that I entirely endorse the views he has expressed. Having sat with him for a considerable time on the Committee which considered this question, I can assure him I have the greatest interest in the recommendations of the Committee being carried out. I am not in a position

to-day to say how the recommendations will be carried out. They are under the consideration of the Treasury at the present moment, and I hope, when we meet again in the Autumn Session, I shall be able to state what is proposed to be done in carrying out the recommendations of the Committee. I am very glad to hear my hon. Friend say that he considers the present reporting very much better than it has been in past years. I think myself, however, that still further improvements might be made, and I hope such improvements will be carried out in future years.

*SIR R. TEMPLE desired to say that the right hon. Gentleman had made a mistake in thinking he (Sir R. Temple) was a Member of the Committee on Parliamentary Reporting. He was not on that Committee, and he spoke quite impartially on the subject.

MR. TOMLINSON remarked that there was a small item of £100 for the distribution of Parliamentary Papers. He should like to know on what principle this distribution took place, and whether, the sum being small, a selection was made of the Papers to be distributed?

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, this money was quite sufficient for the purposes for which it was required. It had now been granted for several years, and the whole amount had never been expended in one year. Greater demands might be made for these Parliamentary Papers, and a larger amount than that formerly spent was considered necessary; but, so far, the application for Parliamentary Papers by Free Libraries had not been sufficient as to cause the expenditure of the whole of the money voted by Parliament.

MR. TOMLINSON asked whether any means had been taken for acquainting managers of Free Libraries with the kind of Papers in existence which might be suitable for them? because they might not apply for Papers, not knowing what they contained.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT thought the managers of the Libraries were quite capable of judging of their own requirements in this matter.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES asked whether the Controller of the Stationery

Office was the registered proprietor of the paper called *The Labour Gazette*? If so, how was it they had no account relating to that paper under this Vote?

MR. MUNDELLA pointed out that the subject had been discussed upon the Board of Trade Vote, and the money passed. They voted this sum the other night.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES : I voted against it if I voted at all. I am merely asking a question.

THE CHAIRMAN : The matter does not arise on this Vote.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES : Then, if I am not in Order, I shall move a reduction of the Controller's salary.

THE CHAIRMAN : That is clearly out of Order on this Vote.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES : It is not out of Order to move the reduction.

THE CHAIRMAN : It does not arise on the Vote. The hon. Member cannot put himself in Order by moving the reduction for this purpose.

Vote agreed to.

15. £13,129, to complete the sum for Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues, &c. Office.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon, &c.) said, the Member for Merthyr (Mr. Pritchard Morgan) had a Motion down for a reduction of this Vote, the hon. Member being particularly anxious to raise certain questions upon it. Would the Chancellor of the Exchequer consent to postpone the Vote until to-morrow?

SIR W. HARCOURT replied, that it would not be convenient to postpone the Vote, but the Report stage should be taken to-morrow in time to enable reasonable discussion to take place. When the Report came on, he thought he would be able to make a statement which would be satisfactory to the hon. Member for Merthyr. He could not allow this Vote to pass without asking leave of the Committee to express his deep sorrow, which he was sure would be shared by everybody who knew him, at the death of Mr. Culley, the Chief of the Woods and Forests Department. The Public Service had sustained a great

loss by Mr. Culley's death, he being a gentleman to whom the Public Service owed a great deal.

MR. S. T. EVANS (Glamorgan, Mid.) said, that as it was not expected that this particular Vote would be reached at this hour, he thought they might fairly ask that the Committee should now report Progress.

SIR W. HARCOURT hoped the Motion to report Progress would not be persisted in. If the Member for Merthyr Tydvil was not satisfied with the statement that would be made, he would have an opportunity of stating his reasons on the Report stage. He desired to state what course the Government proposed to take in regard to Supply. They would finish the other English Votes of this Class, of which there were two which were not of serious importance, and would not lead to long Debate. They would take the Scotch Votes to-morrow and certain other remaining Votes.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE asked whether the Report of the Vote would be taken at such an hour as to enable them to discuss the administration of this Department?

SIR W. HARCOURT : So I understand.

MR. A. O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) said, he desired some explanation as to a letter he had received from the Office of the Commissioner for Woods and Forests. Some time ago he moved for a Return with regard to quit-rents in Ireland, which was a Return of much interest, but one that possibly might involve a certain amount of trouble and inconvenience to the Department. Having obtained the Return, a few days afterwards he received a letter notifying him that he was in arrear with the payment of a sum of 5s. in respect of quit-rents on certain property in Roscommon, and threatening him with all sorts of pains and penalties if he did not at once pay that sum, and warning him that a distraint would be levied against his goods and chattels if he omitted to make the payment. As he did not happen to possess any property in Roscommon, subject to quit-rent or otherwise, he was a little surprised by that communication. He had not the least objection to the Com-

Mr. Gibson Bowles

missioners distraining on his goods and chattels in Roscommon, but it did appear to him that the officials of the Department having been put to a certain amount of trouble, and finding a name similar to his own on their list, at once assumed there was an opportunity of visiting him with punishment, because he had moved for the Return. He did not know whether the Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Sir J. T. Hibbert) could give any explanation of the matter, but he desired to convey to the Commissioners of Woods and Forests that he should regard with perfect equanimity any action they might take in regard to quit-rents in Roscommon.

*SIR C. W. DILKE asked if the Treasury would be able, in future years, to induce the Office of Woods and Forests to give fuller accounts than they had done in the past? If the right hon. Gentleman could induce the Office to give more items and details, together with the names of tenants of sporting leases, it would be an advantage?

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, he had been in communication with his right hon. Friend (Sir C. Dilke) on the subject of the Report. As to the point raised by the hon. Member opposite, he was rather sorry that he had not mentioned this matter to him, so that he could have made inquiries into it. Not knowing anything about it, he was unable at present to give the hon. Gentleman any information; but he would make inquiries as to it, and would give him the explanation he desired.

*SIR R. TEMPLE asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer to take the Report stage of this Vote at an earlier hour than half-past 5 o'clock, otherwise Members would be kept in the House until perhaps 7 o'clock, and compelled to break engagements they had made. He asked the Government to show a little consideration towards private Members.

SIR W. HARCOURT should be very glad to meet the hon. Baronet if it were possible, but he was afraid that, under the circumstances, a great many of them had to break engagements which they had made. They were not bound to take the Report of Supply by any particular

hour, but if it was taken at half-past 5 he hoped there would be plenty of time for the discussion of any subject which could properly be taken on that Report. He was afraid some inconvenience might be sustained by hon. Members, but he had endeavoured to collect the feelings and wishes of gentlemen on the other side of the House as well as on this, and he had come to the conclusion that the most convenient course for all would be to finish the English Votes of this Class to-night; to take Scotch Votes and such other Votes as might be taken up till half-past 5 on Wednesday, and then take the Report of Supply, which would leave a sufficiently elastic margin for any necessary discussion.

MR. A. C. MORTON did not want to discuss this Vote now, but he was aware that enormous reforms were wanted in the administration of this Office. Indeed, he was not sure whether the proper thing would not be to get a good big broom and sweep out the present administration altogether.

Vote agreed to.

16. £30,287, to complete the sum for Works and Public Buildings Office. —Agreed to.

17. £16,000, to complete the sum for Secret Service.

MR. POWELL WILLIAMS asked whether the money unspent at the end of the year was returned to the Treasury?

SIR W. HARCOURT: Yes, Sir.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES said, he noticed that the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs took £300 a year for managing the Secret Service Fund. He should like an assurance from the Secretary to the Treasury that he would look into this matter, for it needed looking into.

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT: I have no acquaintance, in any way, with this Fund.

MR. A. C. MORTON said, that when the Radicals were in Opposition they always took a Division against the Vote. He would have been glad to take a Division against it now, were it not for the lateness of the Session and the pressure of Public Business, but he protested against it, as

he had always done every year since he entered Parliament.

Vote agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported To-morrow ;
Committee to sit again To-morrow.

SUPPLY—REPORT.

Resolutions [11th September] reported.

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1893-4.

1. "That a sum, not exceeding £257,800, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Salaries and Miscellaneous Charges of the War Office, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894."

2. "That a sum, not exceeding £560,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay and Allowances (exclusive of Supplies, Clothing, &c.) of the Militia (to a number not exceeding 135,546, including 30,000 Militia Reserve) which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894."

Resolutions agreed to.

PISTOLS BILL.—(No. 425.)

COMMITTEE.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

SIR. R. TEMPLE asked whether the restrictions of the Bill applied to pistols which were not fire-arms, but merely specimens of art?

MR. ASQUITH: Clause 7 provides that the Bill shall not apply to the sale of any antique pistol, curiosity, or ornament.

Clause 1.

*MR. BYLES (York, W.R., Shipley) said, he was sure that if Members had examined the Bill they would never have read it a second time. He moved the rejection of Clause 1, as involving an unnecessary interference with private liberty.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be omitted."—(*Mr. Byles.*)

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. H. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): If the clause is defeated the Bill must be dropped.

Mr. A. C. Morton

MR. CONYBEARE supported his hon. Friend's objection, as the Bill had not received the attention which ought to have been given to it. A great deal could be said against the restrictions contained in the Bill.

Question put, "That Clause 1, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The Committee divided :—Ayes 109 ;
Noes 17.—(Division List, No. 305.)

Clause 2 to 6, inclusive, agreed to.

*SIR R. TEMPLE said, he would like to know whether a pistol of modern make, but intended purely for ornament, would come within the restrictions of the clause?

MR. ASQUITH said, unless the exemption was strictly limited to "antique" pistols it would be liable to abuse.

MR. CONYBEARE said, the clause was open to grave objection in that respect. He would suggest that the word "historical" be introduced to meet the difficulty.

MR. H. GLADSTONE said, the word would not remove the feature which the hon. Member considered objectionable.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 8 agreed to.

Clause 9.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be omitted."

MR. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough) said, it was surprising that any Radical Government should propose such a clause as this. Any Government doing so deserved censure.

MR. CONYBEARE said, before they passed away from this, he thought they should have some reason assigned for the introduction of such a clause. There might be reasons for the passing of the Bill, but they were entitled to some explanation for the appearance of this clause.

Question put, and agreed to.

Clauses 10 and 11 agreed to.

Clause 12.

MR. CONYBEARE said, the definition of a pistol as a firearm of less than

15 in. in length should be amended, so as to exclude toy-pistols and other such harmless weapons.

MR. H. GLADSTONE said, the definition was considered satisfactory as it stood.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam) said, perhaps the insertion of the words "capable of inflicting grievous bodily harm" would meet the case.

MR. ASQUITH said, such words would be most objectionable, because serious injury was often inflicted with toys. The question had been carefully considered, and they were not prepared to adopt these suggestions.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY thought the words he suggested would meet the case.

MR. CONYBEARE: Do we understand that the Bill will apply to small pistols?

MR. ASQUITH: Yes.

Clause agreed to.

Remaining clauses agreed to.

Bill reported; as amended, to be considered upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 458.]

MADRAS AND BOMBAY ARMIES BILL.

[*Lords*].—(No. 413.)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress, Clause 1, 11th September.*]

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 27, to leave out the word "continue," in order to insert the word "cease."—(Mr. Naoroji.)

Question proposed, "That the word 'continue' stand part of the Clause."

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (MR. G. RUSSELL, North Beds.) said, he was desirous of explaining that, as introduced in another place, the Bill contained the proposition now made. But in Committee an Amendment was introduced providing that the Commanders should retain their seats. The Secretary of State accepted the Amendment in order to secure the passing

of the Bill, but reserved his freedom of action when the Bill reached the House of Commons. It was hardly becoming that they should make any alteration now, and he was, therefore, prepared to accept his hon. Friend's Amendment.

*SIR R. TEMPLE said, he must strongly object to the course which the Government intended to pursue. It was of great importance that the Bill should remain as it was, and that the word "continue" should stand part of it, so that the Commanders should retain their seats in the Councils. He would repeat what had been said in favour of that course; but he thought it was quite clear last night that the Committee intended to stand by the Bill as it came down from the Lords. He could not but regard this as a most extraordinary surrender, and he objected to this being done by the Secretary of State in opposition to the feeling and opinion of the Military Authorities. It would be a great misfortune if they did not adhere to the arrangement previously made. The matter had gone so far that a certain amount of friction could not be avoided, he feared; but much would be done if the Government would stand by their Bill as passed in another place, and passed with the sanction of noble Lords who had held Office under the Crown. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Manchester and himself—and he thought they had had experience which entitled them to be heard—were not in favour of this alteration, and would once more very earnestly appeal to the Government to stand by their measure. If necessary, he would be—if in Order—ready to divide the Committee on this question.

*SIR C. W. DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) said, it was evident the non-Baronet (Sir R. Temple) was strongly opposed to the Bill, and that he wished to defeat its object, which was the centralisation of military authority in India. There might be some feeling hostile to this change in the minds of high Bombay authorities; but he (Sir C. W. Dilke) believed the opinion now expressed by the Mover and supporters of the Amendment was approved by successive Governor Generals, and military opinion generally. Military opinion, indeed, was very strong upon the question.

*SIR R. TEMPLE said, he was not dealing with the question as a local one, but from his acquaintance with the needs and requirements of the countries to which the Bill would apply.

*SIR C. W. DILKE said, he understood the hon. Baronet to say that he had authority to speak for the Military Authorities.

SIR R. TEMPLE said, he could not allow the question to pass unchallenged. He would, therefore, move "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."

*THE CHAIRMAN: I cannot put that Motion; I was about to put the Amendment.

MR. TOMLINSON rose, and was understood to say that he could not agree with the views set forth by the right hon. Baronet (Sir C. W. Dilke).

Question put, and negatived.

Remaining Clause agreed to.

Bill reported; as amended, to be considered upon Thursday.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (SCHOOL ATTENDANCE) BILL.

Lords Amendment to be considered forthwith; considered, and agreed to.

SEA FISHERIES REGULATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.—(No. 244.)

As amended, considered, read the third time, and passed.

SALE OF GOODS (*re-committed*) BILL [*Lords*].—(No. 441.)

Considered in Committee; Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Thursday.

LAW OF COMMONS AMENDMENT BILL [*Lords*].—(No. 442.)

Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; read the third time, and passed, without Amendment.

CONGESTED DISTRICTS BOARD (IRELAND).

Return presented,—relative thereto [ordered 16th May; *Sir Thomas Esmonde*]; to lie upon the Table.

QUEENSLAND (IMMIGRATION).

Return presented,—relative thereto [Address 1st September; *Mr. John Ellis*]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copy presented,—of Diplomatic and Consular Reports on Trade and Finance, No. 1288 (Amsterdam) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (MISCELLANEOUS SERIES).

Copy presented,—of Reports on Subjects of General and Commercial Interest, No. 302 (Mexico) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

NAVAL SAVINGS BANKS.

Account presented,—of Deposits in Naval Savings Banks and the Payments thereof, and the Interest thereon, and Investments therein, &c., during the financial year, 1891-2 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

ROYAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND.

Paper laid upon the Table by the Clerk of the House,—Account of Receipts and Expenditure for the year ended 31st March, 1893, with Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon [by Act].

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made, and Question, "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*The Chancellor of the Exchequer*,)—put, and agreed to.

House adjourned at half after Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 13th September 1893.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—COMMITTEE.

SUPPLY—considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE
DEPARTMENTS, 1893-4.

CLASS II.

1. £6,410, to complete the sum for
Secretary for Scotland's Office.

MR. T. SHAW (Hawick) said, he had placed on the Paper a Motion for the reduction of the salary of the Secretary for Scotland by £100, but he had no desire to reduce the right hon. Gentleman's salary, his object being to elicit some information from him with regard to the split in the Deer Forests Commission, which would be reassuring to the mind of the people of Scotland. He had no title to attack the general policy of the appointment of the Commission, but he desired to know what action the right hon. Gentleman was taking with respect to this Commission. His own feeling was distinctly favourable to the appointment of the Commission, and he had nothing but the highest praise for the action of the Government in regard to it. But certain circumstances had arisen within the last few weeks which he desired, in the public interest, and for the peace and good order of the Highlands of Scotland, to call the attention of the Committee to. He thought it was very evident that recently the Commission had not been performing its proper work.

THE CHAIRMAN: I desire to point out that the hon. Member cannot on this Vote enter upon the performance of the duties of this Commission.

MR. T. SHAW said, he had no desire to attack the Commission or the performance of its duties, but he wished to elicit some information from the right hon. Gentleman as to his own conduct in regard to the Commission. What he would say with regard to the Commission was that he trusted the Commis-

sioners would put aside all personal feelings and look to the far wider and more important interests that were at stake rather than take into consideration any question of private wrongs to any one of them. He had the highest regard for the Chairman of the Commission, who was well qualified, both by his legal experiences and the able services he had rendered on the Crofters' Commission, to ably perform the duties attaching to the Office; but he felt bound to say that, whatever might have happened within the Commission, the feeling in Scotland was in the direction of a healing of the trivial squabble that had occurred. He hoped they would have from the Secretary for Scotland something of an assuring character to show that efforts on the part of the Government had not been wanting to heal up the contention, and that the Scottish people should obtain from this Government by the operation of the Commission something that, at all events, would be the basis of legislation so much desired in Scotland to enable crofters beyond the Highland line to have further land on which they might exercise their calling. In respect of that demand he only desired to say that, unless contention in the Commission came speedily to a close, the demand on the subject would grow in intensity; and as the question of social order and the peace of the district was involved, he hoped to hear from the right hon. Gentleman something to assure the Committee that no effort had been wanting on the part of the Government to allay the feeling that had arisen. Perhaps his own connection with this matter was known to the Committee. He was personally acquainted with the Chairman, and was known to some of the others, and he would appeal to them to put aside all sense of private wrongs, and keep in view the fact that the wrong and injustice to the crofter population demanded that all temporary ill-feeling should be put on one side. Unless they put aside their own personal feelings and had a sense of patriotism, a great amount of evil would be wrought in Scotland. There was one other general topic he should like to refer to on this Vote, and it was, that he thought the time had come for Scotchmen to ask themselves whether, after all, the Office of Secretary for Scotland was one that could longer satisfy the needs of Scotch-

men. For the administration from Dover House he had nothing but praise; and if administration were all that was demanded, Scotland would be probably the best governed country in the world. But that was not the sole point of view from which they looked at this Scottish Office. The Office was created not from an administrative standpoint, but to give a more effective means of legislating for Scotland, and from that point of view he must express a sense of great disappointment. So far as legislation was concerned, they thought that a further step would have been gained when the Secretary for Scotland was appointed to Cabinet rank; but they found that Scotland was governed by a bureau, and that would not do for the Scottish mind. Scotland would not be governed by a bureaucracy, however good it might be. Year after year Scotland had seen her legislation dragging wearily behind that of England, and they too readily realised this fact on the questions of Registration and Local Veto. In conclusion, he asked from the Secretary for Scotland some ray of hope that the trivial squabble in the Commission would be healed, and that the right hon. Gentleman had done all in his power to make the Commission a success.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Sir G. TREVELYAN, Glasgow, Bridgeton): I will say nothing as to the latter portion of the remarks of the hon. Member until I have heard what other Members have to state with regard to the subject. As to the Crofters' Commission, in the 7th Class of the Estimates the Committee will be called on to vote a substantial sum of money for the purposes of this Commission; and I conceive that that will be the occasion on which to discuss the general question. On the other question of the difficulties that have arisen in the Commission, I earnestly entreat those who are friends to the Commission, and those gentlemen of considerable eminence who are serving on the Commission, not to press the Government on the matter at this moment. My own belief is that the difficulties that have arisen will be healed up, and the process by which the question will be healed up will be the influence of those considerations to which my hon. Friend has referred—namely, that personal matters should give way to a sense

of public duty by men carrying out a public work.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) said, he did not wish to join in any enterprise for the reduction of his right hon. Friend's salary, because he thought he deserved a bigger sum. He was willing to pay a tribute to the success with which his right hon. Friend had fulfilled the duties of his Office. There was one spot on his administration, however. He thought his right hon. Friend would feel disappointed if he did not carry out the pledge he made to bring that subject before the House, because he would probably remember he (Dr. Farquharson) had the honour to introduce a deputation to him to protest against the withdrawal of the Circular of the Board of Supervision prohibiting County Medical Officers of Health from engaging in private practice. By a recent Act it was made compulsory that County Councils should appoint Medical Officers of Health for districts or combinations, and at that time the idea was that Medical Officers of Health, except in special circumstances, should not be allowed to engage in private practice.

THE CHAIRMAN pointed out that this matter was covered by the Vote for the Board of Supervision.

DR. FARQUHARSON said, in that case he would reserve his observations.

MR. A. CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E.) had hoped that the hon. Member for Hawick would have referred to a question which concerned more nearly his own constituency, and in which he (Mr. Chamberlain) had some interest. Having been for some time a candidate for a Scotch constituency, he was bound to make himself acquainted with the matter which he wished to bring before the Committee. The hon. Member for Hawick had travelled a long way from his own constituents, who had a grievance at least as great, as serious, and as worthy of attention as any the hon. Member had mentioned. The Secretary for Scotland, in his happier days, was a Member for the Border Burghs, and probably was aware of the question he (Mr. Chamberlain) was going to call attention to. What he wished to ask was whether the right hon. Gentleman was going to take any action to inquire into the grievances connected with the fisheries in the Tweed and neighbouring

rivers and inlets—to do anything to give satisfaction to the inhabitants of those districts? It was alleged that the public rights of fishing enjoyed by people living near the Tweed and other rivers of the district were taken away from them by a side-wind in an Act of Parliament without Parliament knowing what was being done, and without Parliament having any intention of taking them away. The hon. Member for the Border Burghs knew what a hold this subject had on the electors of the district, and how much it had influenced recent elections. It was stated again and again before the last Election, and he believed during the Election, by the supporters of the present Government that this matter would be gone into, that redress would be given, and that the rights which the people alleged had been taken from them would be restored. The Secretary for Scotland had taken no legislative step to restore these rights. The right hon. Gentleman had not even made any kind of inquiry into the grievances which existed. He wished to ask what steps the right hon. Gentleman would now take to fulfil the pledges of his supporters and friends in that district?

MR. T. SHAW considered this discussion premature, and said he had intended to raise this question on the Vote for Law and Justice, and he had given notice of a reduction of that Vote in order to bring the matter under the notice of the Committee.

MR. COCHRANE (Ayrshire, N.) said, he joined in the protest of the hon. Member as to the unsatisfactory nature of the way in which Scottish Business had been attended to in the House of Commons, and particularly as to the late hour at which Scottish Business came on.

THE CHAIRMAN: This discussion is not appropriate to the Vote, because it is due to the action of the House of Commons.

MR. COCHRANE said, he wished to endorse what the hon. Member for the Border Burghs had said, that Scotland dragged wearily behind in all those measures which were promoted in their interest. He hoped the Secretary for Scotland would pay attention to any endeavour to further Scottish Business. He would receive the support of the Unionist Members as well as the support of those who habitually supported him. He

wished to call attention to the opening of a portion of the Clyde to trawling. The whole of the Clyde was closed to trawling, but under the bye-laws a certain portion of it had been opened.

MR. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire) asked whether this was not a matter for the Scottish Fishery Board?

THE CHAIRMAN: I thought so, but I was waiting to hear what was the argument of the hon. Gentleman. I think this is a matter for the next Vote.

MR. COCHRANE: This is a matter for the Secretary for Scotland.

THE CHAIRMAN observed that it would only be material on the next Vote.

MR. COCHRANE: Very well; I will call attention to it on that Vote.

SIR W. WEDDERBURN (Banffshire) would like to draw the attention of the Committee to a matter that very strongly affected his constituents in Banffshire. He had put down an Instruction to the Committee on the Scotch Fishery Bill on the subject, but the Speaker ruled that a matter which related to the use of the foreshores did not come within the scope of the Bill. He now desired to ask whether the Secretary for Scotland would be willing to take some measure to mitigate the difficulties from which fishermen suffered in regard to the use of the foreshore? For a very long period the fishermen had enjoyed the use of the foreshore. They needed it in order to dry their nets, and for other purposes. They had enjoyed this right by Common Law, and he thought he might say by common-sense as well. But, in addition, there were Statutes under Queen Anne (before the Union), and under George II. and George III., giving them the use of the foreshore and of 100 yards beyond. But the difficulties from which the men suffered now were that they were not able to get the full use of the foreshore for this purpose, and that there was a great want of house accommodation in those very localities where it was necessary for fishermen to carry on their industry. There was no doubt about the right of the fishermen, both under Statute and Common Law, to the use of the foreshores; and what he would ask was that the right hon. Gentleman should take steps in order to place in the hands of some authority the duty

of enforcing this right, and of seeing that the men got the use of their foreshores, which was essential to their industry. They hoped that the County Councils would give access to the mountains; but that was a matter of pleasure. He hoped that the Fishery Board and the District Committee would have power to secure for the fishermen access to the shores, a matter on which a very important industry depended.

MR. H. SMITH (Falkirk, &c.) said, that no Member of the House was in a better position to speak as to the enormous wickedness of the Tweed Laws than he was himself, because he happened to be one who had suffered from the arbitrary and inequitable character of these laws. He was probably the only Member of the House who had ever been tried and sentenced in his absence by any legally constituted Court. That had been his fate under the Tweed Fishery Laws.

THE CHAIRMAN: This subject is not relevant to the Vote before the Committee.

SIR G. TREVELYAN said, he did not know that there was any other Vote on which the Tweed Fishing Laws could be alluded to more advantageously than the Vote for the Secretary for Scotland.

MR. H. SMITH, proceeding, said, if anything of the kind had occurred in any of the other portions of Her Majesty's dominions it would not have been necessary to draw attention twice in that House to the wickedness of the system which permitted such acts of tyranny. He agreed with the hon. Member for the Border Burghs when he said that, much as they valued the administrative services of the Secretary for Scotland, and highly as they appreciated his constant sympathy with all legitimate Scottish grievances, still they did not think that was sufficient to satisfy the just Scottish demands upon the House. He was perfectly certain that if, instead of having a Department in Dover House—excellent as it might be—they had had a body of men sitting in Edinburgh or Glasgow who were themselves allowed to deal with matters of that kind, the Tweed Fishery Laws would have been swept off the Statute Book at least 20 years ago.

Sir W. Wedderburn

MR. GRAHAM MURRAY (Bute-shire) said, with regard to the action of the Deer Forests Commission, he would remind the hon. Member for the Border Burghs that the remit from the House of Commons to that Commission was carefully worded, and that the Commission was in no sense executive, but was merely a Commission to inquire and report. He entirely agreed with the hon. Member in his wish that the labours of the Commission would not be rendered nugatory by a very trivial point. At the same time, he could not endorse the idea that either the object or the necessary outcome of the Commission's labours should be in the direction which the hon. Member indicated. They would do well to suspend their judgment upon these matters until they saw the Commission's Report, and saw what really practically could be done. In regard to the Tweed Fishery Laws, he hoped if the Secretary for Scotland was going to say anything about them he would rather say it upon this Vote than upon the matter of Police. If the Tweed Fishery Laws were wrong, let them be amended; it would not do simply to talk about the wickedness, and relate an interesting family incident in the life of the hon. Member for the Falkirk Burghs, who it seemed had on one occasion been tried and sentenced, but who in another place had himself been engaged in the work of trying and sentencing other people. He was afraid that on this occasion the hon. Member was voicing the complaint of a good many people who would wish to abolish property in fishing altogether. [Mr. H. SMITH: No, no!] That was undoubtedly the popular tide at Galashiels. What they wanted was to be allowed to fish for salmon without interference. That would be a violation of a very valuable right, and he protested against the idea of dealing with a valuable right by way of paralysing the police arrangements of the country. He wished to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether there had been any change in the attitude of the Government in regard to the Minute on Secondary Education, or whether they had heard the last word upon the matter?

MR. T. SHAW said that, in view of the course of the discussion, he would on the present Vote refer to the question of

the administration of the Tweed Fishery Laws. In the course of the present Session he obtained a Return dealing with all cases in the Tweedside counties for the 10 years ending 1892. He found from that Return that in that period the fines from all ordinary criminal cases in the Counties of Roxburgh, Peebles, and Selkirk amounted to £1,042. That figure demonstrated that the community in these districts was of the most law-abiding character. But would it be believed that in the same counties for the same period the fines, under the Tweed Fisheries Acts alone, amounted to no less a sum than £3,954? Such a contrast of figures showed that the existing state of the law in those counties was nothing less than a social and public scandal, and there was a case for immediate and stringent inquiry into the operation of these laws. There was a third heading in the Return, "Offences under the Game Laws," and the fines under that head amounted for the same period to £1,141. So that if they added the fines under the Game Laws and the Fishery Laws together they had this startling contrast: that these fines for Statute-made crime were five times the amount of the fines for all other Common Law offences in these counties. The figures under the one heading were £5,095, and under the other £1,042. He did not think that any Minister could look upon that state of things as satisfactory, and he thought the time had arrived for a most stringent inquiry into the matter. He believed that the Sheriffs of these three counties view the administration of those laws, not with discredit only, but with absolute disgust. Two-thirds of their time was occupied in trying poaching offences. The position was simply this: that no one was thought the less of by his fellows in the community for a breach of the Tweed Fishery Laws, whereas anyone who offended against the ordinary Criminal Law was at once looked down upon. The hon. Member for Bute (Mr. Graham Murray) said that it was desired to abolish property in salmon. They did not desire to abolish property in salmon, but they did desire to see that Crown property in salmon should be given not to individuals, but for the public use and enjoyment. Until that state of matters was brought about, they might tinker at a remedy for years and

years, but they would never bring the community at large into a state of sympathy with the law. The Return he had given proved that there was no more law-abiding class of men than the men in his constituency. But why should they be turned into criminals?

THE CHAIRMAN: You cannot discuss the law. As I understood, you desired to put a question for an inquiry.

MR. T. SHAW said, he had only been replying to the view of the hon. Member for Bute, who seemed to suggest that he (Mr. Shaw) and others had sympathy with breach of the law. Their desire, on the contrary, was to bring the law into line with the feelings of the community at large; and he hoped a Commission would be appointed to inquire into the whole subject. The Secretary for Scotland knew the facts as well as any man in the House, and Scotland had a right to look to him for special and speedy action. They demanded it in the interests of social peace; and for himself he would never be content until he saw those law-abiding counties put in the position of having the Statutory Law applicable to the Tweed fisheries brought into line with the sentiments of the people.

MR. GRAHAM MURRAY said, he had no desire at all to go counter to any wish for an inquiry, because he thought that those who represented proprietary rights had nothing to dread from a full and ample inquiry. At the same time, he did not think the figures which his hon. Friend had quoted quite bore out the conclusion at which he arrived. He would remind his hon. Friend that, as a matter of fact, in the ordinary criminal work of the Sheriff Court the punishment of a fine was practically reserved to the offence of being drunk and disorderly. All other forms of criminal offence, such as assaults and so forth, were, as a rule, punished in another way. Therefore, it did not do to take the mere amount of the pecuniary fines, and think that they had got a means of comparison of the various kinds of crime. He thought that an inquiry would show that all those whom his hon. Friend represented did not entirely share the opinions he had expressed, and that the acquisition of these rights for the benefit of the public could only be done with justice by paying those who at present

possessed them. Even then, unless the manners and customs of certain persons altered, it would be necessary, in the interests of the public, that there should be a close time, because some of the offences were the taking of salmon out of season, and also for capturing salmon by unsportsmanlike methods.

MR. A. CHAMBERLAIN said, that undoubtedly at present the mass of public opinion—for instance, in Galashiels, and that district—was against the present law, and, therefore, the wise course would be to inquire and see whether there were real and genuine grievances underlying this feeling, and whether, without doing injustice to anyone, those grievances could be redressed. The hon. Gentleman seemed to think that the right of fishing in all those waters was vested in individuals, and that those individuals had indefeasible rights which could only be bought out. For himself, he contended that while a large part of those waters was properly private property, a large portion was really Crown property, which in these days was as much as saying public property; and the private rights acquired in those Crown waters had been acquired without the knowledge and, as they believed, against the will of Parliament, owing to an oversight in the drafting of an Act which passed some years ago. That was one reason why there should be an inquiry.

*SIR G. TREVELYAN: The questions that have been raised, and that could have been raised legitimately on this Vote, narrow themselves down to a small compass in point of number, though I will not say of importance. The Member for Banffshire (Sir W. Wedderburn) has referred to the question of foreshores with reference to their being used by fishermen for the purposes of their craft. My hon. Friend will recognise that now that the Scottish Fishery Bill has, by the wonderful forbearance, among other qualities, of Members of this House, become law, as far as this House is concerned—and I trust is on its way to become law in the other House—that there will be now in all districts a Fishery Committee representing the fishermen, who will be able to put in the most powerful manner the grievances and aspirations of their constituents before Parliament and the Government. But I

will not wait for that. If my hon. Friend will come to the Scottish Office, I have the assurance of the Lord Advocate that he will go very carefully into the legal position of this very vexed question, and ascertain how the matter stands at present, so as to enable the doubts regarding it to be cleared up. The Member for Buteshire asked a question with regard to the Secondary Education Minute. The second Minute, which was laid on the Table, and which was approved by an immense majority of this House, is the final decision of the Government on the matter, with the single exception of the alteration to take place next year, which is that £200 will be paid over to each County Committee and each Burgh Committee, as a sort of instalment before the main dividend is paid in accordance with the number of the population. I now come to the only other subject before us; but it is one of great importance, and that is the question of the Tweed. I thoroughly agree with Members who have spoken as to the great gravity of the situation. For 20 years past the sympathies of the people of the countryside have been entirely opposed to the law, and the manner in which it is enforced. I will give a few sample statistics. They are 20 years old, but I have very carefully watched the Returns since then, and I find that the same proportion still generally holds good. In the years 1873 and 1874 there were 580 people brought up on criminal charges in the district that borders on the Tweed, and the fines amounted to £580 and costs. In those two years 22,000 salmon were caught in the river by those who had right to the fisheries. That is to say, for every 37 salmon taken, one person was brought up on a criminal charge, and £1 was paid in fine and costs. In the County of Peebles one person in 100 in those two years was brought up on a criminal charges connected with the Tweed Fisheries; and I observe that in the last 10 years the same proportion obtains. That is a state of things which can only be accounted for in one of two ways—either that the population is exceptionally lawless, or that the law is exceptionally bad. The population is not exceptionally lawless. I have lived among them for 20 years, and I know that they require the least equipment of police to keep

Mr. Graham Murray

them from breaking the law, and to keep the peace in ordinary matters. I have seen them under great excitement at several contested elections, and have never seen a population which is more able to keep the peace for themselves without extraneous interference. Therefore, the fault lies in the law, which is different from the law of England in these matters. An hon. Member asked me whether I will grant an inquiry. My own opinion is that except on the special question of the Charters we do not require inquiry. We have all the facts before us at the Scottish Office.

MR. T. SHAW: But the Charters are a very important question.

*SIR G. TREVELYAN: Yes; that is so. But the Government have the facts in their possession. The state of things is well known at the Scottish Office, and also so is the feeling of the population. The law is exceptional in the highest degree. If it were placed under the general Salmon Fisheries Acts of Scotland, that alone would be a very great improvement. But it might be said that the South bank of the Tweed is in England, and, therefore, that we could not make that alteration. But I have had a most important deputation from the English side, who informed me that they would be perfectly satisfied that the whole of the Tweed should be placed under the general law of Scotland, and not only so, but that that law should be altered in several particulars, which I will not enter into now, but which would greatly ameliorate the relations of the fishermen to the law. As to the question of Salmon Charters, that is a purely administrative matter, and upon that I am not afraid to face Parliament. Very much more has been done during the last year or so to assert the rights of the public as against the rights of individuals, or the straining of the rights of the Crown, than ever has been done before. The Committee which sat on the subject recommended that no further salmon leases should be given without the sanction of the Secretary for Scotland, and also that licences in the case of fresh grants should be given to the public. Last November I induced the Treasury to consent that no lease at all should henceforth be given without the consent of the Secretary for Scotland. That consent has in no case

been obtained from that day to this, and I have given it to be thoroughly understood that no fresh lease will be made except to the general fishermen of the district on the payment of a reasonable licence. That unfortunately, however, concerns a very small part of the Scottish Salmon Fisheries, and when we come to deal with the main question we shall have to see that as leases fall out they shall be brought under the same regulations. I have stated on two or three occasions this Session that until the Scottish Sea Fisheries Bill was out of the way we could not deal with the question of salmon, and I have promised that next Session I will lay the Bill on the Table. That promise I now repeat. I had hoped that something might have been done in regard to the Salmon Law in the Scottish Fisheries Bill. That is impossible at this time of the Session. If, however, as I earnestly hope, the Bill meets no difficulties in another place—and it is a Bill which will not bear retrenching, because it is the least we could give to the Scottish fishermen—then next year I hope to deal with the question of salmon fishing, and to deal with it in no ungenerous spirit, but in a spirit that will be advantageous to the public, and not unjust to individuals.

SIR W. WEDDERBURN suggested that any inquiry that was instituted with regard to salmon should be extended to trout fishing, which in some parts of Scotland was quite as much a burning question as salmon fishing was in other parts. In the Spey and its tributaries it was a matter which interested his constituents almost more than any other local question. He wished to ask a question on another point. There was a strong feeling in the North-East of Scotland that the Crofters Act should be extended to the small holders in these parts. It was not because his constituents had any complaint against the landlords personally. His county was particularly fortunate in its landlords, and it was against the system that complaint was made, and his constituents were extremely anxious that this protection of the fruits of their industry should be extended to a class which were in exactly the same industrial position as the crofters in the Western or Northern parts of Scotland. All the Members for the North-East of Scotland joined in an appeal

to the right hon. Gentleman on this subject. He therefore asked whether the right hon. Gentleman proposed to take any steps in this direction?

DR. FARQUHARSON endorsed what his hon. Friend had said as to the desire for the extension of the Crofters Act. He did not know any other question on which his constituents had urged him so much.

VISCOUNT WOLMER (Edinburgh, W.) said, he wished to ask the Secretary for Scotland as to how certain matters stood regarding which the right hon. Gentleman had heard several times from the Trades Council of Edinburgh and district? That body had approached the right hon. Gentleman on behalf of the professional waiters in Edinburgh, and the grievance they had laid before him was that they allowed certain public servants under the control of the Secretary for Scotland unfairly to compete with them in their professional duties during the hours for which they were paid to serve the public, and that sometimes special holidays were given them to enable them so to compete. He (Viscount Wolmer) had had no opportunity of testing personally whether the case was correctly stated; but it seemed to him it was a subject on which the Trades Council were perfectly within their rights in approaching the right hon. Gentleman, and he wished to ask whether the grievance was a substantial one; and, if so, what steps were to be taken to remedy it? The second point he wished to raise was what showed to him the very unfair disadvantage under which the Scottish Police laboured in the matter of superannuation compared with their English colleagues. He would give only one instance of the great disproportion.

THE CHAIRMAN: This is matter of an Act of Parliament, and, therefore, not in Order.

VISCOUNT WOLMER, on the point of Order, wished to point out that there was no Vote for the Scottish Police. It was paid for out of an Imperial account; but the Secretary for Scotland was responsible for its distribution, and this was the only Vote on which it would be possible to bring the question forward. The English Police were allowed 30-60ths of their pay as a pension after 25 years' approved service, but the Scottish Police got only 28-60ths after

28 years' approved service. There was no such corresponding disadvantage between Scotland and England in regard to pensions in the Customs or Post Office, and he would ask the Secretary for Scotland whether this subject had engaged his attention, and whether he did not admit the unfairness of the arrangement? He would also ask the right hon. Gentleman if, before the next Estimates were framed, he would approach two of his Colleagues on matters of great interest to Edinburgh? A large sum had been paid to the Crown as compensation for property taken by the North British Railway Company in Edinburgh. That money was claimed by the Lord Provost and Town Council of Edinburgh as due to Edinburgh for the improvement of the Castle, part of the land of which had been taken, and for which this money was paid. He did not think any Member of this Committee would deny that money so paid to the public for a piece of the Castle rock actually taken by the Railway Company should be appropriated to no other purpose than that which would be to the interests of the City. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman to see if the wishes of the Town Council of Edinburgh could not be carried out. Lastly, he would ask whether before next year the Secretary for Scotland would endeavour to induce the First Commissioner of Works to make provision for the proper maintenance of Holyrood Palace?

MR. H. SMITH said, as resident in Edinburgh, he supported the appeal of the noble Lord (Lord Wolmer) with regard to the sum paid for that part of Princes Street Gardens which had been taken from the Crown. There had been a great deal of litigation about the matter. The Bills in Parliament were opposed by the Town Council, and the main subject of interest to the inhabitants of Edinburgh was the question whether the contemplated alteration in the railway would alter for the worse the appearance of Princes Street Gardens. They were unsuccessful in their opposition, and the Railway Company got power, not only to take off a part of the Gardens which belonged to the city, but to detach a point of the rock upon which Edinburgh Castle was built. It was perfectly plain that the operations of the Railway Company had not inflicted any injury upon

the nation at large, but had inflicted serious injury upon the inhabitants of the City of Edinburgh. That being so, the sum of £2,000 ought not to go into the general coffers of the State, but ought to be given to the Corporation of the city. Then, he wished to say a word in reference to another complaint by the noble Lord. He (Mr. H. Smith) had also been made aware of the grievance of the professional waiters in the City of Edinburgh. They were called upon to compete on very unfavourable terms with those public servants who were somewhat numerous in Edinburgh, and who were employed and paid by the State as attendants at the Picture Galleries and in the Courts of Law, and elsewhere. He thought the Secretary for Scotland might well be called upon to inquire into that grievance, with a view to its being remedied.

MR. GRAHAM MURRAY said, he would point out that the ground in Princes Street Gardens referred to had been given by the Crown to the city for an indefinite period. There was every reason, in his opinion, that the money should go to the City of Edinburgh.

MR. W. WHITELOW (Perth) said, with regard to the Secondary Education Minute, that in the discussion which took place last May a complaint was made that, generally speaking, the burghs were insufficiently represented on the Committees, and the Secretary for Scotland promised that an inquiry would be made, and that, if necessary, he would bring in a Supplementary Minute. He wished to know if the right hon. Gentleman had made the promised inquiry? He should be glad to think they had heard the last of this matter, and whether the right hon. Gentleman was in a position to tell them that the matter would have further attention.

*MR. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough) said, having taken some interest in the restoration of the Castle and Palace mentioned by the noble Lord (Lord Wolmer) he supported his view. With regard to the Princes Street Gardens, no money would have been paid at all but for the action of the Edinburgh Town Council. The Corporation fought the matter and bore all the expenses, and then the Crown, as usual, came in and collared the money. He

thought it should be returned. Then, with regard to the Fatal Accidents Inquiry Bill, which had been dropped, he regretted that the Government had withdrawn the measure, and asked when it was proposed to re-introduce it? Legislation on this matter was urgently asked for by the working men of Scotland, and he hoped the Secretary for Scotland would give them an assurance that the Bill would be re-introduced.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think the hon. Member is not strictly in Order.

*MR. A. C. MORTON said, he was not going to discuss the question, but a Bill, introduced six months ago, had been withdrawn, and he wanted to urge upon the right hon. Gentleman the desirability of having another brought in as soon as possible.

THE CHAIRMAN said, the hon. Member could not argue as to the question of a future Bill.

*MR. A. C. MORTON said, he thought he had a right to complain on the Vote for the right hon. Gentleman's salary that he had not gone on with the Bill, and to ask him when he was going to produce another measure of a similar character. This was a question that commanded a great deal of attention in Scotland. He knew there was some objection to the measure, especially as to the jury; but he hoped the Government would re-introduce it, with a provision for the jury system, and pass it into law. He was aware that the dropped Bill did not contain all that was desired; but it would have been a great advance on the present state of the law. Under its provisions friends of the parties could appear at the inquiry, or they could be represented by counsel. The inquiry would be immediate and automatic. There would be sworn evidence, copies of all the papers and documents could be had by the parties interested, and there would be the great advantage of publicity and an open Court. He would ask the Government to hold out some hope that a measure of the kind would be re-introduced and pressed forward. Generally speaking, he thought it would have the support on both sides of the House, and he had no doubt its operation, when passed, would remedy some of the grievances complained of in Scotland. The request was a reasonable one, and he hoped to hear that the right hon.

Gentleman was prepared to give a reply that would satisfy working-men and their families in Scotland.

*MR. PAUL (Edinburgh, S.) said, he agreed with the hon. Gentleman in urging the desirability of the Government introducing another Fatal Accidents Bill early next Session. But he would point out that the last Bill underwent, after it passed through the Standing Committee, at the instance of the Government, a considerable change. As it was introduced, it provided for an inquiry before the Sheriff without a jury. He was sure it would be the desire of the great majority of the working classes in his constituency that the Bill, if introduced again, should provide for an inquiry before the Sheriff with a jury. As the Lord Advocate had so far recognised that as to put upon the Paper an Amendment providing the machinery for inquiry by jury, he hoped they might take that as an earnest that the Government would, at the earliest possible opportunity, insure that the working classes of Scotland should have, in the case of all fatal accidents occurring to any of them in the course of their employment, not only a full inquiry with the publicity which was desirable, but also such a tribunal as would command their general confidence and respect. He wished also to refer to the points which had been so ably raised by his noble Friend and Colleague (Lord Wolmer), especially as regarded the sum of £2,000 which he claimed on behalf of the city. He (Mr. Paul) submitted that the city was entitled, not to ask this from the Treasury as a favour, but to claim it as a right. The money properly belonged to them, and if there was any doubt about their getting it, it was merely because of the want of legal machinery. He understood it to be the view of the Treasury that the only way in which this money could be paid over was by placing an item upon the Estimates, and he hoped they would have from the Secretary for Scotland a positive assurance that this sum would appear upon the Scottish Estimates for next year. He desired also to support every word which his noble Friend had said about the superannuation of the Scottish police. He thought his noble Friend had said this was the only case of unequal payments in the two countries.

Mr. A. C. Morton

VISCOUNT WOLMER : No, no !

*MR. PAUL said, he was glad to hear that, as he knew there were other cases of a like kind. Then, with regard to the question of the professional waiters, he had received a communication from the Trades Council of Edinburgh. He understood their strongest ground of complaint was that persons in the employment of the Government were allowed to pursue the avocation of waiters in the time which belonged to the Government.

SIR R. TEMPLE (Surrey, Kingston) asked permission to say that while he had confidence in the management of the Scotch Education Department, he would like to have an assurance from the right hon. Gentleman that no money granted for elementary education would be given for secondary education until the exact state of the law was ascertained. This was a matter of consequence, not only because of the practice in England, but because of questions arising in England. He merely put the question, saying nothing with regard to the Scotch Department for Education.

*SIR G. TREVELYAN : Sir, the first question, in which we are told a grievance is felt, is that of the professional waiters against the messengers in the Government Offices. That is a question I have gone into very completely, and I have laid down, so far as it is in my power, very positive orders about it. I conceive that my hon. Friend the Member for South Edinburgh strains the privilege of Government very strongly when he says that a Government servant owes the Government his whole time. What a Government servant owes to the public is the number of hours which are required to carry out the duties which the Government impose upon him. That is the principle which has been carried into every branch of the Public Service. A man is allowed to do with the time which is his own what he likes. It is really just as hard to prevent a messenger from waiting after office hours or from waiting at a Highland gathering during the fortnight which constitutes his leave as it would have been to prevent Sir Henry Taylor or Anthony Trollope from writing books out of office hours. I have inquired at every office in which there are any messengers who wait, and in all cases I find that either in the cases where they have done so they waited

after office hours at dinner parties, or that, when they waited in the daytime, the day in which they so waited for private profit was strictly deducted from their fortnight's leave. The Regulation appears to be perfectly just, and to that Regulation the messengers will be strictly kept. The next question is that of superannuation of the police. I do not think it will be possible for me to enter into that. Police superannuation is governed by an Act which was passed in the last Parliament, and is not a matter which can be properly discussed on the Vote for the Salary of the Secretary for Scotland. The hon. Member for Perthshire wants to know whether burghs might have a larger representation on the County Committees. I cannot say that any burghs have applied in such a manner as to bring their claims very seriously before the Office. If they do so, and if I find that there is a real desire on the part of any important burghs to be specially represented, I shall not have the slightest hesitation in laying an additional Minute upon the Table if it is desired. Then comes the question of my speaking to other Members of the Government on the money matter referred to by my noble Friend. I do not know whether it is strictly regular for one Member of the Government to speak to another upon a matter concerning the latter's Department, but I may say that the Scotch Office has found the Treasury exceedingly generous within the last 12 months. On two occasions large sums of money—thousands of pounds—have fallen to the Treasury under the intestacy custom in connection with the burgh of Ayr; and in consequence of the urgent representations of the hon. Member for Ayr to the Scotch Office, and from the Scotch Office to the Treasury, I am glad to say that in both cases the entire sum of money was made over to the Corporation for the public purposes of the town. Therefore, I think the Scotch Office is not unwilling to put in a good word in that quarter. That is, perhaps, all I can say. As regards inquiry into fatal accidents, it was absolutely necessary to withdraw the last Bill on the subject in consequence of the understanding arrived at between the two sides of the House. It always was a contentious Bill. It was blocked by an hon. Member who most certainly would

have made good his objections to it. Since then very great pressure has been put upon the Government by, as far as I can make out, every body of people who asked for the Bill, and my right hon. Friend was told in the most decided language—with great vehemence in some instances—by hon. Members and representatives of Trade Bodies that the Bill would be valueless and would be opposed if Jury Clauses were not put in. The Government have always thought that the objection to the Jury Clauses was that they would weight the Bill. We were prepared to introduce Jury Clauses, but that would have made the Bill more contentious than it already was. Now, Sir, I think I have answered the questions brought forward upon my salary, and I hope I may appeal to the Committee to pass the Vote so that we may proceed to others.

SIR W. WEDDERBURN said, he would remind the right hon. Gentleman of his questions with regard to trout fishing and the extension of the Crofters Act to the north-eastern Counties.

SIR G. TREVELYAN said, that these were questions relating to future legislation. They were certainly both before the Government, but he could not speak at any length, or give any definite promise on them on this Vote.

VISCOUNT WOLMER asked whether he was to understand that the Scotch Office would approach the Treasury with regard to the Princes Street Gardens? He would, at the same time, ask him to bear in mind the question of superannuation.

SIR G. TREVELYAN said, the first step in regard to the question of the money would be that the Edinburgh Corporation should approach him.

*MR. A. C. MORTON asked when the Government would reintroduce the Fatal Accidents Inquiry Bill?

SIR G. TREVELYAN said, the Bill would be reintroduced. It was a measure they had very much at heart. He could not say more.

Vote agreed to.

2. £15,858, to complete the sum for Fishery Board, Scotland.

MR. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire) said, at present the sea police force, which was under the command of the Fishery

Board, was very inadequate for the purpose for which it existed. The force was now the same as it was in 1885, but since 1885 the Fishery Board had been allowed to shut certain areas against trawling; and further, the number of trawlers had increased something like four-fold. Therefore it was perfectly obvious that if the police force in 1885 was inadequate, it must be sadly inadequate now. Then there was a small gunboat, the *Jackal*, and for only one season of the year there were three gunboats put at the disposal of the Fishery Board by the Admiralty. When they looked at the speed at which these boats went they would find that the average speed was five to seven knots an hour. Those boats were intended to catch steam trawlers, some of which went at the rate of nine knots an hour. He need hardly point out, therefore, that it was no use setting a boat which went at the rate of five or seven knots an hour to catch one which went at the rate of nine knots. He wished that the speed of the gunboats could be increased in order that the trawlers might be more closely watched. Another subject which he wished to speak on was harbour accommodation on the coast of Scotland. Since the passing of the Sea Fisheries Bill they were somewhat better off than they were before in this respect. The sum of £3,000 a year was given by the old Act of Parliament. That had not always been entirely spent on harbours, and it was perfectly impossible to carry out a complete scheme of harbour extension with such a sum. But under the new Act they were allowed to use a sum as a basis for borrowing a larger amount, and he hoped this arrangement would prove sufficient. He wished, however, to point out that the money which was accumulated from the herring brand surplus should, as in the case of the Ayr Burghs, go in aid of Scottish harbours, because the Committee which sat on this subject reported in favour of such an arrangement. The sum of £31,000 accrued from this source, and he hoped the Treasury would follow the same generous policy they had pursued towards the Ayr Burghs, and give back the money to help in the improvement of harbours round the coast. In connection with the money coming from these herring brands, he did not think that the

Mr. Crombie

sum given back was fairly spent. Some 90 per cent. of the money was raised on the East Coast, and the remaining portion on the West Coast; but he regretted to say that almost all of the money given back was spent on the West Coast in telegraphic communication. He hoped that in future a fairer arrangement would be observed, and that the East Coast would benefit proportionally to the money it contributed.

MR. BEITH (Inverness, &c.) said, that the Finance Clause of the Sea Fisheries Bill having been dropped, the Scottish Fishery Board would be in a very weak position financially for the carrying out of the measure. He wished to ask the Secretary for Scotland what steps he intended to take to place at the disposal of the Fishery Board a larger sum of money than was provided by the Vote. There were two objects which urgently required a larger sum of money. One was the improvement of piers and harbours, and he would instance the case of Nairn Harbour, on which the local community had spent no less a sum than £38,000, but which had become inadequate for the accommodation of the larger boats that were now used in the carrying on of the sea fisheries. They had recently a liability of £2,500 for making the harbour safe for the protection of such boats. The Fishery Board recognised the importance of this harbour and the justice of its claim; but the answer to-day made was "No funds." They said—

"They stand second or third on the list of those we mean to give a grant to when we have funds, but no funds being in existence, the position is very awkward and difficult."

The obligation he had referred to rested on the town of Nairn, and the people naturally felt extremely anxious that the Fishery Board, by the command of funds, should be enabled to carry out what they admitted was required, and give a grant to the town in order that the harbour might be put in a satisfactory state. In regard to the question of sea police, the Fishery Board, owing to the inefficiency of the vessels at its command, was unable to enforce its bye-laws. Moray Firth had been closed to trawling by an order of the Fishery Board. In consequence of the want of a sufficient police to see the order given effect to, trawling was carried on night and day in the Moray Firth just

as if no order had been made on the subject. This was a condition of things which ought not for the credit of the country to be allowed to continue. He hoped that the Secretary for Scotland would be able to see his way to make a demand on the Treasury, and that the Treasury would accede to it.

MR. WASON (Ayrshire, S.) said, he wished to join in the appeals which had been made to the Secretary for Scotland to see that proper police protection was given to the line fishermen in those waters in which trawling was prohibited. The Firth of Clyde was closed to beam trawling, except in a small portion of it, and he hoped before long the whole of these waters would be closed to seine trawlers as well as beam trawlers. In that case it would become very necessary that there should be an effective policing of the Firth of Clyde, so that the orders of the Fishery Board might be carried into effect. He had had some complaints of great damage done by trawlers to the crammel nets of the fishermen at Ballantrae, and in many cases the men who had caused that damage had not been brought to justice. With regard to the question of harbours, he believed that, so far as the South West of Scotland was concerned, practically there were next to no harbours at all, and he did not think a shilling of Government money had been spent upon them for many years past. If they wished really to see a harbour which was in a disgraceful state, he would advise hon. Members to go to one of the most charming little places in the whole of the South West of Scotland—namely, Portpatrick. The harbour was originally constructed for the short sea passage between Scotland and Ireland, and an enormous sum of money—something like £100,000—was spent upon it by the Government. The harbour was now in a worse condition than before that enormous sum was spent upon it, and he hoped that the South West of Scotland would not be forgotten in this matter by the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. COCHRANE wished to call attention to a point which had already been alluded to with reference to the opening of certain portions of the Clyde to trawlers. He believed that every hon. Member who was acquainted with the dis-

trict sympathised with the line fishermen in this matter. Last year a very influential and important deputation waited upon the Secretary for Scotland on the subject. Under the Act of 1889 the whole of the Clyde was closed to trawlers, but permission was given to the Fishery Board by a bye-law to throw open any portion they liked to a certain class of trawlers. Soon after the Act was passed the Fishery Board made a bye-law throwing open a part of the river which was essentially the part which they should have kept closed, as it was of all others the place where the fish bred. It was within territorial waters, and was the very narrowest part of the Clyde. The result of opening it was that the line fishermen of the Clyde had been subjected to great hardship. There were 18 trawlers now fishing in the part of the Clyde which had been open to them. They used originally to trawl in the whole of the Clyde, but were now confined to the narrow portion of the river he spoke of. There they trawled day and night, raking up all the fish, and also the spawning beds. The consequence was that the line fishermen were unable to get their lines out, and that if they did get them out they were unable to catch many fish. It was alleged that the trawlers did not exceed eight tons in burden, but the fishermen declared that they did exceed that burden, and they had been known to carry as much as 50 tons of gravel from one part of the Clyde to another. The deputation asked the right hon. Gentleman to produce the Report of the officer who had inquired into the subject, and the right hon. Gentleman promised that the Report should be forthcoming; but he (Mr. Cochrane) had never seen or heard of it since. The Secretary for Scotland also promised a new inquiry. Sir Thomas Boyd and another member of the Fishery Board had held an inquiry. The investigation was not, however, considered sufficient by the fishermen. It was held in Greenock and Rothesay. Inasmuch as nearly the whole of the 18 trawlers belonged to Greenock, it was considered that the opinion of people in Greenock ought not to influence the Fishery Board in the matter. The Secretary for Scotland had promised a new inquiry, but he (Mr. Cochrane) thought the right hon. Gentleman had not ful-

filled the letter, and that he had hardly fulfilled the spirit of that undertaking. In reply to a question put to him in the House, the right hon. Gentleman said an inquiry had been made by Mr. Anderson Smith, a member of the Scottish Fishery Board, into the allegation of the Clyde fishermen that the boats exceeded the limit of eight tons, and he considered that the allegation was not proved. He (Mr. Cochrane) should like to know whether the gentlemen who made the inquiry had the boats measured, and also what the measurements were. He had now to raise a rather difficult and delicate question, because it affected the Chairman of the Fishery Board, who was formerly a Member of the House of Commons, and who, he believed, had a great many personal friends in the House. A considerable question of principle was involved in the matter in reference to Government officials interfering in political contests, and it was also desirable to clear up a charge that was made on a former occasion by the hon. Member for North Aberdeen (Mr. Hunter) against Colonel Russell, who was Parliamentary candidate for Aberdeenshire at the time that Mr. Esslemont was made Chairman of the Fishery Board.

MR. BEITH, rising to Order, asked whether the question referred to by the hon. Member could be discussed on the Vote before the Committee?

MR. COCHRANE remarked, that the question distinctly affected the character of the Chairman of the Scottish Fishery Board.

THE CHAIRMAN: As I understand, the Chairman of the Fishery Board is upon this Vote, and if that is so, although I think it is somewhat doubtful how far the hon. Gentleman is justified in going into matters apart from the duties of the Chairman of the Board, I do not think at the present moment I can stop him.

MR. COCHRANE went on to say that he had put a question to the Secretary for Scotland as to the conduct of the Chairman of the Fishery Board in addressing a public meeting in September, 1892, in support of a Parliamentary candidate for East Aberdeenshire, and had inquired whether the interference of officials of the Government in Parliamentary elections was in accordance with the Regulations. The right hon.

Gentleman made a somewhat lengthy reply, and quoted the speech which Mr. Esslemont delivered. The right hon. Gentleman stated that Mr. Esslemont went to the meeting in order to reply to personal attacks upon him. The question arose, of course, whether these attacks were such as made it necessary that Mr. Esslemont should break through the Regulations of the Office by addressing an election meeting. After the right hon. Gentleman's answer the hon. Member for North Aberdeenshire (Mr. Hunter) asked the following question:—

"Is it not a fact that the sole topic Mr. Esslemont dealt with was to contradict a lie?" He (Mr. Cochrane) thought this was a very serious statement to make when Colonel Russell was not in the House to defend himself. He had carefully examined the extracts from Mr. Esslemont's speech, read to the House by the Secretary for Scotland, and as far as he could make out, the only attack that had been made upon that gentleman by Colonel Russell consisted of a statement that as a Member of the House of Commons he had spoken against the Vote for the Fishery Board in 1888. Having referred to *Hansard*, he (Mr. Cochrane) found that Mr. Esslemont did speak against that Vote in 1888, and expressed the opinion that £800 a year was too large a salary to give to the Chairman of the Fishery Board, when nothing was given to the non-official members.

THE CHAIRMAN: I do not think this is material to the Vote. What the Chairman of the Fishery Board said on some other occasion has nothing to do with the Vote. The answer given by the Secretary for Scotland was that the Chairman of the Board went to the meeting to defend himself from the attacks that had been made upon him.

MR. COCHRANE said, he only wanted to show that these attacks were unfounded, and were not of such a character as called for Mr. Esslemont's interference in the election.

MR. C. CAMERON (Glasgow, College), on a point of Order, asked whether it was competent for the hon. Gentleman to refer to matters that occurred during a period not embraced by this year's Estimates?

THE CHAIRMAN: I have already pointed out that to refer to what the Chairman of the Board did before he

Mr. Cochrane

was appointed Chairman is out of Order, but with regard to his conduct on this particular occasion I cannot interfere. What he did as Chairman may be brought under the notice of the Committee.

SIR C. CAMERON: My point is that what he did as Chairman at a period anterior to that embraced by this Vote cannot be dealt with.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member must remember that the answer given was that the Chairman went there to defend himself from attacks, and if those attacks were made before the period covered by the Vote, that is a matter which the Committee could consider. To go into details, moreover, as to what he said and did is out of Order.

MR. COCHRANE said, he would merely add that at the political meeting Mr. Esslemont said—

“You know the duty before you well, and I am not going to ask any man here to give a vote for one candidate more than another.”

This was obviously a very considerable hint as to what he was present at the meeting for. The Secretary for Scotland had stated that Mr. Esslemont received from the Scotch Office a statement as to what the official custom was before he went to the meeting. He was, therefore, aware of the dangers he ran and, in view of the fact that he was a Member of the House of Commons when a similar case was dealt with, and the present Member for South Belfast (Mr. Johnston) was deprived of his office of Inspector of Fisheries in Ireland for similar conduct, the warning given to Mr. Esslemont ought to have been sufficient to deter him from going to the meeting. But there was a further question connected with the honour and good faith of the Fishery Board. Colonel Russell called attention to this: that he had been told that day, on what seemed very good authority, that one of the first things the Chairman of the Fishery Board proposed to do was to open the Moray Firth for four months in the year to trawlers. At the end of the meeting a gentleman got up and read a telegram from Mr. Esslemont—

“Moray Firth rumour or statement absolutely false. Neither suggested nor proposed anything of the sort. Contradict this at public meeting.”

That was a very distinct and clear statement by Mr. Esslemont. He would not go into all the correspondence which

passed on the matter. He would merely call attention to the fact that this statement of Mr. Esslemont had been characterised by the leading paper in Scotland as being a falsehood. [*Cries of “What paper?”*] *The Scotsman*. This gentleman, Mr. Esslemont, who was so tender about his honour that he was compelled to go several miles on a snowy night to attend a political meeting in order to refute these very mild attacks made upon him, had not found it necessary to his honour and dignity, or to the honour and dignity of the Fishery Board, of which he was Chairman, to make any reply whatever to the distinct statements in *The Scotsman*. He would quote an extract from *The Scotsman* which appeared in *The Daily Free Press* on December 23.

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): I am sorry to interrupt the hon. Member, but I beg to ask your ruling, Sir, on a point of Order. I wish to ask whether, in bringing a charge against the Chairman of the Scottish Fishery Board for attending a particular political meeting, the hon. Member is justified in quoting from a leading article in *The Scotsman*?

*THE CHAIRMAN: I cannot say that in this particular instance the hon. Member is out of Order, although he is somewhat near the line. The particular charge, I understand, against the Chairman of the Board was attending a political meeting and making a statement there. I do not think the hon. Member should go into other matters.

MR. COCHRANE said, that the second charge he was bringing under the notice of the Secretary for Scotland was that Mr. Esslemont sent this telegram to be read at a public meeting; that he invited the receiver of it to read it; and that in it he made a statement which had been declared in a public print to be not a true one. He considered that in that regard the honour of the Chairman of the Fishery Board was distinctly at stake as to whether this telegram was true or false. It was maintained that the telegram was sent for political purposes.

SIR G. TREVELYAN: It did not contain a falsehood.

MR. COCHRANE: The telegram did not contain the truth.

SIR G. TREVELYAN: Do you say it is untrue?

MR. COCHRANE said, he was not in a position to say whether it was or was not. He was not sufficiently acquainted with the facts. But what he said was, that it was stated to be a falsehood by *The Scotsman*, and that statement had never, so far as he was aware, been refuted by Mr. Esslemont. The quotation was—

“Never was a man in a more unenviable position than Mr. Esslemont. He has, in the service of his Party, descended to the dirtiest of dirty work——”

[*Cries of “Order !”*]

*THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order ! It is irregular to bring a charge against a gentleman in this way, supported merely by some matter in a newspaper which may or may not be accurate. If the hon. Member makes a charge he ought to support the charge by material evidence, and if he does not I must rule him out of Order.

MR. COCHRANE said, he was not sufficiently acquainted with the facts to make the charge himself; nor did he wish to make a personal attack on Mr. Esslemont. But what he did wish to do was to call the attention of the Committee to the difference of the treatment meted out to this gentleman and the treatment meted out to the hon. Member for South Belfast (Mr. Johnston)——

THE CHAIRMAN: But then the Secretary for Scotland is not accountable for that. That was done by a former Government. The Secretary for Scotland and the Government are only accountable for their own acts.

MR. COCHRANE said, that what he wished to ask was, What were the principles on which such questions were dealt with? The hon. Member for South Belfast was dismissed for taking part in a political meeting, which was a meeting of the Church Synod in Ireland, and it was on that account that he received his dismissal; and he wanted to know how it was that, after that warning, the Chairman of the Fishery Board had been permitted to take part in these political meetings?

MR. DALZIEL: Are they meetings or a meeting?

MR. COCHRANE said, that after the example of Mr. Johnston——

MR. DALZIEL: I rise to Order. I wish to ask whether it was one, or more than one, meeting?

MR. COCHRANE said, that Mr. Esslemont sent a telegram to one meeting and personally attended another. He did not wish to make a personal attack on Mr. Esslemont. He had never met him, and there was nothing personal in this matter. He merely wished to clear up the ground, and to say that it was a great hardship that one gentleman should be dismissed from the Public Service for the part he took in political meetings, while another who did so should not. He did not see why the same fate should not be meted out in both cases.

SIR G. TREVELYAN said, that the hon. Member had said quite sufficient to show that if his views were accepted, to take a place in the Public Service would become intolerable to any man of delicacy and honour. What were the charges brought against Mr. Esslemont and the Government? The serious part of the charge was that a gentleman in an official position had gone to assist the candidature of a political candidate at a political election. That was the only matter which concerned the Government, and the ground on which he would have to defend the Government. What course could the Government adopt in this matter? Were they to censure Mr. Esslemont for what he did? Were they to follow the example of the course taken in the case of Mr. Johnston, under very different circumstances, and dismiss him from the Public Service? He would read what Mr. Esslemont did do, and would ask any single Member to say whether it merited such a step. Mr. Esslemont took absolutely no part whatever in the election that was then going on, until certain charges were made against him. These charges had been stated by the hon. Member. They were personal charges against Mr. Esslemont—charges that he proposed to reduce the expenditure of the Fishery Board, and afterwards took a salary upon that Board. But whatever these charges were, Mr. Esslemont in his speech never went outside them in any particular, except in the passage which, after the speech the hon. Member had just made, he was absolutely bound to read to the House. Mr. Esslemont was the first speaker at the meeting. He said that it should be understood that, in the position he now occupied, not being a candidate, and not seeking the suffrages of the

electors, he should not be attacked by any of the candidates before them. He then went straight, and in moderate language, into the specific charges which had been made against him, and then they came to the latter portion of his speech, in which he protested that he should have been spared any misrepresentation, and should have been left alone in the position which he had undertaken. He added—

“You know the duty before you well; and I am not going to ask any man here to give a vote for one candidate more than another.”

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Was the candidate there?

*SIR G. TREVELYAN said, he could not speak as to that. In the report he had the candidate was not mentioned as being there.

MR. HOZIER: I do not think he was.

*SIR G. TREVELYAN said, he had read these words, which were the words which had been quoted as showing that Mr. Esslemont was taking the part of a partisan in the election. They were the words which the hon. Member had picked out for that purpose. But he had noticed that there was not a single cheer to show that anyone in this House put that construction upon them. Mr. Esslemont had sought to justify himself in the face of neighbours on whose good opinion he set great value. He went to that meeting, although he had been warned by the Scottish Office of the official custom that members of the permanent Civil Service ought not to take part in a contested election, and that was the part which Mr. Esslemont took. He would ask any gentleman in the House whether for that indiscretion—if it was an indiscretion—and under the circumstances, the strong measure should have been taken of dismissing Mr. Esslemont from the Service? He thought it was absolutely impossible that such a course could for a moment have been followed, and, therefore, he thought that on that point he had justified his own action.

*MR. HOZIER: Did the Government tell him not to do it again?

SIR G. TREVELYAN said, that he had written to Mr. Esslemont several times, but he could not remember the words, and he considered that the preliminary warning was enough. Mr. Esslemont went and made his speech, and he was

bound to say that he did not feel inclined subsequently to censure Mr. Esslemont for what he said on that occasion. But the hon. Member said that Mr. Esslemont took part in another meeting, and he founded that charge upon the telegram in which Mr. Esslemont referred to the charge of what he had said within the precincts of the Board-room. He was really surprised that that question, at any rate, had again been brought before the House. What was Mr. Esslemont's position? He was a member of a Board concerned with the discharge of public business. But that Board, for all administrative purposes, was the same as one man. What passed at that Board was never known outside. If there was one axiom in public life it was that proceedings at Boards of the nature of the Admiralty and the Fishery Board were absolutely confidential. On a disputed point within the Board, no member was entitled to go outside and give his own version of what had passed in private at the Board; and a man who betrayed the confidence of the Board laid himself open to flat contradiction, and deserved no other contradiction. No person who was attacked by a colleague on account of what had passed behind the scenes and around the table was bound to discuss the matter at all. But then came the question whether the gentleman attacked ought to leave the matter absolutely alone, or simply say, in the plainest terms, that the statement put before the public was not the true one. A man who had been so shamefully used as Mr. Esslemont by a colleague bringing forward matters which passed in the strictest confidence had a right to take either of these courses—to treat it with contempt, or to say that the charge did not convey a just impression to the public. He was sorry that question had been brought up a second time before this House. But as to entering into it because *The Scotsman* newspaper had used violent language against Mr. Esslemont, he was surprised that the hon. Member, if he had any real charge to make against Mr. Esslemont—any charge of falsehood—he forgot the exact terms of the passage the hon. Member quoted—he should have been prepared to make that charge himself. It was easy to blacken the character of a public man by reading an offensive and scurrilous passage out

of a newspaper in that House. Was there a man in that House who had not such things written about him in some paper or other? But were they to be read aloud in that House along with the allegation that if he did not answer them in a Court of Law, or take some steps to have his character vindicated, he was suffering under grave imputations? Who would stand such an ordeal as that? Absolutely not one. He did not want to enter into the case of Mr. Johnston. That question was all discussed not long ago in Mr. Johnston's presence, and that hon. Gentleman took such a kindly, pleasant, and honourable part in the discussion that he (Sir G. Trevelyan) disliked extremely to say a word about it in his absence. The difference, however, in Mr. Johnston's case was that he used pretty strong Party language over and over again after the Government had earnestly and pathetically warned, entreated, and urged him not to do so. But he did not want to make charges against Mr. Johnston. He was exceedingly sorry that this question had been brought a second time before the House of Commons, and he could not think that there were any hon. Member who would take a strong view of it.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think anybody will blame the right hon. Gentleman for defending in warm language any official whom he had appointed, and who, even before he was an official, was no doubt on friendly terms with him, nor will I say a single word against Mr. Esslemont, whom in common with all the other Members of the House I respect for the manner in which he discharged his Parliamentary duties. But I do not think the question raised by my hon. Friend is quite so simple as the right hon. Gentleman appears to suppose. In the first place, the attack on this subject was not an attack upon the Government. If it had been the case, the proper time would have been on the salary of the right hon. Gentleman and not upon the Fisheries Vote. The criticisms my hon. Friend made were not passed upon the Government, but upon the course which Mr. Esslemont thought it is duty to pursue in the face of certain statements or attacks made with regard to his conduct on the Fishery Board. I shall not enter into the question of how far it is or is not

honourable for one member of the Fishery Board to make a statement to the public with regard to the action taken by another member of the Board in regard to matters which should remain confidential. I do not think there could be anything more disastrous to the Public Service than that a habit should spring up of members of the same Board, first discussing questions of public importance in private, and then going about the country giving their own version of what their colleagues on the Board had done. I agree with the general view that what passes at a Board should be as confidential between members of the Board or Department as if they were secrets discussed between Cabinet Ministers with closed doors; and, although Mr. Esslemont might have received provocation on the occasion referred to, I think it would be as disastrous to the Public Service that members of the Board should go and make public explanations at contested elections as that they should discuss in public what had been gone over between themselves in private. To take a parallel case. When I was Irish Secretary, and when the right hon. Gentleman was Irish Secretary, it was constantly the practice for attacks to be made in and out of this House by Nationalist Members from Ireland upon permanent officials in Ireland. Suppose those permanent officials had taken the view that it was their duty to go before their old constituents or their neighbours and publicly relieve themselves of the odium heaped upon them, because they were alleged to have done this or that in private. The whole government of the country, if such a course were pursued, would fall into complete dissolution, the whole Civil Service of the country would be dragged into the vortex of Party controversy, and it would be absolutely impossible to prevent this country from sinking into the abyss into which other democratic countries have dropped. I do not think the contention would bear examination for a moment, and do think it is a very serious responsibility for any gentleman to attack the conduct of a permanent official of the Crown. I do not say it ought never to be done; we all know it is constantly done, but the responsibility of doing so is great. But when it is done, if it were said to the permanent officials who had been attacked in their

Sir G. Trevelyan

administrative work, or whose characters had been impugned—"You may rush into print, or go upon a public platform, or take part in a contested election in order to justify yourselves," the thing will be found impossible. I do not wish to attack Mr. Esslemont, or even to weigh the amount of provocation he has received, which, for anything I know, may have been great; but still I think it is the duty of the Government of the day at the time to lay down clearly and publicly the principles on which alone the Civil Service can be carried on, and under which it is absolutely impossible to allow gentlemen in the position of Mr. Esslemont to take part in these public meetings at any time, and least of all at a time when a contested election is going on in the very constituency for which within a few days he had himself been Member. It will be impossible for any man to say that Mr. Esslemont's appearance on a public platform in his old constituency did not have, and was not known to have, a great political significance. He ended his speech by saying every man knew how to do his duty, and he was not going to tell them. Those words, coming from an ex-Member, and spoken at a meeting convened, I presume, in the interests of one candidate, had, and must have had, political weight. I am sorry that the right hon. Gentleman, while defending warmly, as he had a right to do, both the character and the conduct of Mr. Esslemont, does not take this occasion for laying down what I believe must be the right hon. Gentleman's view, the true principles and policy of this matter, as I am sure they are in the view of the Committee—the true principles of public policy—namely, that the Civil servants of the Crown holding permanent appointments must on no provocation be induced to take part in public meetings which had, and were intended to have, political influence and political weight in the struggle that goes on between two Parties.

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) said, he was sure the Committee had heard with satisfaction the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, and so far as he and his friends were concerned the matter might be allowed to rest. He wished he could think that this attack on Mr. Esslemont had been brought forward purely in the interests of public policy and in the in-

terests of the purity of the Civil Service. If the hon. Member who had raised the subject had known Mr. Esslemont he would not have made the charge he had made. He could only express his surprise that the hon. Member had not shown the zeal he had displayed in this connection in other quarters. Did the hon. Member know that the Deputy Chairman of the Fishery Board, who was Sheriff Guthrie Smith, was an active supporter of the noble Lord the Member for West Edinburgh during his electioneering campaign. ["No."] Well, he was Chairman of the Liberal Unionist Association before the election.

VISCOUNT WOLMER (Edinburgh, W.): He was once.

MR. DALZIEL said, that if he were not mistaken, Sheriff Guthrie Smith gave his moral support to the noble Lord before the election, and showed his zeal in the contest by acting as his host during that election.

VISCOUNT WOLMER was understood to dissent.

MR. DALZIEL said, at any rate, he was not wrong in saying, that Sheriff Guthrie Smith was a supporter of the noble Lord. Why, then, was this charge made against Mr. Esslemont if Sheriff Guthrie Smith, who was Deputy Chairman of the Fishery Board, was to be allowed to attend political meetings?

MR. COCHRANE asked whether the Deputy Chairman received a salary?

MR. DALZIEL said, he was inclined to believe he did not; but that made no difference. What they had to do was to deal with Sheriff Guthrie Smith in his official capacity. Moreover, if this charge had been made in the interest of the purity of the Civil Service, notice would have been taken of the action of the Sheriffs in Scotland. He knew one Sheriff who went from door to door canvassing on behalf of a particular candidate, and that Sheriff might, a fortnight afterwards, have had to try cases in connection with the election. So long as that continued, a charge such as that now brought against Mr. Esslemont was ridiculous and absurd.

VISCOUNT WOLMER: It is the invariable custom that Sheriffs do take part in politics. As regards the position of Sheriff Guthrie Smith on the Fishery Board, I maintain that the hon. Member has made out no case whatever. The

only Member of the Fishery Board who is paid a salary by the State is the Chairman. The others are, without exception, gentlemen who give their services gratuitously.

DR. FARQUHARSON said, that it was evident that the Tories of Aberdeenshire were still smarting from the defeat which Mr. Esslemont inflicted on them at the General Election. He had no doubt Members would be pleased to learn that this mean and ignominious attack had the effect of greatly increasing Mr. Esslemont's reputation in the constituency. Mr. Esslemont's character had been attacked, and he should have thought that the first place he would go to to make a reply was before a meeting of his own friends. His information was that Mr. Esslemont did not go down to that meeting and speak until he had got from the authorities in London distinct permission to do so, to the extent of clearing his own character. Before he made the speech Mr. Esslemont had got a distinct authority to make a personal explanation on a public platform, and on the basis of that permission he went down and did so. Mr. Esslemont's remarks upon that occasion were entirely restricted to the defence of his own personal character from charges and accusations which he thought were a great detriment to that character. He did not utter a single political word, and when he had finished he left the platform and sat among the general body of the meeting. What Mr. Esslemont did he was perfectly entitled to do; and he (Dr. Farquharson) was glad to hear the manly and straightforward defence made for him by the Secretary for Scotland.

SIR J. GORST (Cambridge University) said, that after the speech of the hon. Gentleman, this ceased to be an altogether Scottish question. It was now one that concerned the order and discipline of the Civil Service. He understood that the attack made upon Mr. Esslemont had been a slight one. It was not an attack upon his honour, but merely upon his discretion, and now he gathered from the speech of the hon. Member for West Aberdeenshire that it was at the instigation of the Government that Mr. Esslemont went North. This gentleman was not to observe the universal rule of the Civil Service, and to leave his defence to the head of his

Department, but the Government itself suggested that he should go to a public election meeting, and at that meeting, presumably in the interest of the political candidate of his own Party, make a statement which might or might not be an accurate one, but which was obviously most improper to make at that time and in those circumstances. He really thought that the Committee had a right to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether the statement of the hon. Member for West Aberdeenshire was correct or not. If it was correct, he should like him to explain how he reconciled the conduct of the Government with proper discipline in the Civil Service.

SIR G. TREVELYAN: I should have thought that after my speech, and after the speech of the Leader of the Opposition, the rule in this matter had been clearly laid down. The only thing I know about it is that before Mr. Esslemont went to this meeting he had received a telegram from the Scotch Office warning him that the public servants were not allowed to take part in public meetings.

*MR. HOZIER (Lanarkshire, S.) said, that was quite different from the statement of the hon. Member for West Aberdeenshire, who said that the Scottish Office authorised Mr. Esslemont to go to the meeting.

SIR G. TREVELYAN: There was no mention of the Scottish Office in what the hon. Member said.

MR. HOZIER: Does the hon. Member for West Aberdeenshire say so?

DR. FARQUHARSON: I believe the Scottish Office had nothing whatever to do with this matter.

*MR. HOZIER: Then from whom did Mr. Esslemont receive the telegram authorising him to attend the meeting and make a statement? Might I ask that of the hon. Member for West Aberdeenshire?

DR. FARQUHARSON: I believe the Scottish Office had nothing to do with it.

*MR. HOZIER said, he could now understand why the Scottish Secretary was embarrassed when he asked whether the Scottish Office told Mr. Esslemont not to do this again.

SIR G. TREVELYAN: I have said that the only part I took, or was cognisant

of, was that the Scotch Office warned Mr. Esslemont beforehand that public servants ought not to take part in elections. Then the hon. Member says I was embarrassed—which can only mean that I did allow Mr. Esslemont to go.

*MR. HOZIER said, he did not mean that at all. He did not mean to impute any untruth to the right hon. Gentleman. That would be the last thing in the world he would think of doing.

MR. GRAHAM MURRAY: The hon. Member for Kirkcaldy has spoken about the part which Sheriffs take in elections. He spoke of their having to try political offences, but it is the case that no Sheriff ever takes part in any political election connected with his own Sheriffdom. That makes the whole difference. It has been the universal custom of Sheriffs not to disassociate themselves from political life. Even among the few Sheriffs who belong to the political Party opposite, there are those who take part in political meetings.

MR. CROMBIE: I rise to Order. May I ask if this is relative to the subject of the Fishery Board?

THE CHAIRMAN: I cannot say that the hon. Gentleman is out of Order.

MR. GRAHAM MURRAY: I shall simply add that the Prime Minister has had frequently on his platforms the Sheriffs of Scotland, few in number, who agree with his general policy.

MR. H. SMITH thought it would be for the convenience of the House and the country if the rule which was laid down on all sides as a proper rule to regulate the conduct of the Chairman of the Fishery Board was also to be laid down to regulate the conduct of the Deputy Chairman of the Board. The Deputy Chairman was not paid as such, but he held his position on that Board because he happened to be one of the Sheriffs who was obliged to occupy membership upon it in virtue of his office. He got £1,000 as Sheriff, and it was therefore a mere quibble to say that he was not paid for discharging the duty of Deputy Chairman of the Board. The sooner the practice of Sheriffs taking active part in political elections was put an end to the better, and they could not in this respect do better than begin with the Deputy Chairman of the Fishery Board.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) suggested that the Parliamentary Secretary might be able to tell the Committee something about this mysterious telegram. He had no doubt the hon. Gentleman could, if he wished, throw a great deal of light upon it. He quite agreed, as an old Member of the Civil Service, that there should be a general rule regulating the attendance of Civil servants at political meetings, and that that rule should be applied to both political Parties alike. He had been in the Civil Service for some 20 years. When, some eight years ago, he was adopted as the candidate for a constituency by a public meeting which he had attended, thereupon he was requested, though a Conservative Government was in Office, to resign his position, and he did so. He thought that rule should be applied to all Parties alike.

SIR C. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) reminded the House that this was the 13th of September, and that what they had been discussing was purely ancient history. He thought the hon. Member who had just sat down was justified in his brief interposition, but this was the Vote for the Scotch Fishery Board, and as the Scottish Members had the reputation of being practical men, he thought they could better devote the time that remained to them in discussing other questions. He was not going to rake up an old story, but he would point out that one of the Sheriffs in his own constituency attached his name to a handbill issued against him (Sir C. Cameron) during the Election of 1886. The right hon. Gentleman was then Secretary for Scotland, but nothing could be done in the matter. These things occurred constantly, and there was no use in going back to them.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (Manchester, E.) considered that it would be out of Order now to discuss at length the existing system under which Sheriffs took part in public meetings. Any Englishman listening to the speech of the hon. Member would be under the impression that the Sheriff had taken an active part in local politics.

SIR C. CAMERON: That was what I referred to, although I did not say so.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR was quite aware that Sheriffs in Scotland did take part in political demonstrations, but he

never heard of a Sheriff within the jurisdiction of his own Sheriffdom taking the active part which the hon. Gentleman appeared to suppose was taken in 1886, and unless the facts were brought before him by the hon. Gentleman he should continue to believe he was labouring under a mistake. At all events, he would go so far as to say that if such a course was pursued by any Sheriff he thought it was unfortunate. Whether Sheriffs were or were not entitled to take part in political matters, they ought not within their sphere of jurisdiction to do anything to bring into question their absolute impartiality. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Marjoribanks) would give the House all the information he possessed with regard to the telegram.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. MARJORIBANKS, Berwickshire) said, he would only be too happy to offer himself as a *corpus vile* to be gibbeted as the sender of the telegram if it would at all produce harmony in the Committee or expedite proceedings. As a matter of fact, Mr. Esslemont telegraphed to him, when these statements were made with regard to him, asking whether he thought he might reply. He (Mr. Marjoribanks) said, "Certainly, I think you might." And Mr. Esslemont did so. He did not understand that Mr. Esslemont took part in the political meeting. He went simply to reply to the charges made against him. If any blame was attachable to any Party at all it was to him (Mr. Marjoribanks), and he hoped he would be allowed to offer himself as a sacrifice on Mr. Esslemont's behalf.

*MR. HOZIER said, it now turned out that the telegram was sent by the Patronage Secretary to the Treasury—that was, by the political official who worked the political organisation of a political Party. In his opinion, and he was sure in the opinion of the Committee, the explanation just given made the transaction ten thousand times worse.

*SIR A. ROLLIT (Islington, S.) said, that as a Member of the Deep Sea Fisheries Committee, he should like to express his view of the vital importance of the scientific investigations carried on by the Scotch Fishery Board. This Board dealt with, perhaps, one of the most important industries of the country,

and he desired to emphasise his sense of the value of the work of the Board in the scientific investigation of the fisheries, and to point out how valuable an example the Scotch Fishery Board had shown to them in this country in regard to dealing with their fisheries. The Scotch Board had done a great deal to throw light upon the migration, the food of fishes, and the means of increasing the supply of fish, but in England they had only one great organisation for this work—at Plymouth and Grimsby—in the Marine Biological Association, and even that Scientific Body had not pursued the history and character of the fishes and the best means of saving them and utilising them for food so well as the Scotch Fishery Board. There was no doubt we were throwing away, to a great extent, the harvest of the sea in this country, and of the North Sea especially. As far as one could judge, it did not seem to be the case that there were as good fish in the sea as ever came out, except only proverbially. On the contrary, the seas were ceasing to be the sources of fishing industry they had been in the past, and unless great care were taken in protecting the nurseries for fish, and some steps also adopted for limiting the size of the fish which might be taken, the time was not far distant when a great source of food and a most valuable means of change of diet would be, to a great extent, denied the people of this country. It was a serious state of things that while the catching power had increased so largely the quantity of fish caught remained stationary or nearly so, if it was not even decreasing. The fishes caught were also much less in size than was the case formerly. This required investigation, and he wished to bear his testimony to the value of the scientific work of the Scotch Fishery Board. Scotland had a Fishery Board, but in England they anticipated Scotland by having their District Committees. He was glad this step had been taken in Scotland, that the representative principle had been extended, and that practical fishermen were to be represented on the Boards, and he hoped the time was not far distant when the Sea Fisheries Committees of this country would be equally representative of the fishermen. He trusted, too, that they

should have a National Sea Fisheries Board as well as Committees, which would follow the valuable example set by Scotland. With reference to the grant for telegraphic extension, it was most important that intelligence of large catches should be quickly conveyed to the markets to avoid the great waste that must ensue from the non-consumption of fish. The amount of that grant was £1,200, but he hoped it might be increased. It was very necessary, too, that the question of harbours and piers should be borne in mind, especially with regard to Ireland. He trusted that what had been done in Scotland would be done in England and Ireland.

Vote agreed to.

3. £2,872, to complete the sum for Lunacy Commission, Scotland.

4. £4,887; to complete the sum for Registrar General's Office, Scotland.

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR (Dunbartonshire) asked whether the Census for Scotland was approaching completion?

SIR G. TREVELYAN replied that it was. £3,500 was taken this year, and he had every reason to believe that the work was approaching completion.

Vote agreed to.

5. £4,830, to complete the sum for Board of Supervision for Relief of the Poor, and for Public Health, Scotland.

*DR. FARQUHARSON said, he wished to make a protest against the somewhat retrograde step which had been taken by the Scotch Office in the withdrawal of the Circular of the Board of Supervision prohibiting medical officers from engaging in private practice.

MR. GRAHAM MURRAY said, he could only state that the Board of Supervision, of which he was a member when this matter came forward, considered the matter as best they could, and they certainly took the best practical advice they could obtain. As the right hon. Gentleman had departed from the official declaration of the Board, he hoped he would be able to give them some satisfaction on the subject. The position of the Board was acquiesced in by the vast majority of the counties.

SIR G. TREVELYAN said, it was impossible to carry out the Circular in four or five counties, including Ross-shire; and so far from being a general

Regulation, it dealt with the subject in an arbitrary manner, which excited a great deal of bitterness in those counties, notably Haddington, Forfar, and Berwick. These counties were not allowed to have their share of the grant, because they had not a medical officer engaged for his whole time. He (Sir G. Trevelyan), therefore, decided that those counties should receive the grant where it was shown that the duties of the medical officer were efficiently and properly done. If it should turn out that he had made a mistake the system would have to be changed.

SIR C. CAMERON said, the only item for medical professional advice to the Board of Supervision stated in the Estimates was a sum of £200 paid to Dr. Littlejohn, who, though possessing high qualifications, had a number of other official duties to discharge. Last night they had a declaration from the President of the Local Government Board that he had increased the medical staff of his Board in view of the threatened visitation of cholera. He (Sir C. Cameron) did not ask the Secretary for Scotland to rush into any great expense in this matter, but he thought that it would be money well spent if some definite arrangements were made in connection with the Board of Supervision to take care that they should have some really efficient Central Department of medical advice. If a suspicious case broke out in Scotland, it was of supreme importance that there should be arrangements whereby experts could pronounce upon the real nature of the case, and at present there was no machinery connected with the Board of Supervision to enable that to be done.

SIR G. TREVELYAN said, that nobody was more deeply impressed than he was with the inadequate staff which the Board of Supervision had for such a matter as this. His earnest hope was that the very first measure of importance introduced by the Scottish Department might include the reorganisation of the Board of Supervision.

Vote agreed to.

CLASS III.

6. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £25,506, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will

come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894, for the Salaries of the Law Officers; the Salaries and Expenses of the Department of the Solicitor for the Affairs of Her Majesty's Treasury, Queen's Proctor, and Director of Public Prosecutions; the Costs of Prosecutions, of other Legal Proceedings, and of Parliamentary Agency."

Mr. GRAHAM MURRAY moved the reduction of the Vote by £500, in order to call attention to the inadequacy of the salaries of the Scottish Law Officers. About 15 or 16 years ago a Committee was appointed to inquire into the whole matter of the remuneration of the Law Officers of the Three Kingdoms. Their recommendations were embodied in a Report which they presented, and they came to the conclusion that the salaries were to be fixed at a certain figure. The Treasury not only did not print the Report which dealt with the Scottish Law Officers, but so effectually suppressed and buried it that at this moment there was only one copy in existence, which he had been fortunate enough at one time to see. From that day to this nothing had been done to carry forward the recommendations regarding the Scottish Law Officers. Of course, they did not for a moment suppose that the salaries of the Scottish Law Officers ought to be fixed at the same scale as those of the English Law Officers; but the inadequacy of the Scottish Law Officers' salaries was too well known to need any comment whatsoever. The Solicitor General for England received a salary of £5,000, whilst the Solicitor General for Scotland received only £955. Whether judged by the value of their services or the question of the quality of the sacrifice, in neither case could they possibly justify the two salaries on the same principle. Therefore, he hoped that they would at least have from the Government some satisfactory promise that they would really give this matter some consideration, and put into some practical shape the recommendations of the Committee come to so long ago.

Motion made, and Question proposed,
"That Item A, Salaries, be reduced by £500, in respect of the salary of the Attorney General."
—(Mr. Graham Murray.)

Mr. POWELL WILLIAMS (Birmingham, S.) could not allow this Vote to pass without a protest, and in making that protest he desired to dissociate himself from any charge of desiring, either directly or indirectly, or by implication,

to reflect in any way upon the two distinguished gentlemen who held the offices of Her Majesty's Law Advisers. No one who knew their career and eminent abilities would desire in any way to make any attack upon them. The Attorney General, if he might say so, had rendered an additional service to the country by the extreme ability with which he had conducted a delicate and important case abroad. But that did not prevent him, and ought not to prevent anyone who held the idea that the Law Officers received excessive payments for the services they rendered to the State, from challenging the Vote, as he did on this occasion. In taking this course he was glad to know he was sustained by the very strong opinion expressed in this House some years ago by his right hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), who in the year 1888 said he thought that £12,000 a year would command the services of the very ablest and most eminent man at the English Bar, and the same view was taken by the hon. Member for Poplar, who went so far as to say that if the Law Officers took private practice they must necessarily, to some extent, neglect their public duties. The Attorney General received £7,000 and the Solicitor General £6,000, and additional payments in respect of contentious business. Formerly the fees for such contentious business were calculated on a very much lower scale than the fees payable by an ordinary client to a Queen's Counsel of eminence. But now, under the terms of the Treasury Minute, the Law Officers agreed to give up their private practice except in cases before the Privy Council and the House of Lords, but the payments to be made to them in respect of contentious business had been greatly increased. He agreed with the hon. Member for Poplar and with the right hon. Member for Wolverhampton in thinking that £12,000 a year was a sufficient payment for these services, and he hoped the Treasury would adopt the opinion of those eminent Members of the Government.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby) trusted the Committee would not think it necessary for him to go into the whole subject, seeing that it had already been discussed at very great length on the

Supplementary Estimates, when the hon. Member had expressed his views on the matter. The new system was a very simple one. In old days the Law Officers took private practice. The Government made the change by which they were not to take private practice, and offered them an indemnity, which was that, instead of the limited amount under the old system, they were to receive the same amount as any barrister of similar position in the profession would receive for the like work. That was really all that was given for the purpose of obtaining the whole time of the Law Officers of the Crown. In regard to the question raised by the late Solicitor General for Scotland, that the fees of the Law Officers for Scotland were on too low a scale, he only wished the hon. and learned Member had taken advantage of the distinguished position he occupied in the former Administration to give effect to the recommendation of the Commission which reported 16 years ago, since which time there had been two Conservative Governments in power, with the opportunity of doing this particular justice to Scotland. Personally, he could not say he regretted it was not done. Scotland in this matter was rather in the position of the man in the parable, who came in at the eleventh hour, and who claimed that he should get as much as those who had borne the heat and burden of the day. The admission of Scotland to the Union came at a more recent period than the establishment of the office of Attorney General for England. The first comer was first served. However, he did not wish to pronounce any decided opinion on the question of the remuneration of the Law Officers for Scotland. He thought that might be a proper matter for consideration with reference to the larger question which had been raised. He hoped the Committee would consider that it had already been sufficiently discussed in the present Session.

MR. HANBURY (Preston) said, they did not want to discuss this matter over again, but he thought they should be quite clear what the principle was. He did not think it was quite correct to say the Law Officers of the Crown were to give them practically the whole of their time, or to renounce private business, because there was one reservation, to the

effect that they were to retain their right to certain retainers which they had when they took Office. He was told that, under that reservation, if the Attorney General and Solicitor General were retained for a particular Railway Company, they would have the right not only to argue the particular case for that Railway Company on which they had been engaged or retained when they took Office, but they would also be able to argue all subsequent cases of such Railway Companies during all the time of their tenure of Office. If that construction applied to private clients also it was a very large reservation indeed. He might be wrong, but he was told that what he had stated was the case, and therefore to say that the Law Officers were giving up their private business and giving their whole time to the country was hardly a fair statement of the case. The President of the Local Government Board had expressed the opinion that for £12,000 a year they ought to be able to get the best lawyer in the country, without any private practice at all. He understood the salaries, without fees, were £7,000 and £6,000 for the Attorney General and Solicitor General respectively, and he was told that in one particular suit—which the country lost, and in which large additional costs had to be paid besides fees—the fees actually paid to the Solicitor General amounted to something like £1,700. The Solicitor General had £6,000 a year, and if he were to have four cases like this in a year that would amount to another £6,000, thus bringing his salary up to £12,000 in addition to private practice. It seemed to him that £1,700 was an enormous price to pay for one suit. One of the chief complaints he (Mr. Hanbury) and others made was that the scale of fees upon which the Law Officers were to be remunerated was much higher than anything that had been adopted before. He believed that previously their fees were based on the scale that counsel would receive from ordinary clients, but the new scale was one to which the most eminent counsel at the Bar would be entitled. He should like to know on what scale the Law Officers were being remunerated now in these contentious suits, and what proportion it bore to the scale paid under the old system?

MR. GRAHAM MURRAY said, he was afraid they would never get justice on the point he had raised as to the remuneration of the Law Officers of Scotland until hon. Members made themselves a little unpleasant in regard to it. He hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he was spared for another year, would do something for his long-suffering supporters behind him. He would not press the Amendment.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

MR. HAYES-FISHER (Fulham) called attention to the fact that they had no information at the present moment as to what the fees for contentious business amounted to. He could not see why the Estimates could not be framed so as to give them the amount of fees which the Attorney General and Solicitor General received.

SIR W. HARCOURT: We cannot estimate these fees beforehand.

MR. HAYES FISHER said, the amount of the fees for 1892-3 might be stated so as to give them some idea as to the probable amount in each year, and he considered they were entitled to some information on this subject. The Law Officers were the only officers whose salaries with fees were not placed on the Estimates of the House of Commons. He was not in the least complaining of the salary they had, and he was certainly not prepared to vote for a reduction until he knew how the new plan would work. He agreed that there was a great disparity between the amounts paid to the Law Officers of England and Ireland and those of Scotland. He wondered the question had not before been raised by the Members for Scotland. Whenever it was raised, he for his part would join them in protesting against the very unfair treatment of Scotland in this matter.

MR. POWELL WILLIAMS said, he would like to be told the amount of fees already paid to the Law Officers. This matter was not discussed at any great length on the former occasion, because they were told that the proper time to

raise the discussion would be upon the Estimates. He had now made his protest, and would there leave the matter.

*THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir C. RUSSELL, Hackney, S.) said, it was due to the hon. Member for Preston that he should answer one or two questions, which that hon. Member had put to him. He had requested to know whether the Law Officers of the Crown considered themselves free to act on a general retainer, or whether they considered themselves confined to the definite cases in which they were retained before their acceptance of Office in the Government. He answered this question in a previous discussion, and stated that although they might, according to the letter of the arrangement, act on general retainer, he thought it would not be in accordance with the spirit of the arrangement that they should do so, and for himself he confessed he had no intention of doing so. He had no doubt the Solicitor General took the same view. The hon. Member also asked a question about the Hansard Union prosecution—for that was the case to which he alluded—and the Solicitor General's fees. He did not know whether the figure stated by the hon. Member was correct, but it must be remembered that that case extended over a great number of weeks, and he would undertake to say that whatever fees were received by the Solicitor General they would turn out to be very much less than the fees of the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth (Sir E. Clarke), or the other leading counsel representing the several defendants. The last question put by the hon. Member was whether the new arrangement which had been made would not lead to a large increase in the fees paid to the Law Officers? No doubt it would increase such fees, but at present experience did not enable one to say to what extent. The new arrangement only provided that the Law Officers should receive, in respect of contentious business, such fees as counsel of life-standing received from private clients. He thought it would be derogatory to the position of the Law Officers that (if they were to be paid for contentious business) they should receive less.

***MR. TOMLINSON** said, the Attorney General's argument was rather surprising. He now said that he approved of the new arrangement; but on the previous occasion when the subject was discussed he said he preferred the old system. But that was the system which he now said it was beneath the dignity of the Law Officers to accept. He did not see how the two views could be reconciled. He also wished to ask whether the new clerks on the permanent staff—he presumed of the Civil Service—were subject to the ordinary Rules of the Service as to retirement and other conditions.

VISCOUNT WOLMER asked whether the Secretary to the Treasury could give the amount of the Law Officers' fees up to date?

***SIR J. T. HIBBERT** said, he could not do that; but he saw no objection to a note being inserted in the Estimates for any year showing the amount of the fees in the previous year. With regard to the question of the hon. Member for Preston, the clerks of the permanent staff were subject to the Rules and Regulations of the Civil Service. He saw no reason why they should be treated in any other way.

MR. HAYES-FISHER said, there was a different arrangement in Ireland.

MR. HANBURY said, before the Question was put he wished to call attention to a statement by Mr. Justice Day, when on circuit at Bodmin and Exeter, as to the immense amount of perjury in the Law Courts. His Lordship said that perjury was rank in the Courts. He (Mr. Hanbury) thought the Public Prosecutor ought to have taken some notice of those observations and to have taken steps to bring perjurers to justice. The comments of the Judge were sufficiently startling to demand something should be done; and perhaps the Attorney General could tell them whether any steps were to be taken in the matter, with the object of having the offenders made amenable. There should certainly be some means of punishing perjury where it existed. Again, he wished to refer to a very important case, which, to a large extent, affected the

working classes, and that was the prosecution of the Directors of the Portsea Building Society. In that case the jury could not come to a decision, but Mr. Justice Hawkins expressed a very strong opinion that there ought to be another prosecution. It certainly seemed strange that no further action had been taken. The Solicitor to the Treasury drew an extra £500 a year for acting as Director of Public Prosecutions, his total salary being £3,000. Remarkable changes had taken place in his office during the last year. One was a large increase in the pay of the upper clerks, and a decrease in that of the lower clerks. In his opinion, there should be fewer of the Upper Division and more of the Lower Division clerks, as a rule. Then there was an allowance made to the Solicitor for a personal staff of eight clerks. Last year that allowance was £1,200; this year it was £2,200. Thus, the Solicitor was allowed a fixed lump sum for clerks, who were nominated by himself, and were not Civil servants. To that system the Public Accounts Committee had objected. There was no Department that required so thoroughly to be inquired into as this legal Department. These officials did not even come within the purview of the Royal Commission which inquired into the Civil Establishments. There was no Department opened up so wide a field for inquiry as the Law Department—an inquiry which he believed would result in great economy to the Public Service.

***SIR C. RUSSELL** said, with regard to the statement that a great deal of perjury was committed in the Courts, he feared it was true, and the remark would particularly apply to the Divorce Court, and yet the circumstances were exceedingly rare where they afforded any reasonable expectation of a successful prosecution. The offence of perjury stood on a different footing from other offences, as it required the evidence of two witnesses, who must support one another on material points. Further, any Judge who had before him a case in which he had come to the conclusion that perjury had been committed had in his power, then and there, the initiation of a prosecution; and he had also another course—

he might send the papers to the Public Prosecutor and require him to examine into them. He was not aware of any case where that course had been taken in which the Public Prosecutor had not done his duty. With regard to the prosecution of the Directors and officers of the Portsea Building Society, one person had been found guilty and was suffering imprisonment. Although the results of their misdeeds undoubtedly caused to a poor and deserving class a great deal of mischief, yet it also appeared to be the case that none of the Directors or officials had corruptly put the money into their pockets. In these circumstances the jury disagreed. It became his duty to consider what should be done, and, after consulting with his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Dumfries, who was senior counsel in the prosecution, he came to the conclusion that in the circumstances the case was not one in which there should be a re-trial.

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, with regard to the other matter alluded to by the hon. Member, the question of the upper and lower clerks was gone into by the Committee which sat in 1887. A Treasury Minute was issued in December, 1888, based on their recommendations. Those recommendations were generally in accordance with the views stated by the hon. Member, and were being gradually carried out. A reduction had already been made, but a more considerable one would be effected. When the whole scheme was carried out there would be a considerable decrease in the staff, and a consequent economy.

MR. HANBURY: If that is so, how does it come that we have an increase in the sum for providing clerks? It was only £1,200 last year, and this year it is £2,200.

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, that the effect of the scheme as a whole would be to decrease the staff and secure economy.

SIR J. GORST (Cambridge University) said, he would like to refer to another question. The Director of Public Prosecutions was under a statutory obligation to attend, either him-

self or by his counsel, every Election Petition trial. He was to attend in the interests of public morality, and to prosecute all persons found to have been guilty of corrupt practices. A great deal of expense, therefore, was connected with that duty; and the money he thought was wholly wasted, as the Public Prosecutor never brought to justice persons charged with bribery, and there was no result whatever. Perhaps the Chancellor of the Exchequer would tell them what his view of the matter was.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (SIR W. HARCOURT, Derby) said, no doubt the duty was imposed on the Public Prosecutor, but the facts were made known at the trial, and, where a prosecution was necessary, the requisite steps could be taken. He would be glad to consider favourably the suggestion that the Public Prosecutor should not be required to attend, either himself or by counsel, as this did not seem to be necessary. The facts being on record, as he said, his presence should not be essential. In that way, perhaps, public money might be saved.

MR. JACKSON (Leeds, N.) said, he would point out, in reference to a question put by the Member for Preston (Mr. Hanbury) that the sum on the Paper for providing clerks was not a fixed sum. It was only the maximum sum that might be required.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said, there was an item of £25 on the Paper in respect of Admiralty Agents at Lisbon and Madrid. He did not think such Agents were necessary.

SIR W. HARCOURT said, he hoped the Committee would now allow the Vote to pass.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £23,282, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894, for certain Miscellaneous Legal Expenses."

Sir C. Russell

It being half-past Five of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his report to the House.

Resolutions to be reported To-morrow; Committee also report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

SUPPLY.—REPORT.

Resolutions [12th September] reported.

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1893-4.

Resolutions read a second time.

Resolution 1 agreed to.

Resolution 2.

“That a sum, not exceeding £786,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for Capitation Grants and Miscellaneous Charges of Volunteer Corps, including pay, &c. of the Permanent Staff, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894.”

VISCOUNT WOLMER (Edinburgh, W.) said, he wished to have some information, if not now, at any rate, before the next Estimates were presented, respecting the payment of the Capitation Grant, as to whether it would not be possible for the Treasury to lend money to corps at a less interest than the corps were able to get it on the strength of their own credit. Some corps had their armoury and drill-hall provided for them, while other corps had not, and it was for these purposes that the money was required. In some cases the money was given by private individuals, who took an interest in the corps; but other corps, which were not so favourably situated, had to borrow the money and pay interest for it out of the Capitation Grants. Could not this money be advanced by the Treasury? He also wished to know whether the allowance of £100 for each battery in position was enough; and whether there had been a movement in the district of Edinburgh for the formation of a corps of fortress engineers? There was permission given by the War Office for the formation of such a corps, which he understood had been withdrawn. He earnestly asked, before the next Estimates were framed, if the Secretary of State for War would consider the desirability of re-granting this permission. Then as to the mobilisation scheme, the people of Edin-

burgh and neighbourhood wanted to know what provision was to be made when, in the event of mobilisation, troops of all kinds were withdrawn and taken away to the South. He also asked the Secretary of State for War to reconsider the point as to the desirability of bestowing decorations on Volunteer privates before next year.

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston) said, he desired to support some of the suggestions made by the noble Lord opposite. As to the Capitation Grant, it appeared to him that it would be a good plan to lend money in advance to such corps as might desire it. At present, not only had a high interest to be paid, but officers had to borrow on their own personal security. He did not suppose this involved any risk, as the Capitation Grant was sure to come ultimately; but many men did not care to give a personal security to their banker. As to engineers, he hoped the War Office would take into consideration the desirability of making the proposed extension. There were a great many skilled persons who would be invaluable in the Volunteers in carrying out engineering duties, who, at present, did not think it worth while to join the Service. If the Volunteers were ever called out, the necessity for men of this kind would be felt, and would have to be met. Another point was as to requiring adjutants to alter their uniforms, in some cases to take off their gold lace and change it for silver. He did not know why this should be a universal rule in connection with the Volunteer Infantry. In some cases the uniforms of the Regular regiments of the battalion to which the Volunteers were attached was exactly the same as that of the Volunteers, with the exception of the lace. It was an advantage to Volunteers to have the services of an adjutant who was a trained soldier, but it was very hard that when an officer took the position of adjutant in a Volunteer regiment he should be put to the expense of altering his uniform.

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) said, the whole Service was delighted to hear that Her Majesty had been pleased to recognise the services

of the non-commissioned officers by bestowing the new decoration upon them. He thought, however, that these decorations would be more valuable if given not altogether for length of service but for special service or efficiency. As a Volunteer Commanding Officer, he desired to thank the right hon. Gentleman for his good offices. But he earnestly hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would take steps to make up the deficiency in the number of subalterns. At present they were 1,500 short, and in some battalions the evil was becoming more and more serious.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling, &c.): In reply to the noble Lord the Member for West Edinburgh, I would ask him to assist me by recalling the points to which he has referred to my memory in the future. Several of the points are well worthy of consideration. As to the question of advancing money from the Treasury, I am afraid I cannot meet the noble Lord. My views upon the matters raised by the hon. Member for Preston are well known, and I am afraid the hon. Gentleman has not urged anything which will cause me to alter those views.

Resolution agreed to.

Resolutions 3 to 6 agreed to.

Resolution 7.

"That a sum, not exceeding £126,300, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for Sundry Miscellaneous Effective Services, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1894."

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE (Rochester) said he wished to refer to the sanitary condition of the Windsor Cavalry Barracks.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN : The matter was discussed last night.

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE said, he had read the Debate, but the subject did not seem to have been adequately dealt with. There was serious dissatisfaction with the condition of these barracks. He understood that very severe Reports had been forwarded to the War Office with respect to the condition of the barracks. One Report, made no later than last month, asserted that the condition was so bad that the barracks were

unfit for occupation. There have been one or two cases of sickness, and not long ago a non-commissioned officer, who died at Aldershot shortly after leaving the Windsor Barracks, showed very distinct symptoms of enteric poisoning. It was important that this matter should be looked into and carefully dealt with, in view of the possible approach of the cholera epidemic. The Government would incur serious responsibility if they allowed these barracks to be re-occupied without satisfying themselves as to their sound sanitary condition. He would ask whether the Secretary of State would be willing to lay upon the Table the Reports of the medical officers who had, on behalf of the War Office, examined the barracks. The danger was not only as to the insanitary condition of the premises, but, as the question had been mooted in another place as well as in this House, there was also a danger of creating a feeling of alarm amongst the troops who had to occupy the barracks. Now that the question had been mooted, the Secretary of State would probably agree that the proper course to adopt would be to take the public into his confidence, and let them see the Reports. If it should turn out that the danger had been exaggerated, he (Viscount Cranborne) would be more pleased than anybody else. Still, they must satisfy themselves whether this was really the case or not.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN : It is not usual to lay on the Table purely Departmental Reports, but I can assure the noble Lord that the greatest care has been taken in investigating this question. I can say that the Chief Officer of the Army Medical Department, the Chief Officer of Engineers, and the Quartermaster General, all agree that the system of drainage is old-fashioned and bad. There is no doubt that it ought to be renewed; but that is the case with many barracks in the country. The particularly urgent matter with regard to Windsor Barracks is that in the officers' quarters there has been for some time an offensive smell. That has been traced to a foul latrine, and to other sources unconnected with the drains. These smaller defects will be remedied before the regiment returns. The Director General of the Army Medical Department and his

Colonel Howard Vincent

advisers cannot find anything in the Reports indicating that the general effect on the health of the men has been bad. I am afraid I cannot put the alterations of drains at the Windsor Barracks forward as the first and most urgent case.

Resolution agreed to.

Resolutions 8 and 9 agreed to.

Resolution 10.

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE
DEPARTMENTS, 1893-4.

CLASS II.

"That a sum, not exceeding £90,621, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1894, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Local Government Board."

SIR J. GORST (Cambridge University) said, he was sorry he was not able to remain in the House last night, owing to the physical restrictions put upon the House by the Government, to hear the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, when he replied to him upon the question of the acquisition by Boards of Guardians of land on which to set the unemployed to work. He should now, however, like to protest against the doctrine which he understood the right hon. Gentleman laid down—namely, that Guardians were to be restrained from exercising powers which they possessed by law, because those powers had not been exercised for 60 years, and because, in the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman, it was desirable that the use of those powers should be conferred by fresh legislation. Everybody knew that it would be difficult to pass legislation of that kind through the House. It would require a large amount of belief in the efficacy of the experiment to induce many Members to support such a Bill even in the present Parliament. He thought it was a fortunate thing that it had turned out that the law had given those powers, and he deeply regretted that when Boards of Guardians were willing to try the experiment of obtaining land, and setting those out of employment to work upon it, and giving them reasonable wages, such an interesting experiment could not be tried.

*MR. BYLES (York, W.R., Shipley) said, he, too, had been disappointed with the reply of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board last night. He had understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that although these Acts of Parliament existed, and although he had ascertained by conference with the Law Officers of the Crown that they were still in force and could be made operative, yet, for his part, he could not advise that they should be put in operation without fresh legislation. He had thought at the time, and he thought still, that it was rather a piece of good fortune that the House of Commons should find itself with some Acts of Parliament in its locker which it could take out and use when it wanted them. No doubt the policy of the Poor Law had been very largely altered when the new Act was adopted, but they had arrived at a time when the question of the unemployed had become a very difficult and a very acute one, and one which, if it had not already, must very shortly call for effectual treatment. He wished to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he did not think that at least a portion of the ancient Acts to which the right hon. Gentleman had referred, and especially that enabling Boards of Guardians to acquire lands up to 50 acres with the object of employing men upon it in useful remunerative employment, might not be put in force? He thought that Act might with advantage to the nation be revived, at any rate, experimentally. Various schemes for dealing with the unemployed existed. He was interested in one in Westmoreland, where a young Unitarian minister, who had studied this question all his life, had devoted himself to obtaining voluntarily money with which to purchase land on which to employ men at remunerative work. The principle on which this scheme was worked was that the men employed should produce what they consumed, and consume what they produced. Thus there was no necessity to go into the open market, or to displace outside labour. The idea was that the Poor Law Unions should adopt the same principle in dealing with the unemployed in their districts. Surely it was a solu-

tion of the unemployed question to which Parliament and the Department should not close their eyes.

*MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston) said, that before the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board replied he should like to ask him if there was any record of the transactions of the late Government which went to prove that during the six years they were in Office they made any effort to relieve the distress amongst the unemployed which was then much more acute and general than at present? Had any effort been made by the right hon. Gentleman and his friends, who were now professing so much sympathy with the unemployed, to carry out the Act referred to? He should like to know when the right hon. Gentleman discovered the existence of the Act.

SIR J. GORST: I did not make the discovery.

*MR. CREMER said, it was unfortunate that the Act was not discovered when the right hon. Gentleman was in Office, because this looked very much like the usual attempt on the part of the "outs" to prove that the "ins" were sinners above all men, and that the "outs" were the party to whom the country must look for reforms and relief.

MR. LONG (Liverpool, West Derby) said, the remarks of the hon. Member who had just sat down were absolutely undeserved by the late Government. The hon. Member was mistaken in thinking that the "outs" desired to return to Office on the application of an Act which had not been in use for 60 years. It would be found that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge had a very small following in making this demand, and he regretted that his right hon. and learned Friend had unwisely returned to the charge. He would again express the earnest hope, in what he believed to be the best interests of the unemployed, and also of the wage-earning classes generally, that the President of the Local Government Board would not depart from the wise and statesmanlike position which he had assumed on this

question. If the unemployed were to get work, it should be not at the expense of the poor rate, not from the Board of Guardians, but from Imperial funds, voted for the purpose, and placed at the disposal of a Public Department; or it should be done, as was being done now, by private enterprise. Some hon. Members seemed to think that the cultivation of land was perfectly easy, and that a man had only to get a spade and so many square yards of land to get a livelihood. As one connected with the land all his life, to his pecuniary loss, he said there could be nothing more ridiculous. If a distressed watchmaker could not break stones he could not perform the hard work connected with farming—he could not hold a scythe, and cut a crop of hay and pitch it into a wagon. He was sure the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had the interests of the unemployed at heart, as everybody on the Ministerial and the Opposition side of the House had. He therefore hoped that the President of the Local Government Board would give no more sympathy to the proposed experiments by Boards of Guardians than he gave last night. After all, it must be remembered that the Guardians administered funds compulsorily raised for the benefit of the whole community, and if dangerous experiments such as were suggested were to be carried out at all they should be conducted by private enterprise, and not by public officials by means of public funds derived from the rates.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (MR. H. H. FOWLER, Wolverhampton, E.): I think I have some ground of complaint against the right hon. Member for the University of Cambridge, who put a question to me last night similar to that he has put to-day, and who, when the time came for me to reply—and it certainly was not at a late hour—had left the House. I do not find fault with the right hon. Gentleman's private engagements taking him away from the House, but I do complain that he should, on the strength of a necessarily condensed report of my speech, have attributed to me language which I had not used and a policy which I have no intention of

Mr. Byles

adopting. The right hon. Gentleman has endeavoured to make some political capital by attributing to one of Her Majesty's Ministers, who has a very difficult and delicate duty to perform, a policy which he has never enunciated, and which he certainly has no idea of following. I must repeat what I said last night as to the position in which I find myself placed. Last evening I stated that, to the surprise of myself, of every lawyer, and of most practical men, the Law Officers of the Crown have advised the Government that when the Poor Law system of 1834 came into existence certain obsolete clauses of the original Act of Elizabeth remained in force. One of these clauses is singularly favourable, no doubt, to providing labour at the public expense; but another is by no means favourable to our modern notions of the freedom of the subject, inasmuch as it empowers Overseers or Guardians to apply to the Magistrates to inflict punishment on those of the unemployed who refused to work. The Law Officers of the Crown held that these laws were still in force. What was the position of the President of the Local Government Board under these circumstances? No applications had been made to him by any Board of Guardians to put these laws into force. It is very doubtful whether they can be put into force without the sanction of the Local Government Board. The question is, whether the Local Government Board should take initiatory steps under these circumstances? I said there were two questions to be considered. In the first place, the application of these powers would involve a great change in the administration of the Poor Law—a change which would practically amount to a reversal of the whole policy of the Poor Law during the last 60 years, and the restoration of the eleemosynary character of the relief which was given prior to 1834—and I said that if such a proposal was to be made, I would not, as an individual Minister, undertake the responsibility of making it, but that so great a change must be made by Her Majesty's Ministers as a body. I said further that, assuming that the Cabinet as a whole were in favour of making the change, it was a Constitutional question as to whether so great a change should be made by the action of any Government, of whatever Party that Government was composed, without the distinct sanction of Parliament. I shall not shrink from exercising what I may call the ordinary and well-understood powers of the Department entrusted to my care, and I have not shrunk from doing a certain number of things in the course of the last few months; but there are limits to administrative discretion, and I think that such a question as the reversal of the policy of the Poor Law which has prevailed for the last 60 years ought to be submitted to the House of Commons, and decided by no other Body. To that policy I mean to adhere. It will be for my Colleagues in the Cabinet to decide, first, whether they intend to initiate this great change; and, secondly, whether, if they do so intend, they will or will not submit their policy to the approval of the House of Commons. As to the remarks of my hon. Friend the Member for the Shipley Division (Mr. Byles), I can only say that my sympathies are all in the direction he mentions. I wish to make no distinction whatever between myself and any other Member in this matter. I believe there is no man in the House who does not regard this question of the unemployed as one of the gravest questions that could possibly be considered, and I view the difficulties and complexities of the situation as strongly as any man can do. Anything I can do, consistently with the proper discharge of my functions, I should be most happy to do in endeavouring to help Boards of Guardians to grapple with the difficulty. It has been pointed out that Boards of Guardians are called upon to administer funds which are compulsorily exacted in the way of rates from the whole community. They cannot be generous with other people's money, however they may deal with their own. If Parliament should be of opinion that the proper mode of administering these funds is to carry out the experiments that are suggested Parliament will have the responsibility, and it will be the duty of the Guardians to act accordingly. I do not think anyone will say that I ought to act in so grave a matter as this without the concurrence of my Colleagues, but do not let anybody impute to me that I am in any way indifferent to the gravity of the

question, or have any want of sympathy with the efforts that have been made to provide relief for the unemployed. I said last night that I was prepared to recommend the Government that when the Royal Commission on the Aged Poor made their Report—and I expect the Commission will report before the end of the present year—it should be reconstituted, or another Commission should be constituted for the purpose of inquiring into the larger question of the whole administration of the Poor Law, which I admit ought to be brought into more perfect conformity with the requirements of the day than a law passed so long ago could possibly be. I trust that the House will see there was no other course open to me than that which I have followed.

*MR. BYLES said, he wished to explain that the employment he had spoken of was remunerative employment.

MR. THORNTON (Clapham) thought it his duty to inform the President of the Local Government Board of the fact that a very large number of medical men in London were adverse to the importation of foreign rags. That adverse opinion was not mitigated by the statement that certain scientists had resolved that there was no danger to be apprehended from imported rags. He had been told by medical men that it was perfectly certain that from time to time disease, and especially small-pox, had been brought to this country by means of rags, and there was no reason, in their opinion, why cholera should not be so brought.

MR. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) said that, having called the attention of the President of the Local Government Board to the consideration of the Poor Laws early in the Session, he hoped the Government would see its way either to introduce a Consolidation Bill early next Session, or, at any rate, to put Members in possession of the facts of the case, by producing a digest of the Poor Laws.

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT said, he had no doubt that the unemployed had the sympathy of the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. H. H. Fowler), but it would have been very

Mr. H. H. Fowler

much more satisfactory if the right hon. Gentleman had been able to announce some definite views on the part of the Government in reference to the unemployed. He had come that afternoon from a manufacturing district of Yorkshire, where the distress was very great indeed, and where many men who were quite willing to work had been compelled to go into the workhouse, in order that relief might be afforded to their wives and children. If the Government appointed a Commission it would be the end of next year before anything could be done. The question was one which pressed for urgent consideration. The hon. Member for Haggerston (Mr. Cremer), who had suddenly displayed an interest in this question, was one of those who spoke and voted against the Amendment to the Address at the beginning of the Session. He was glad that, although somewhat tardily, the interest of the hon. Member had been now directed to the question, and he would urge the President of the Local Government Board to deal with it as promptly as possible, and not to wait for the Report of the Royal Commission.

MR. BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) said that, although he did not often agree with the President of the Local Government Board, he had seldom heard a more common-sense speech than that which the right hon. Gentleman had just delivered, and he hoped he would not sanction any of the suggested experiments with ratepayers' money, especially when it was remembered that a scheme of Municipal Law Reform had been tried in Paris and had failed. The idea of putting those who had been brought up in towns to work in the country was ludicrous. The farmers could not make agriculture pay when they had the assistance of ordinary agricultural labourers, and it was absurd to suppose that anyone could make it pay when the work was carried on by men who knew nothing about it.

Resolution agreed to.

Resolutions 11 to 14 agreed to.

Resolution 15.

"That a sum, not exceeding £13,129, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum

necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of Her Majesty's Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues, and of the Office of Land Revenue Records and Inrolments."

MR. PRITCHARD MORGAN (Merthyr Tydfil) said, he had placed on the Paper a Motion for the reduction of the Vote yesterday, and he should have been in his place to move it, had it not been for the unfortunate death of Her Majesty's Chief Commissioner of Woods and Forests. Inasmuch, however, as some of his hon. Friends had raised the question last night, he felt it his duty to say a few words to-day on the subject. Before doing so, he wished to impress upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer the advisability of appointing in the place of the gentleman who had just died a practical man who had some knowledge of the subject he had to control. The Treasury were not so conversant with this subject as they might be. Had they known more about it, in all probability he should not have had to carry on a contest with the authorities for 10 years, as he had done. He had to record with satisfaction the fact that the Government had now, to some extent, endeavoured to meet him, although not to the extent which the importance of the question deserved. In Wales the system prevailed of granting long leases, and leaseholders who wanted to mine had to obtain a lease from the authorities before doing so. His complaint was that the Office of Woods and Forests would not fix the mining royalties for the whole of the term. The present Chancellor of the Exchequer had certainly consented to fix the royalties for five years, but that was not a sufficiently long period for opening up a mine. At the end of the five years, when a large amount of capital had been spent on a mine, it would be necessary to go to the Office of Woods and Forests again, and have the royalties fixed just as the Commissioners pleased. As there was some question as to the impression entertained by the Royal Commission respecting the amount of the royalties charged, he might say that the Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. Burt), who was a Member of the

Commission, had expressed the opinion that the Commission had in their mind's eye the fact that 1 per cent. was the amount to be charged. The hon. Member for the Rhondda Division (Mr. W. Abraham) and other Members of the Commission had expressed a similar opinion. He contended that the royalties on these mines should be charged upon the profits. There was the question also of affording employment to labour. One mine in which he was not interested was obtaining a return far in excess of any mine in South Africa or the Australian Colonies. In another mine, where over 100 men were employed, there were 40 square miles of this auriferous country, and it was only natural that officials of the Office of Woods and Forests, with salaries fixed by Act of Parliament, should not desire this area to be opened up lest their duties should be increased. It was admitted on all hands that if there was any possibility of gold being produced in the United Kingdom at a profit, every possible encouragement should be given to it. It was an extraordinary thing that a man could go to any part of the Australian Colonies, and for a fee of 10s. could take all the gold he could get and be paid a handsome reward for having discovered it; but that in Wales a man could not mine on his own land without being harassed by officials, driven in the Court of Chancery, or having his property locked up for ever. He trusted he should receive an assurance that inasmuch as the company's leases from the landowners existed for 32 years from June last the Government would fix the royalties for the same period of 32 years at the amount they were now, and not put them in the unsatisfactory position of having imposed on them at the mere caprice of any permanent officials higher royalties than should be levied. He moved to reduce the Vote by £100.

Amendment proposed, To leave out the sum of "£13,129," in order to insert the sum of "£13,029."—(Mr. Pritchard Morgan.)

Question proposed, "That the sum of '£13,129' stand part of the Resolution."

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EX-CHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby): I am a little surprised and

somewhat disappointed at the tone the hon. Member has adopted towards Her Majesty's Government, for if anybody has done what he could to satisfy another man, I have done that for the hon. Member. From the first I regarded with the greatest possible favour any arrangement which could be made for the purpose of encouraging gold mining in Wales, both to increase the gold production and to give employment in a poor country; and as soon as I entered Office in the present Government I used my authority for the purpose of fixing the royalty at 1-100th instead of 1-30th, which the mine-owners had previously paid. The hon. Member has enjoyed the benefit of that reduction, and has expressed his gratitude; but he has been informed that the Government could not come to a final decision until they had the Report of the Royal Commission on Mines. The conduct of the Commissioners of Woods and Forests has been impeached, but only two or three years ago a Select Committee of the House investigated the whole conduct of the Department, including its action in this matter, and a more complete vindication it would be impossible to have had than was contained in the Report of the Committee. Then came the Report of the Royal Commission on Mines, which said—

"To sum up the opinion we have been requested to give upon Mr. Morgan's complaints, it does not appear to us that the royalties received by the Crown upon gold, which have amounted in all, from the year 1836 to April 1891, to less than £7,000, have interfered with the investment of capital in gold mining."

We consider that the Commissioners of Woods have throughout the proceedings into which we have inquired dealt with the Crown rights in as liberal a manner as was consistent with their duty. They have had the assistance of two most competent professional advisers in Sir Warrington Smyth and Mr. Forster Brown, and they have shown, by the reduction they made in the royalty payable under the lease of the Clogau Mine, as well as by the modification they proposed of the royalty payable by the Morgan Mine Company, that they are prepared to give an equitable consideration to the altered circumstances of mines, and not to take their stand upon

the strict letter of agreements. Our conclusions upon this subject concur with those of a Select Committee of the House of Commons upon the Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues of the Crown, which sat in 1889 and 1890, and in whose Report there is the following paragraph with regard to Welsh gold mining:—

"During the last few years the Commissioners have granted a large number of licences to explore for gold in Merionethshire, on a royalty of 1-15th of the ore extracted if obtained on Crown land, and of 1-30th to landowners if obtained on private lands. The results do not appear to have been encouraging, as of a large number of projected mines only three or four are doing anything, and none have so far been successful. It has been complained that the Crown royalty is too high, as a reason for this want of success. The late Sir Warrington Smyth, who, until his death, acted as Mineral Inspector and adviser to the Commissioners, gave conclusive evidence that this complaint is not well founded. He called the attention of the Committee to a prospectus of a Gold Mining Company with a capital of £210,000, out of which £190,000 was to be given to the promoter, who had, no doubt, spent some money upon it, but whose bonus of £190,000 rendered it next to impossible that the company should succeed as a commercial undertaking. The company referred to in this paragraph is the Morgan Gold Mining Company (Limited), and the promoter referred to is Mr. Pritchard Morgan."

It is, I think, quite plain that the mining royalties could not be said to have prevented the success of that undertaking, especially when you compare the £7,000 got in royalties with the £190,000 paid to a promoter. I wish to say distinctly that Crown property is national property, and we are bound to deal with it as property in which the whole community is equally interested. To suggest that the Commissioners discourage mining, or any other industry because it would give them more trouble, is an unjust, unfounded, and unworthy insinuation. I have always recognised the principle that we ought to regard this matter in the general interests of the community, and that industries, when they are struggling in their commencement, ought to be encouraged. That was why I only asked for a nominal royalty for the first five years. If the industry succeeds, not being overloaded with promotion money, and ultimately becomes a profitable undertaking, I think it ought to pay its contribution to the Public Exchequer, and therefore there ought to be a terminal period for the

Sir W. Harcourt

nominal payment. "If the term of five years is not sufficient, then it can be reconsidered at the proper time; but I should like to see the mining tried as a fair commercial experiment. I cannot say that has yet been done, for the reason I have already stated.

MR. PRITCHARD MORGAN: I wish to tell the right hon. Gentleman some facts which he does not appear to know. There have been £120,000 expended on the Morgan Mine. I spent £30,000 looking for this gold before I saw a speck of it as large as a pin's head, and the Government never interfered with me for four years. The company has paid a dividend of £10,500, and the Woods and Forests Department has received royalties to the extent of £3,000 in hard cash, or 30 per cent. on the amount paid in dividends.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I have no doubt, if the hon. Gentleman says so, that that is true. I take my stand on the principle I have enunciated—that these industries ought not to be interfered with by a burden in the early years; but when they develop into a profitable undertaking, I think on all fair and just principles they ought to pay their contribution to the Public Exchequer.

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) said, he knew nothing whatever about the promotion of this company, or the amount paid to the vendor, but he could not understand why royalties should be levied by the Crown upon the production of gold or any other article. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would agree to limit the royalty to 1 per cent. over the whole term of the lease. The mine-owners would still contribute to the Exchequer, because the income derived from the mines would be taxed as other incomes were.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon, &c.) said, he did not wish to argue the point raised by the Chancellor of the Exchequer; but he wished to remind him that the present Government had not made the reduction of 1 per cent., for it was made by their predecessors—who

brought the royalty down from 3½ per cent. to that figure; and he trusted the Government would see their way to extend the reduced royalty for the whole period the contract had to run. He had visited the mines himself, and found that they gave employment to 200 very poor people, who altogether supported a population of 1,000. He hoped that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would see his way to give his favourable consideration to the whole matter.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) said that, in his opinion, the royalty paid to the nation was a very proper thing. In gold mines abroad—in South Africa, America, and elsewhere—everyone who was commencing mining had to pay what amounted to a considerable royalty. The real point in this matter, which deserved more consideration than apparently the Chancellor of the Exchequer had given it, was that the gold royalty of 1-100th which was to be raised after five years should be raised solely on the profits. However satisfactory the Report of the Royal Commission on Mining Royalties might be in regard to Wales, in Cornwall the Commission was regarded as a farce, and its result as absolutely worthless. The Commission, so far as Cornwall was concerned, was composed of landlords and land agents, and, therefore, the grievances of Cornwall never received any consideration from it.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Resolution agreed to.

Resolution 16.

"That a sum, not exceeding £30,287, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Works and Public Buildings."

***MR. A. C. MORTON** said, there was a sum of £320 on the Votes for supplying double sashes to the windows of the Tea Rooms, Dining Rooms, and Reading Rooms of the House of Commons. He understood the work had not been done, and he wished to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether the money had been returned to the Treasury, or used for some other purpose? He also wished to

know whether the structural alterations recommended by the Kitchen Committee in order to provide proper facilities for cooking would be carried out? So far as he could see, the offices devoted to the Kitchen were not fit for the purpose. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman would also tell him what decision he had come to with regard to his suggestion that more seats and the means of obtaining temperance refreshments within the grounds should be provided for visitors to Hampton Court Palace Gardens? So as to accentuate his inquiry as to the £320, he would formally move to reduce the Vote by a sum of £320.

*MR. SPEAKER: The subject which the hon. Gentleman last touched upon does not come under this Vote.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE, Bradford, Central) said, it was true that £320 was voted last year for making double windows in certain rooms of the House. He understood the money had been spent in doubling the windows in the Tea Room. He would consider the question of structural alterations in the Kitchen, which he admitted was in some respects not all that it should be. He had considered the subject of refreshments at Hampton Court, and he had decided against it, as there were many refreshment houses in the neighbourhood, and it might interfere with the enjoyment of the people in the Gardens. He had made arrangements that seats should be provided.

*Mr. CREMER said, it was reported that the First Commissioner of Works had inspected the part of the House in which it was suggested that alterations should be made in conjunction with an official who was opposed to any structural alterations at all. He therefore hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would preserve an open mind upon the subject until the Committee had had the opportunity of laying their views before him.

Mr. BRUNNER (Cheshire, North-wich) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman had considered the suggestions made with a view to additional accommodation being provided for the hanging of hats?

[No reply was given.]

Mr. A. C. Morton

Resolution agreed to.

Subsequent Resolution agreed to.

ROYAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND.

Account [presented 12th September] to be printed. [No. 415.]

FISHERIES (IRELAND)

Copy presented,—of Ad-interim Report of the Inspectors of Irish Fisheries on the Mackerel Fishing off the Coast of Ireland during the Spring of 1893 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC RECORDS (IRELAND).

Copy presented,—of Twenty-fifth Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records in Ireland [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented,—of Diplomatic and Consular Reports on Trade and Finance, Nos. 1289 (Manila), 1290 (Bahia), and 1291 (Munich) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

NATIONALITY AND NATURALIZATION (MISCELLANEOUS, No. 5, 1893).

Copy presented,—of Report from Her Majesty's Minister at the Hague inclosing a translation of the Netherland Law on Nationality and Domicile of 12th December, 1892 (in continuation of Miscellaneous, No. 4, 1893) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

SOUTH AFRICA.

Copy presented,—of Copies and Extracts of Correspondence relating to the British South Africa Company in Mashonaland and Matabeleland [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1893-4 (STATEMENT).

Copy presented,—of Statement regarding the probable insufficiency of the Estimate for Vote 14 (Naval and Marine Pensions, Gratuities and Compassionate Allowances) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

It being after Six of the clock, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put.

House adjourned at ten minutes after Seven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 14th September 1893.

QUESTIONS.

EEL FISHING IN LOUGH NEAGH.

MR. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he could state what rights exist, several or other, of fishing for eels in Lough Neagh; what instruments may be used; and what protection has been used by owners or afforded by the Royal Irish Constabulary to such fishery rights, and at whose cost?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. J. MORLEY, Newcastle-upon-Tyne): The Inspectors of Irish Fisheries state that there are considerable doubts as to what rights exist—several or other—of fishing for eels in Lough Neagh. It would appear, however, that the public have exercised a right of fishing for eels in the lake probably since the reign of Charles II., and they still exercise that right. The instrument that may be used for the capture of eels, during the open season, is the coghill net; but numbers of “long” lines are also used by the public. The former instrument is subject to a licence duty of £3 per season, but no licence duty has ever been fixed for the long lines. The only place where protection is afforded by the police is at Toome, where they protect the water bailiffs in the employment of the Board of Conservators. The only expense incurred by the police is occasional subsistence allowance, which is borne by the Constabulary Department.

SIAM.

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if definite instructions will be given to Lord Dufferin in negotiating with the French Government on the Siamese Question to insist upon no restrictions being placed upon British trade in any part of Siam, having regard to the fact that 93 per

cent. of the imports and 85 per cent. of the exports were last year conveyed in British ships?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir E. GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): As far as Her Majesty's Government are aware, no proposal has been made to place restrictions upon British trade in any part of Siam. But Lord Dufferin is fully alive to the importance of the British commercial interests in Siam, and will receive whatever instructions may appear necessary in case they should be in any way threatened.

IRISH NATIONAL EDUCATION EXAMINATIONS.

MR. MACARTNEY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland communicate the results of the examination held in July of candidates for the Training Colleges to them or any other persons; and, if not, whether he can state why not; and whether there is any objection to publishing a Return of the names of the candidates admitted to Drumcondra and the other Training Colleges, with the percentage of their answering as well as that of the rejected candidates?

MR. J. MORLEY: The practice hitherto has been for the Commissioners to communicate the result of the examination to the Principals of the Training Colleges, and it was within the discretion of the Authorities of the Colleges to communicate the marks to the candidates who passed the examination, if these authorities thought proper to do so. The Commissioners will, in future, issue to the Managers of the Colleges a rota of the persons examined, with a view to its exhibition in the respective Colleges, indicating by numbers and not by names the cases of such candidates as fail to qualify.

GUN LICENCES IN COUNTY LIMERICK.

MR. FINUCANE (Limerick, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Mr. Timothy M'Namara, Ballinlaw Athlacca, County Limerick, has four times applied for a gun licence during the past year, and has been refused each time, the gun being a

present made in the presence of Sergeant Kerrish, of Boherard, Limerick, who took charge of the gun until a licence was obtained; and have Lord Fermoy and Mr. Jevers, J.P., recommended Mr. M'Namara for a licence; and, if so, will the licence be granted; and, if not, on what grounds?

MR. J. MORLEY: It appears that the gun referred to was formerly the property of one James Ryan, who had a licence to keep it, and that upon his death in March, 1892, the weapon was handed over to the police by Ryan's wife. It has never been in the actual possession of M'Namara, although the original licence for the gun and a written document consenting to his using it were given to him by Mrs. Ryan in July, 1892. I understand that M'Namara has been recommended for a licence, as stated in the second paragraph; such a recommendation, though valuable, would not of itself constitute a sufficient reason for the grant of a licence, as there are many other circumstances to be considered. However, I shall make inquiry into the matter.

MRS. GLADSTONE AND HER LIMERICK TENANTS.

MR. FINUCANE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Mr. Noonan, Toomaline, Doon, County Limerick, after his eviction by Mrs. Gladstone, was admitted into one of the farm offices as caretaker, and has been recently served by a writ from the Superior Courts for possession on a question of title; if so, has his eviction been illegal; and will the landlady get police assistance in removing the crops off the farm before the case has been heard?

MR. J. MORLEY: I understand that the ejectment proceedings recently instituted against Noonan are limited to the dwelling-house only, to which he was re-admitted as caretaker after his eviction from the house and farm in February, 1892. The case is expected to be heard in November next. It is no part of the duty of the police to assist in the removal of crops from the farm, but it will be their duty to preserve the public peace should the necessity arise.

Mr. Finucane

TOOMALINE TENANTRY DISPUTE.

MR. FINUCANE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether Kirwin, for whose arrest a warrant was issued for threatening to shoot an evicted tenant at Toomaline, County Limerick, has been yet arrested; and, if not, will instructions be given to the Constabulary to watch the trial of the action for possession of a dwelling-house by Mrs. Gladstone against her tenant, and in which Kirwin is an essential witness?

MR. J. MORLEY: I understand the hon. Member will not, in the interests of justice, press this question.

THE CAVAN MAGISTRACY.

MR. KNOX (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland how many Justices of the Peace were appointed in the County Cavan during the last 12 months of the term of Office of the late Administration, and how many of these were Protestants and how many Catholics; how many have been appointed in the same county during the past 12 months, and how many of these were Protestants and how many Catholics; whether he is aware that the majority of Petty Sessions districts of the county are still without a single Catholic Justice of the Peace, though the vast majority of the people are Catholics; and whether effectual steps will be taken without further delay to redress the balance?

MR. J. MORLEY: Fifteen Magistrates were appointed in the County Cavan during the last 12 months of Office of the late Administration, of whom one is a Roman Catholic, one a Presbyterian, and 13 are of the Church of Ireland. Six Magistrates have been appointed in the same county during the last 12 months, of whom four are Roman Catholics, one is a Methodist, and one Church of Ireland. There are 18 Petty Sessions in the county, and at 13 of these one or more Catholic Justices of the Peace attend, or are eligible to attend. The total number of Magistrates in the county is 114, of whom 29 are Roman Catholics. The Lord Chancellor assures me he is ready to consider the names of any Roman Catholic gentlemen that may be brought before him as suitable for the Commission of the Peace.

LUNATICS IN BELFAST WORKHOUSES.

MR. KNOX: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the condition of lunatics in the workhouses of Ireland, and especially at Belfast, as disclosed by the Annual Report of the Inspectors; whether he is aware that one of the greatest obstacles to the removal of these patients to regular asylums is the fact that pauper lunatics in workhouses are supported out of the poor rate, which is paid half by the owners, while pauper lunatics in asylums are supported out of the county cess, which is paid wholly by the occupiers; and whether he will consult with hon. Members on both sides of the House with a view to putting an end to this state of things?

MR. J. MORLEY: The incidence of taxation in respect to maintenance of pauper lunatics in district lunatic asylums and in workhouses is as stated, but I understand that the principal obstacle in the way of the transfer of inmates of unsound mind from workhouses to district asylums lies in the fact that these latter institutions are so overcrowded as to afford no accommodation for such patients. The subject has been fully dealt with in the Report of the Departmental Committee on Irish Lunacy Administration which was presented to Parliament in 1891. As regards the case of Belfast, I am informed that the Board of Governors of the district asylum are providing increased accommodation for the patients, and it is expected that this accommodation will be completed in a couple of weeks. The workhouse buildings are also being extended with a similar object. With respect to the concluding paragraph, the hon. and learned Gentleman may rest assured that the whole question is receiving my most careful attention, and I hope to have an early opportunity of conferring with the Inspectors of Lunatic Asylums and ascertaining what steps can be taken to lessen the overcrowded condition of these institutions.

ACCIDENTS ON THE HIGHLAND RAILWAY.

SIR W. WEDDERBURN (Banffshire): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he will furnish

a statement of accidents to mixed trains on the Highland Railway in the last few years; and will give a Return showing to what extent during the last six months trains on that railway have been late in their time of arrival; and of what number of vehicles these trains have been composed, distinguishing between goods and passenger carriages?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (MR. MUNDELLA, Sheffield, Brightside): I will lay on the Table a statement of the accidents to mixed trains on the Highland Railway which have formed the subject of an inquiry during the last few years. The Board of Trade have not the other information asked for by the hon. Baronet, but they will communicate with the Company on the subject.

PORTADOWN POST OFFICE.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether his attention has been called to the insufficient accommodation for the public and the *employés* at the Portadown Post Office, and if it is intended to build a new Post Office for that town?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (MR. A. MORLEY, Nottingham, E.): Attention was called some time ago to the insufficient accommodation afforded in the present Post Office at Portadown, and the question of providing a new Crown Office there has been under consideration. A proposal for the acquisition of a site and the erection of a building in Bridge Street has just been received, and it will be dealt with without delay.

IRISH POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANKS.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I beg to ask the Postmaster General why the Table showing the distribution of the balances in Post Office Savings Banks in Ireland according to counties has been omitted for the year 1892; and if the Tables for Great Britain have been published?

MR. A. MORLEY: I understand the hon. Member to refer to a Return which was moved for for some years by the late Mr. Whitley. This Return was presented for the last time in 1890 for the year ended 31st December, 1889, and it has not been moved for since. The Return is a costly one, and the purposes which it serves appear to be hardly proportionate to its cost.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL : I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether the balances in Irish Post Office and Trustee Savings Banks for the half-year ending 30th June last shows a decrease of £160,000; and if this is the first half-year since 1883 in which there has not been an increase?

MR. A. MORLEY : The estimated decrease in the Post Office Savings Banks, apart from the Trustees Banks, was only £49,000, or rather more than 1 per cent. The answer to the last paragraph is in the affirmative. I ought to say that during the first two months of the current half-year the deposits exceeded the withdrawals by about 36,000 in number, and about £24,000 in amount.

WAGES FOR UNSKILLED LABOUR AT DEVONPORT.

MR. KEARLEY (Devonport) : I beg to ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty whether, in view of the fact that house rent at Devonport is at least as high as at Deptford and Woolwich, the Government have decided to make the minimum standard rate of wages to unskilled labourers the same as conceded to these districts?

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. E. ROBERTSON, Dundee) : A careful investigation was made into the cost of living (including rent) in the various dockyard districts, with the result that, in the opinion of the Board, no basis could be found for a discrimination in the rate of wages to unskilled labourers except in the special cases of Deptford and Woolwich. The Admiralty is unable to see its way to any alteration of this decision.

MR. KEARLEY : Are the Admiralty aware that at Devonport the rent for a single room is quite as much as is paid for a cottage in some parts of the country?

MR. E. ROBERTSON : There is a great difference in the case of Woolwich and Deptford; but we could not find that there was any evidence which would justify us in discriminating between Devonport and any other part of the country.

MR. KEARLEY : Is the Civil Lord prepared to receive evidence on this question? A statement was made only two days ago to the Plymouth Corporation by the Labour Council of the Three

Towns that the cost of living and rent in Devonport was 20 per cent. higher than in London.

MR. E. ROBERTSON : Any information the hon. Gentleman may lay before me will be fully considered.

COAL MINERS' CHECK WEIGHERS.

MR. WASON (Ayrshire, S.) : I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether his attention has been called to a defect in "The Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1887," under which it would appear that, while the miners have the nominal power of appointing a check weigher to safeguard their interests, should the appointment made by them prove unacceptable to the mine-owners, the latter have the right to terminate the men's contract, and inform them that they might work on a new contract provided that they did not appoint the same check weigher; and whether he will take steps to have the law amended, so as to ensure that the miners are not deprived of their legal right to select their own check weigher?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR, Clackmannan, &c.) : It appears from the decisions which have been pronounced that the right of miners to appoint a check weigher is not effectively secured to them by the existing law. The grievance pointed at in the question appears to me to be a genuine one, and I think it is very fit matter for consideration whether an attempt should not be made to remedy it by legislation.

EDUCATIONAL DISPUTES IN GUERNSEY.

MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Notts, Mansfield) : I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether the States of Guernsey have recently passed a law relating to public primary education which makes the rectors of the parishes *ex officio* members and Presidents of the School Committees, and provides that the religious instruction in the public elementary schools shall be in conformity with the doctrines of the Anglican Church, and be under the direction of the Ecclesiastical Authority; whether he is aware that the measure was strenuously opposed by the Nonconformists of Guernsey, who have petitioned Her Majesty to cause inquiry to be made into the educational system existing in the Island; whether

the law, before coming into force, must receive the assent of Her Majesty ; and whether there is any objection to placing a copy of the law upon the Table of this House ?

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Mr. ACLAND, York, W.R., Rotherham) : From inquiries at the Privy Council Office, I have ascertained that Petitions from certain merchants and tradesmen of the Island, from the Committee elected to represent the Protestant Nonconformists of the Island, and from the Presidents of a Committee named by the ratepayers of the town and parish of St. Peter's Port, have been presented against the law stated in the Petitions to have been passed by the States of Guernsey relating to public primary education in the Island. The law referred to has not, as yet, been received at the Council Office. Such a law, like other permanent laws of the Island, must receive the assent of Her Majesty in Council, but no precedent can be found for laying a copy of the law upon the Table of the House, even if it had been received.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) : Is it not a fact that the States of Guernsey have a perfect right to pass laws in favour of denominational education ?

MR. ACLAND : Yes ; but the law must receive the assent of Her Majesty.

IRISH COUNTY CESS COLLECTORS.

MR. A. O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) : I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that in many places in Ireland the collectors of county cess, and bailiffs who make seizures in respect of the same, are in the habit of requiring innkeepers to receive distrained cattle and other seizures on their licensed premises ; and whether it is compulsory upon innkeepers to receive such seizures ; and, if so, under what law ?

MR. J. MORLEY : I am informed that the practice referred to does exist in some places in the North of Ireland, but that in other parts of Ireland the practice does not prevail. It is not, I am advised, compulsory on innkeepers to receive such seizures, as by the Act 14 & 15 Vict., cap. 92, it is provided that except for distress for rent no animal can be impounded in any other place than the nearest licensed pound of the county, un-

less where an assault shall be threatened or a rescue anticipated, and that it be necessary to put the animal into a place for its safe detention and for the safety of the person in whose custody it is.

MR. A. O'CONNOR : Has the right hon. Gentleman any means of communicating with the County Authorities ? Is it not a fact that the solicitors to the County Authority of Donegal have threatened innkeepers with opposition to their licences at the next Sessions ?

MR. J. MORLEY : Donegal is, I am told, one of the counties in which the practice prevails. I will certainly make inquiry.

THE UNITED STATES MAIL SERVICE.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick's) : I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he is aware that delivery of the mails off the steamship *Teutonic*, regarding which an inquiry was made, would have reached London sorted ready for delivery at or about 7.30 a.m. on the 6th instant if a throughout service had been ordered by the Post Office Authorities ; and whether, in the interests of the public, it is intended to continue the expeditious service *viâ* Cork, Kingstown, and Holyhead, after the expiration of the present year ?

*MR. A. MORLEY : If the special service referred to had been used the mails would probably have arrived in London about the time stated ; but the *Teutonic* did not bring a full mail and did not arrive at Queenstown within the time laid down for a special service. The case, therefore, did not come within the conditions which govern the use of that service. No decision has been arrived at on the point referred to in the last paragraph, but the subject will be carefully considered before the end of the year.

MR. SEXTON (Kerry, N.) : In connection with this matter, has the right hon. Gentleman yet determined to issue tenders in view of the expiration of the present contract ?

*MR. A. MORLEY : It will be a long time before the present contract terminates—it expires in the year after next, if next year a 12 months' notice is given to end it.

MR. FIELD : What is the number of sacks necessary to constitute a full mail ? Is it 41 ?

*MR. A. MORLEY : It does not depend on the actual number of sacks.

SIR T. ESMONDE (Kerry, W.) : Could not the contract be terminated a year hence by giving notice at the end of this month ?

*MR. A. MORLEY : No.

MR. DANE (Fermanagh, N.) : The right hon. Gentleman says the contract expires in September, 1895, providing a year's notice is given. Could he not give that notice now ?

MR. A. MORLEY : I do not quite see how this arises on the question. If notice is put on the Paper I will answer it.

DUBLIN CITY RATE BOOKS.

MR. FIELD : I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the rate-books of the Collector General for Dublin City now contained a column headed "Occupiers (not liable to rates)," that did not appear therein until some few years ago, and which is an additional column to that authorised by the Franchise Act of 1884 ; and under what Act, or supposed Act or authority, this column was added ; whether Section 63 of "The Collection of Rates (Dublin) Act, 1849," is totally repealed ; and, if not, whether the conditions of rating in that section mentioned are in operation in any part of the United Kingdom except Dublin ; whether the law which provides that every landlord in England shall notify to the assessors of taxes, within 14 days after letting any lands or premises, the names of each incoming occupier, or some similar provision, can be made applicable to Ireland, so that the names of occupiers may become known to the assessors of taxes at the earliest opportunity ; and whether the provisions of the principal Jury Act for England, which permits of omitted names from the Jurors' Lists being added at the annual revision upon any person making complaint, will be made applicable to Ireland ?

MR. J. MORLEY : The column referred to was added to the rate-book after the passing of the Representation of the People Act, 1884, in pursuance of the opinions of eminent counsel obtained by the then Collector General. The section mentioned in paragraph 2 was repealed by Section 19 of the Represen-

tation of the People (Ireland) Act, 1868, so far as regards poor rate in respect of lands, tenements, and hereditaments of an annual value exceeding £4. The hon. Member will see that the conditions of rating mentioned in Section 63 of the Act of 1849 are not now in operation in Dublin. They are not in operation in any part of Ireland. The matter referred to in the 3rd paragraph is worthy of consideration, and an amendment of the law in the direction suggested would tend to facilitate the collection of rates in Ireland. With reference to paragraph 4, the Juries Act (Ireland), 1871, provides for the annual revision of the Jurors' Lists and for the insertion of omitted names by the Parliamentary Revision Courts. I am not aware that any amendment of these provisions is required.

IRISH BURIAL GROUNDS.

MR. FIELD : I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Government intend to bring in a Bill enabling the Guardians of any Poor Law Union in Ireland to acquire by purchase, compulsorily if necessary, any land not exceeding one acre immediately adjoining any existing ancient closed burial ground vested in the Guardians ?

MR. J. MORLEY : I am informed by the Local Government Board that, subject to the restrictions contained in Section 174 of the Public Health Act of 1878, and to the provisions of the Board's Rules and Regulations respecting burial grounds, which require that the land shall be of a character suitable for burial purposes, Boards of Guardians already possess, under Sections 172 and 173 of the Act, all the powers suggested in the question.

MASHONALAND.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT : I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether Her Majesty's Government have confirmation of the telegrams in Tuesday's papers that bands of armed Matabeles have reappeared on the borders of Mashonaland, and that the Mashonas are flying for safety to the British fortifications ; and whether his attention has been called to the statement by the British Chaplain at Victoria that about 3 o'clock in the after-

noon, of July 8, whilst holding a Sunday school, the church and parsonage were surrounded by an impi of Matabele, who were on all sides massacreing the Mashonas without mercy, simply out of thirst for blood?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. S. BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): We have no confirmation of the news referred to. As regards the second question, I am not sure if I have seen the particular statement mentioned. But, of course, there is no doubt that the Matabele did raid within the town of Victoria. I may add that Papers on the subject, containing all the latest news in our possession, were presented yesterday, and will be distributed, I hope, on Monday.

THE "CAMPANIA" MAILS.

MR. MACARTNEY: I beg to ask the Postmaster General if he will explain why the mails per *Campania*, which reached Kingsbridge on Friday last at 2.57 p.m., were detained there over three hours and then sent on to Kingstown by ordinary train, and the mail packet retarded in starting 15 minutes?

MR. A. MORLEY: In the ordinary course the mails would have been conveyed by the afternoon mail train from Queenstown, which would have taken them through to Kingstown. The Railway Company, however, ran a special train as far as Dublin for the passengers and carried the mails for England as well as those for Dublin and the North of Ireland in the special train to Kingsbridge, where they awaited the arrival of the ordinary mail train. On the occasion in question there would seem to have been some little loss of time in the transfer of the bags to the steamer at Kingstown, and this matter is being inquired into. I do not think that a special train from Kingsbridge would have been warranted.

LEEDS BARRACKS.

MR. JACKSON (Leeds, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War when the alterations to the barracks at Leeds will be completed, and if he can state when the barracks are likely to be ready for occupation?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. WOODALL, Hanley) (who replied) said: It is hoped that the alterations to the barracks at

Leeds will be completed by July, 1894, when the barracks are expected to be ready for re-occupation.

THE BRITISH HONDURAS CURRENCY.

MR. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough): In the absence of the hon. Member for Ross and Cromarty, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether urgent representations continue to be received from British Honduras, protesting against the use of a depreciated silver currency; and whether a decision has now been arrived at with respect to the Petition from the inhabitants, praying for a gold standard such as obtains in other parts of the British West Indies, and which Petition has now been under consideration of Her Majesty's Government for a period of over six months?

MR. S. BUXTON: The answer to the first question is in the affirmative. With regard to the second question, the existing currency of British Honduras was established a few years ago, after very careful inquiry and consideration, and in accordance with the general wishes of the colonists. So serious a measure as a change of currency requires very grave deliberation, and is receiving attention at the hands of the Treasury.

SCOTCH SCHOOLMASTERS' HOUSES.

MR. W. WHITELOW (Perth): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland on what ground the Scotch Education Department refuses to recognise the rental of the schoolmaster's house as part of the expenditure on a school required before the payment of the full grant earned?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Sir G. TREVELYAN, Glasgow, Bridgeton): The question put by the hon. Member cannot be answered in general terms, as the circumstances of each case may vary. If the hon. Member will be good enough to inform me of the case in which a difficulty has arisen, I shall be glad to explain the grounds of the Department's action.

CESS INCIDENCE IN PERTH.

MR. W. WHITELOW: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will cause an inquiry to be made into the incidence of the taxes of cess and stent in the City of Perth, with

a view to their reform in the next Session of Parliament?

*MR. J. B. BALFOUR (who replied) said: Inquiry will be made in regard to the incidence of cess in Perth. I am aware that dissatisfaction has sometimes been expressed with respect to the mode in which cess is levied in Scotch burghs, and the inquiry will doubtless show whether there is any peculiarity in the case of Perth, or whether it shares the objections which have been stated by some other burghs. It can then be considered whether a case for legislation is made out.

DAVIDSON'S COUPLINGS.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if large quantities of Davidson's couplings or joints have been made by the War Office and its contractors; if the War Office recognise Mr. Davidson, a working man, as the inventor; and what steps have been taken by the War Office to procure a suitable award for the inventor?

MR. WOODALL (who replied) said: Considerable numbers of couplings or joints for side arms for ordnance have been made on a plan suggested by Mr. Davidson. He claims that these joints are covered by a patent held by him, but the War Department is advised that this patent is bad. £100 has, however, been offered to Mr. Davidson as an acknowledgment of his services in connection with the introduction of the joint in question into Her Majesty's Service. Up to the present he has not accepted this offer.

ROTTEN FRUIT AT COVENT GARDEN.

MR. MACDONA (Southwark, Rotherhithe): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, seeing the great amount of fruit and vegetables that is imported from Rotterdam and Hamburg and sold by auction at Covent Garden, St. Katherine's Wharf, and Pudding Lane, a great quantity of which very often arrives in a rotten state unfit for human consumption, he will send an Inspector or Inspectors to attend these sales and empowered to prohibit the disposal of unwholesome food amongst thickly-populated districts?

Mr. W. Whitelaw

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. H. H. FOWLER, Wolverhampton, E.): The duty of seizing and, where necessary, obtaining an order of Justices for the destruction of articles of food which are unfit for human consumption devolves upon the Local Sanitary Authorities. I am informed that the authorities of the Strand District and of the City of London are exercising a careful supervision in this matter.

MR. J. LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet): Do I understand that if the Local Authority fails to discharge its duty the precautions are dropped?

*MR. H. H. FOWLER: I do not know what might happen in such a case, but I should like to take the opportunity of saying that in the present crisis the Local Authorities are doing everything they can to carry out the directions of the Local Government Board.

MR. A. C. MORTON: May I ask whether fruit and vegetables coming into the Port of London by water are not inspected at all times by the Port Sanitary Authority?

*MR. H. H. FOWLER: Of that I am not aware; but as my hon. Friend is a member of that Authority, he probably knows more about the matter than I do. I think the Port Sanitary Authority of London is pre-eminently distinguished on the present occasion for the admirable manner in which it has discharged its duty.

MR. A. C. MORTON: That is so, Mr. Speaker. Not only are these things inspected now, but they have been inspected at all times.

YORK CAVALRY BARRACKS.

MR. BUTCHER (York): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what further information he can give with reference to the sub-letting of the Government contract for the painting of the Cavalry Barracks at York, and the rate of wages paid by the sub-contractor; what are the wages paid by such sub-contractor to the workmen employed in connection with the work contracted for; whether such wages are below the wages generally accepted in the district for competent workmen of the class employed; and having regard to the Resolution of this House of 13th February,

1891, what steps the Government propose to take in the matter?

MR. WOODALL (who replied) said: Looked at from the present standpoint, there may be said to have been some irregularity in this contract, which was a triennial one, anterior to the Resolution of the House of the 13th of February, 1891. Care will be taken to have the rates of wages provided for in the next triennial contract; but, from the information furnished, there does not appear to be any reason to suppose that the wages paid were lower than those generally in force in the district.

MR. BUTCHER: What are the rates of wages paid to painters and painters' labourers?

MR. WOODALL: There is no obligation in the contract to pay the current rate of wages, the contract having been made three years ago, before the passing of the House of Commons' Resolution; and, therefore, I do not see it is necessary to give the information asked for.

MR. BUTCHER: But in the contract under discussion is there not a clause with respect to the payment of wages such as are accepted in the district?

MR. WOODALL: This contract was made more than three years ago, and no conditions are enjoined in it with regard to the payment of the current rate of wages.

MR. BUTCHER: None as to the wages accepted in the district?

MR. WOODALL: No; the contract was made before the House passed this Resolution, but every contract made subsequent to the House of Commons' Resolution contains a stipulation that the current rate of wages shall be paid.

FLOODS OF THE INDUS.

SIR R. TEMPLE (Surrey, Kingston): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that breaches, owing to floods of the Indus, have been so frequent in the railway leading to Karachi, in Scinde, as to interfere seriously with the trade of that port; and whether he will ascertain what steps are being taken by the Government to prevent recurrence of the difficulty?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. G. RUSSELL, North Beds.): The Secretary of State is aware, from notices in the newspapers,

of the damage caused by the recent floods to the line of the North Western Railway in the neighbourhood of Karachi. The Secretary of State is confident that the Government of India will spare no effort to maintain the efficiency of the railway communications with Karachi, and sees no reason to call for a special Report.

THE "NEW YORK" MAILS.

SIR F. EVANS (Southampton): I beg to ask the Postmaster General at what hour the mails by the steamship *New York*, via Southampton, were received at the General Post Office, and at what hour the mails by the steamship *Teutonic* were received at the same place, last week; and if he can state what proportion of the mail matter from the United States consists of letters, and what proportion of newspapers and printed matter?

MR. A. MORLEY: The mails from the United States brought by the *New York* arrived at the General Post Office at 9.55 a.m. on the 6th inst., and those by the *Teutonic* at 1.29 p.m. on the same day. The proportion of letters to newspapers and printed matter in the mails from the United States is approximately 1 to 5.

THE KERRY MAGISTRACY.

SIR T. ESMONDE (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state how many Nationalist Magistrates have been appointed in the constituency of West Kerry during the past 12 months; and whether any more will be appointed?

MR. J. MORLEY: The Lord Chancellor is unable to give the numbers for West Kerry, as distinguished from the county; but for the entire county the number of gentlemen appointed to the Commission of the Peace during the past 12 months is 19, of whom 12 are believed to be Roman Catholics. No official record exists as to the political opinions of these gentlemen. As regards the second paragraph, I can only give the hon. Baronet the same reply that I have given to the hon. and learned Member for West Cavan—namely, that the Lord Chancellor assures me he is ready to consider the names of any gentlemen which may be

brought before him as suitable for the Commission.

DR. GREIG'S CASE.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL : I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can give any explanation as to the delay on the part of the Chinese Government in settling the admitted claims of Dr. Greig ?

*SIR E. GREY : In his latest Despatch on the subject Mr. O'Connor stated that he had again brought the question of Dr. Greig's compensation before the Taunlyi Yamen, when he was informed that it would be settled on the terms already agreed upon, but that the delay was owing to difficulties which had arisen with the Local Authorities.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL : This matter has been a long time in settlement. Will the hon. Baronet give his attention to it during the Recess ? I am not interested in Dr. Greig specially, but I have an interest in the missionaries of the Irish Presbyterian Church.

*SIR E. GREY : I quite admit there has been a deplorable delay, but we have only recently succeeded in getting the Chinese Government to admit the principle of the claim. The Government have no intention of allowing the matter to drop.

THE INDIAN BUDGET.

SIR R. TEMPLE : I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in reference to the progress of Supply, he can mention approximately the date on which he hopes to cause the Indian Budget to be laid before the House ?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby) : The Indian Budget will be taken on the day fixed for the Second Reading of the Appropriation Bill.

SIR R. TEMPLE : When will that be ?

SIR W. HARCOURT : I think the hon. Baronet is, perhaps, in as good a position as I am to answer that question.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT : Will the Indian Budget be put down before the Appropriation Bill ?

SIR W. HARCOURT : The Appropriation Bill takes precedence when it is put down.

Mr. J. Morley

SATURDAY SITTINGS.

SIR R. TEMPLE : I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether it is to be understood that in the event of a Sitting being held on Saturday next the Adjournment of the House will be moved at 7 o'clock ?

SIR W. HARCOURT : If, as I hope, the Irish Votes are concluded to-day, there will then be two days to dispose of the remainder of Supply. As far as I can gather, there is a universal feeling that Supply should be brought to a close as early as possible. If that is so, I do not think it would be wise at the present moment to fix a particular hour for the conclusion of the Sitting on Saturday.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL : Is there any precedent for taking Irish Supply in one day ?

SIR W. HARCOURT : I am not prepared to answer that question.

SWAZILAND.

SIR R. TEMPLE : I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, before the House adjourns for the Recess, he will lay upon the Table the latest Papers regarding Swaziland, including the Convention ?

MR. S. BUXTON : As I have before explained, no Convention has yet been concluded, and the question whether Papers can be laid before the Adjournment must depend on whether the negotiations respecting such Convention are or are not concluded before that date. I cannot lay incomplete Papers.

SOMERSET AND THE COAL STRIKE.

MR. BARLOW (Somerset, Frome) : I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that, although there has not been the slightest disturbance in the Somerset coal district during the strike, yet large numbers of extra police have been drafted into the district ; and whether he has any power to prevent the Local Authorities acting thus ?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. ASQUITH, Fife, E.) : I have telegraphed to the authorities in Somersetshire on this matter, but have as yet received no reply. When it arrives I will show it privately to the hon. Member. But

whether the statement is true or not, I must point out that the matter rests in the discretion of the Local Authorities, and that I have no power to interfere.

COFFEE TAVERN PROPRIETORS AS LICENSING MAGISTRATES.

MR. AGG - GARDNER (Cheltenham): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether Magistrates, who are proprietors of coffee taverns, wholly or in part, can adjudicate on and withhold licences from public-houses within the area in which their taverns are situated; and, if so, whether he will take steps to apply to such Magistrates the disqualification from acting in licensing cases which attaches to those Justices who are interested, however remotely, in public-house property?

MR. ASQUITH: The Magistrates in question are not disqualified from adjudicating in licensing cases. I do not intend to propose any change in the law applicable to the matter.

THE PISTOLS BILL.

MR. HOPWOOD (Lancashire, S.E., Middleton): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he has now ascertained that the Pistols Bill is a controversial measure; and whether the Government will proceed with it at untimely hours against the feeling of many of their supporters?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I think that, on the whole, the House has treated this as a non-controversial Bill.

THE CHOLERA.

MR. ROUND (Essex, N.E., Harwich): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether there is any foundation for the statement made in some newspapers to the effect that the precautions taken by the Port Sanitary Authorities of Harwich against cholera have failed?

MR. HANBURY (Preston): May I, at the same time, ask whether the right hon. Gentleman has any information with regard to an alleged outbreak of cholera in Ashbourne, Derbyshire?

***MR. H. H. FOWLER**: In answer to the first question, I am not aware that there is any justification for the statement which has appeared in the public Press. I believe that the Port Sanitary

Authority of Harwich have appointed a Sanitary Inspector for the special duty of boarding ships coming within the limits of the port, and that the Orders of the Local Government Board are being carried out. I am in communication with the Port Sanitary Authority, and I see no reason for charging them with any neglect of duty. They are incurring a heavy expense, as all the authorities in the Kingdom are, with reference to this unfortunate outbreak. The case of Ashbourne is, I am sorry to say, a serious one. Thirteen persons have been attacked with choleraic diarrhoea, and eight deaths have occurred. That is an extraordinary proportion, even in severe cases of the disorder, but I find upon investigation that the whole of the persons attacked lived in one courtyard and drank from one well. The water is, I am afraid, very suspicious. The Local Authority have stopped the use of it, and are taking all the precautions they can. We have no information of any spread of the disease outside the courtyard. Perhaps the House will allow me to take this opportunity of stating that the general report to-day from all parts of the Kingdom is satisfactory. There are no cases whatever at Cleethorpes; and at Hull there have been no deaths, and there are only two cases in hospital. A case is reported in the papers this afternoon—and I am sorry to say the report is correct—of a person living at Ashton-under-Lyne who went on a trip to Cleethorpes, and on his return was attacked with cholera or choleraic diarrhoea, to which he has succumbed. I asked Dr. Thorne Thorne to give his opinion on the present state of the epidemic, and he writes to me as follows:—

“Having regard to the time of year through which we have passed since fatal attacks of choleraic character first commenced at one point of our Eastern Coast, the comparatively sporadic character of the disease is a distinctly hopeful feature, and the activity of Sanitary Authorities is even more hopeful as regards the future.”

I think, on the whole, that the House may rest satisfied that affairs are mending—not to put it any stronger at the present time—and that they are not retrograding at all.

MR. POWELL WILLIAMS (Birmingham, S.): Are steps being taken to

have a thorough scientific examination into the character of the outbreak at Ashbourne?

*MR. H. H. FOWLER: Steps will be taken. The Local Government Board will make a thorough inquiry into the matter.

MR. BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich): May I ask whether medical men all over the country have been invited to assist the Local Government Board in ascertaining the exact character of the disease where it has appeared throughout the country?

*MR. H. H. FOWLER: Every district has a Medical Officer of Health, and in no case has any outbreak taken place without our sending down a Medical Inspector to make an examination specially for ourselves. I am quite sure that the Medical Profession will be now, as they always have been, ready to give the greatest help to the Local Government Board.

THE COURSE OF PUBLIC BUSINESS.

*MR. TALBOT (Oxford University): Will the Expiring Laws Continuance Bill be taken to-night?

SIR W. HARCOURT: It will not be taken to-night.

*MR. TALBOT: Will it be taken this week?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I hope so.

*MR. TALBOT: As I wish to draw attention to parts of certain Acts to be included in the Bill, I should be glad to know when the Bill is to be taken? We were told on Monday by the Secretary to the Treasury that the Bill would be taken to-night, and some of us are here at some inconvenience. Cannot the right hon. Gentleman now name a day for taking it?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I am endeavouring to consult the convenience of the House, and I thought it better we should first dispose of Bills on which no discussion is likely to arise. We could take the Expiring Laws Continuance Bill when we have more time at our disposal.

*MR. TALBOT: I quite agree with that, but I think we are entitled to a little notice as to when the Bill is to be taken.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I think I can relieve the hon. Member's mind for this week, at any rate.

Mr. Powell Williams

MR. TOMLINSON: May I ask whether, in order to prevent the overburdening of hon. Members, the right hon. Gentleman will move the Adjournment of the House directly the Government Business has been completed?

SIR W. HARCOURT: That is my intention.

MR. J. LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet): I hope during the remainder of the Session.

MR. BARTLEY: Will the Savings Banks Bill be taken to-night?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I hope it will be taken to-night. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for St. George's, Hanover Square, suggested it might be dealt with as non-controversial if an agreement could be come to with the bankers. Negotiations have been going on with the bankers, and I yesterday received an assurance from them that they are satisfied with the agreement that has been come to with the Government to alter the figure from £100 to £50 as the limit of the annual deposit. It therefore may be taken that the bankers have agreed to the Bill as amended in that sense, and I hope there will be no opposition to it.

*SIR A. ROLLIT (Islington, S.): Is it intended to take the Merchant Shipping Bill to-night?

SIR W. HARCOURT: Yes; I have received a communication from the Chamber of Shipping expressing a hope that the Second Reading will be taken, so that it may be considered by a Committee during the Recess.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

SUPPLY—considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE
DEPARTMENTS, 1893-4.

CLASS II.

1. £2,764, to complete the sum for Household of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, this was not a controversial Vote in the ordinary sense, but he wished to draw attention to an item of £789 for the Chapel Royal. As a matter of fact, that Chapel was not now used by the Lord Lieutenant, nor was it used by anyone extensively. As a rule, the Lord Lieutenant attended the

Royal Hospital Chapel in the morning and St. Patrick's Cathedral in the afternoon. Now, he had no desire to interfere with any vested interests, but it did appear to him that the item simply appeared in the Vote because it had been in previous years' Estimates, and he desired to know whether it was to be continued in the future?

MR. J. MORLEY : I do not think the services at the Chapel have been discontinued.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, he did not deny that services were still held there, but he was assured that they were not attended by the Lord Lieutenant and his Household ; and the question was—Was it worth while to continue to maintain the Chapel?

MR. J. MORLEY : Although it is the fact that the Lord Lieutenant attends the Royal Hospital Chapel in the morning and St. Patrick's Cathedral in the afternoon, I believe that during the Dublin season he also attends the Chapel Royal. I will make inquiries into the matter.

MR. A. C. MORTON said, he remembered that when the Party of the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) was in power he never assisted the opposition which was repeatedly raised to that item.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, that if he desired to reply, he might point out that the hon. Member for Peterborough and his friends, who always resisted the Closure while they were in Opposition, now supported it without a murmur.

MR. SEXTON said, he supposed the hon. Member for South Tyrone would admit that it was a matter within the Lord Lieutenant's own discretion as to what church he should attend. He was surprised at the intervention of the hon. Member, seeing that in the course of the Debates on the Home Rule Bill he evinced such great anxiety that the Civil servants in Ireland should not be despoiled of any of their rights. Did he wish that the Chaplain, Reading Clerks, and Organist of the Chapel Royal should be deprived of their pensions, &c., and of their vested interests?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL : I said I had no desire to touch any vested interest. I only wanted to know if the Vote was to be kept up in future years.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (Manchester, E.) : The hon. Member for North Kerry

(Mr. Sexton) has come forward in quite a new capacity. I recollect that on this Vote, for a number of years in succession, long Debates were raised upon each item, from that of the Chaplain's salary down to that of a certain drummer boy. But the hon. Member now comes forward as a supporter of every appanage of the Castle, although he is aware that the Lord Lieutenant must be a Protestant.

MR. SEXTON : I merely spoke in an interrogatory vein.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR : It must be evident to the Committee that this is a question which cannot be considered apart from other questions connected with the Lord Lieutenant's Household. If we are going to retain Dublin Castle we must keep up its staff, with all circumstance and pomp, and we should not be well advised in cutting it down in a niggardly spirit.

Vote agreed to.

2. £24,028, to complete the sum for Chief Secretary for Ireland—Offices.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, that no one would contend that this was not a Vote that might be legitimately discussed. In former years this Vote had taken as much as three nights, but now the Chancellor of the Exchequer suggested that the whole of the Irish Votes might be disposed of in one Sitting. He assured the right hon. Gentleman he proposed to raise only specific questions, and that he had no intention of making a sporadic raid across the whole Irish question. It ought to be remembered that there had been no opportunity during this long Session of dealing with Irish administration. There had been opportunities for asking questions, but there could be no argument on them ; and there had been Motions for the Adjournment of the House—indeed, he himself had been responsible for that operation twice—but those Motions had to be confined to a definite matter beyond which no one could go. There had been no occasion on which the whole question of Irish administration could be raised, and, therefore, he submitted that they were entitled to discuss it on the Vote for the salary of the Minister responsible to the House of Commons for Irish affairs. The first point he wished to touch upon was the condition of the dark area in

Clare, Kerry, and Limerick. When he last moved the Adjournment of the House on this question the Chief Secretary objected—and he had some fair ground for the objection—that he had literally raised the question before the Clare Assizes were over. That could not be said now; and if they took the two last Spring and Summer Assizes for Clare, Kerry, and Limerick, they would find that 26 agrarian cases were sent to juries. What happened? He proposed only to give a bald statement of the facts, which would show better than anything else the real condition of those three districts. Not a single conviction was obtained in any agrarian case. There were 19 acquittals, six disagreements of the juries, and one adjournment. The fact was that in these counties, in all agrarian cases touching questions of land and politics, it had been absolutely impossible to get a single conviction. Surely that in itself constituted a serious state of affairs. It was all very well for *The Daily News* to talk about County Clare as though it was a standing joke; but it was a place in which Her Majesty's subjects had to live; they had to pay taxes for protection, and the Government did not appear to be able to afford them that protection, because in the 19 cases in which there were acquittals, the juries, according to the Judges, rejected the clearest possible evidence. Was this state of things an improvement on that which had prevailed in the past? Under the late Government, after the passing of the Crimes Act, giving power to change the venue, 231 persons were tried out of their own counties, and there were 106 convictions. The system of changing the venue was, therefore, a partial success, at any rate. Now that that plan was no longer resorted to not a single conviction was obtained, however plain the evidence for the prosecution might be. In Ireland, as a whole, there were, between August 22, 1891, and June 30, 1892, 39 cases of moonlighting. That was under the late Government. From August 22, 1892, to June 30, 1893, there were 8 cases. That was under the present Government. In the first period which I have named there were 20 cases of intimidation; in the second there were 35 cases, and firearms were used in 17 of them. Taking Clare, Limerick, and Kerry, he

Mr. T. W. Russell

found that there were in the first period 28 cases of moonlighting in those counties, and in the second 74 cases. Thus they saw that the result of the Crown's not being able to obtain convictions on clear evidence was an increase both of moonlighting and intimidation. Was not that a very serious state of affairs? Before he ceased dealing with the County of Clare he wished to say a few words in regard to a certain outrage, and he did so solely in order to strengthen the Chief Secretary's hands. He desired here to refer to the case of Mr. Moloney, who was shot at on June 1, and seriously wounded. That gentleman held the position of County Court Registrar in Tipperary. His salary amounted to two guineas a day, payable on the certificate of the County Court Judge that the Registrar had attended and fulfilled his duties. After he was shot, Mr. Moloney was, of course, unable to attend the Court, which sat for 30 days, and as the Judge could not give him a certificate of attendance he had been deprived of his salary. That might be strict law, but it was hardly justice. Mr. Moloney had made an application to the Lord Lieutenant, which had been somewhat misconstrued by the right hon. Gentleman. He applied for aid in meeting his medical expenses, and also for his salary. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to think he did not ask for the latter; but although his letter was somewhat hazy, he certainly did do so, and that was placed beyond doubt by the fact that in reply the salary was refused. Although an agent to a property, he had had no quarrel with the tenants, and had enforced no eviction for 15 years, so that there seemed to be no reason for the outrage. Under these circumstances, was it not drawing the line a little too tight to refuse his salary as Registrar of the County Court? Surely the Treasury could find some means to make a payment which certainly would not be unfair or unjust. When the late Government was in Office one of the charges most frequently brought against them related to the suppression of public meetings. The present First Commissioner of Works was especially annoyed at the suppression of the right of public meeting, and on one occasion, referring to the gathering which got Mr. Wilfrid Blunt into trouble, he said publicly he would not have felt

otherwise than proud to have found himself beside Mr. Blunt in the dock. He was not the only Minister who objected to the suppression of public meetings, for even such a mild man as the President of the Board of Trade, in the Debate on the Address in 1888, asked, in the most indignant tones, was it an agrarian crime to attend a public meeting to express sympathy with the oppressed tenants? On the same occasion the Secretary for Scotland declared that the Nationalists of Ireland had as much right to attend public meetings as a landlord had to receive his rents. Those were excellent sentiments in 1888-9, and public platforms were made to ring with denunciations of the action of the then Chief Secretary. Bearing this in mind, he wished to show how the present Chief Secretary treated public meetings. Would it be believed that the right hon. Gentleman had suppressed, or, to use his own phrase, "interfered with," 21 meetings during his year of Office? It did not occur to the late Chief Secretary to use the phrase "interfered with"; he was too brutally frank. He did not complain of what the present Chief Secretary had done in that respect; he only wanted to point out that, although hon. Members denounced the late Chief Secretary for similar action from 1887 till 1890, they were now silent when their own Chief Secretary was quite as active in the same direction, even if he had not actually beaten the record. He wished to know whether the Chief Secretary would give the House a Return stating the places at which these meetings were suppressed, the circumstances under which they were interfered with, and the amount of interference? They had not been suppressed in Ulster, where they would have been heard of, but in other parts of Ireland, and hon. Members opposite had been so quiet this year that they had not a word of protest against outrages of this kind. There was another offence which the Leader of the Opposition committed every day of the year when he was Chief Secretary. In the last Parliament the Statute of Edward III. was the subject of denunciation by hon. Members opposite. The hon. Member for Donegal—

MR. MAC NEILL: I never mentioned Edward III.'s name in this House.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, that was a very large order, for he did not believe

there was any Member sitting below the Gangway that had not the Statute of Edward III. off by heart. Unquestionably the late Government were denounced for having disentombed that obsolete Statute, and Debates had over and over again taken place upon their enormity and iniquity in using that Act. Since, however, the present Chief Secretary had been in Office the Statute of Edward III. had been put into operation in 16 different cases. The right hon. Gentleman had recently said that "new presbyter was but old priest writ large"; but he would say that the new Morley was the old Balfour writ large, the only difference being that hon. Members below the Gangway were muzzled and gagged in some occult way, so that it was left to him on September 14, when the Chancellor of the Exchequer was panting to get the place shut up, to bring forward these grievances. It would, perhaps, interest the right hon. Gentleman to hear what had been said outside in regard to his action. One of the right hon. Gentleman's friends, who was formerly a Member of this House—he referred to Mr. Leamy—had, at a meeting of the National League in Dublin last week, pointed out that evictions took place just as they did before, and that meetings were suppressed just as they were in the old times, and he had asked what the Chief Secretary had done for the evicted tenants or for anybody else. That Nationalist did not see that the right hon. Gentleman was one whit better than the Leader of the Opposition, and it was quite possible that his private opinion would be that light railways in the West of Ireland would outweigh everything that the right hon. Gentleman had done. He next had to call attention to the disturbances that had taken place at Moira, in Galway, during the last two or three months. There had been a small Protestant community there for 40 years; it numbered only 40 people. There was a feeling in the district, apparently, that they ought not to be there, and it was suggested that they had gone there for proselytising purposes; but, whether that was so or not, if they conducted themselves according to law they were entitled to the protection of the law. What was the nature of the persecution to which they had been subjected? In May the well from which the Scripture

reader obtained his water was soiled, and he was precluded from using the water; a woman was denied permission to cut turf, although she was legally entitled to it, the Roman Catholic owner declaring in explanation that he would not have his name called out in chapel for any amount of money, and subsequently outrages were committed on other members of the community, shots were fired into the parsonage, and a cow was mutilated. All this had occurred since a fresh priest had taken up his residence at Moira. The Chief Secretary had lately strengthened the police force at a village a few miles from Moira, but a police hut at that place would have been much more effective, and he hoped one would be placed there. The next matter he wished to deal with was one in reference to one of the recently-appointed Magistrates.

MR. J. MORLEY: I am not responsible for those appointments.

*THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. Member is not in Order, as the appointment was made by the Lord Chancellor of Ireland. As his salary is on the Consolidated Fund his action cannot be discussed in Supply.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL submitted that if the appointment of Irish Magistrates could not be discussed in this House upon Supply it could not be discussed at all, and that would be a very serious business.

MR. J. MORLEY explained that his point was that the subject could not be discussed on this Vote.

VISCOUNT WOLMER (Edinburgh, W.): On what Vote can it be raised?

*THE CHAIRMAN said, the hon. Member was certainly wrong in raising the question on this Vote. He repeated, that the Lord Chancellor's salary was charged on the Consolidated Fund, and as he was responsible for these appointments they could not be questioned in Supply; that is in accordance with the ruling that was given on the salary of the English Lord Chancellor on the question of his salary as Speaker of the House of Lords a few days before.

MR. SEXTON: Might not the question be raised on the Appropriation Bill?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: On the point of Order, I submit that no question can be discussed upon the Appropriation Bill which cannot be discussed in Supply.

Mr. T. W. Russell

Is it not a serious matter to altogether remove from criticism on the Estimates the action of the Lord Chancellor of Ireland in his administrative, not in his judicial, capacity? Cannot some plan be adopted for raising this point?

*THE CHAIRMAN: I am bound to administer the law as it stands. As the Chief Secretary is only responsible for his administrative acts, and not for these appointments, they cannot be challenged upon this Vote. With regard to the matter of the Appropriation Bill, I cannot decide that now.

SIR T. LEA (Londonderry, S.): The Chief Secretary answers questions in this House with regard to the appointment of Magistrates; and as he must be in consultation with the Lord Chancellor, is he not, to a certain extent, responsible?

*THE CHAIRMAN: No; I think not. He is only responsible for administrative acts in his own Department.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, he could bring forward the matter he wished to deal with without referring to the Lord Chancellor's appointment at all. On June 8, 1893, a landlord named Tyrrell took up the possession of certain lands in Westmeath, allowing all the workmen, six in number, to take re-possession of their houses and gardens on condition that they continued to work for him. The tenant of those lands had been a Mr. Patrick O'Byrne, and he was one of the newly-appointed Magistrates. A decree had in due course been granted against him for non-payment of rent. One of the labourers, named Smith, after being re-instated, refused to work, and a summons was taken out by Mr. Tyrrell, the landlord, for the possession of the dwelling. When the case came on Mr. O'Byrne sat as one of the Magistrates to hear the case, which after a time was adjourned on the understanding that Smith would give up possession; but he refused to carry out his undertaking, and the landlord was kept out of his property for another month. When the case came up a second time, Mr. O'Byrne again sat on the Bench to adjudicate upon it, though, after a bitter contest, he was compelled to leave the Bench. Boycotting notices with reference to the grass on the farm were posted all over the countryside, and Mr. O'Byrne superintended the boycotting proceedings. The area of the farm was 620 acres, the Poor Law

valuation £375, and the rent £141. This evicted tenant, therefore, was not a poor cotter tenant, but a fraudulent debtor who had rightly been put off the holding, and then went on the Bench to adjudicate on a case in which he was concerned. This man was still retained on the Magistracy, and by virtue of his office he was an *ex officio* Guardian. What had he done in that capacity?

MR. J. MORLEY: On a point of Order, may I ask whether this subject has reference to the Estimate before the House?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I am asking the Chief Secretary to take action with regard to this gentleman's conduct on this boycotted farm.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Chief Secretary is not responsible for the conduct of Magistrates.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, he was speaking of this man as an evicted tenant, and not as a Magistrate.

THE CHAIRMAN: I must ask the hon. Member to connect it with some administrative act of the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, he was asking the Chief Secretary to protect the landlord in his legal right. Surely a case of persecution of this kind was not to be disposed of on a mere point of Order? Now, this Mr. O'Byrne, in his capacity as *ex officio* Guardian of the Poor, applied for and obtained outdoor relief for Mrs. Julia Gaffney, an old woman living on the land. Because Mrs. Gaffney continued to work for the landlord, Mr. O'Byrne took action which had the effect of stopping that outdoor relief which he himself had been instrumental in obtaining for the woman.

MR. KNOX: Does not this question arise on the Irish Local Government Board Vote?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, it was all very well to try and burke the question; but this was a matter for which the Chief Secretary was responsible, and it could be raised on another Vote if not on this. Surely it would save time if he was allowed to deal with it at once.

*THE CHAIRMAN: This is an administrative matter, and the Chief Secretary is, I think, responsible.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, he had referred to the facts, because he thought that the Chief Secretary ought to look

into this case and see that Mr. Tyrrell got justice, and also that the conduct of Mr. O'Byrne was brought under the notice of the proper authorities. He next desired to challenge the action of Magistrates in certain Courts in Ireland. Under the recent additions to the Bench, a great many publicans had necessarily been appointed Magistrates. He supposed that that could not be avoided if the policy of the right hon. Gentleman was to be carried out.

MR. M. AUSTIN (Limerick, W.): Have you not already decided, Sir, that magisterial appointments cannot be discussed on this Vote?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I am not discussing the appointment; I am discussing their action.

MR. SEXTON: Surely that is the same thing. The Lord Chancellor, and not the Chief Secretary, is responsible.

*THE CHAIRMAN: I have already desired the hon. Member to deal with some administrative act of the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I submit that it is the duty of the Chief Secretary to bring the action of these Magistrates to the notice of the Lord Chancellor.

*THE CHAIRMAN: It is for the hon. Member to show that the right hon. Gentleman has done an act he should not have done, or failed to do something he should have done.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL, continuing, said, that under previous Governments it used to be the habit for a licensed victualler so appointed to transfer his licence to some relative, or give it up altogether. But a number of gentlemen who had been appointed in these circumstances persisted in sitting at Petty Sessions to try licensing cases, with the result that in some districts it was impossible to get convictions for breaches of the Licensing Laws. This was an entirely new departure, and he should like to know whether the Chief Secretary could not take some steps, either by appealing to the Lord Chancellor or by some other means, to confine these gentlemen to Magisterial duties outside the licensing question? In conclusion, he asked the Chief Secretary whether he proposed to do anything to facilitate the collection of county cess in certain parts of Donegal? It would be in the recollection of the right hon. Gentleman that the collection

of this cess was absolutely in abeyance, and had been for some time. The Grand Jury had applied to the Government for a warrant for the Constabulary to collect it, and he wished to know what arrangement had been come to?

MR. J. MORLEY: I think I had better at once reply to a great many points raised by the hon. Member, and get them out of the way. The hon. Member claims that he and others have had no opportunity before now of calling attention to the misfeasances of my Irish administration. I think that is rather strange, seeing that there have been five or six Motions for the Adjournment. The hon. Member said these were made to call attention to a definite matter of public importance, but surely he forgets that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Manchester (Mr. A. J. Balfour) moved a Vote of Want of Confidence covering the whole field of Irish government only two or three months ago. I do not object to the banter of the hon. Member. It is not particularly ill-humoured. It is said that I have suppressed 21 meetings; but is that a ground for censure from the point of view of the hon. Member? These were meetings for, beyond all doubt, an illegal purpose. Can the hon. Member point to one meeting suppressed where the object was a legal one? I can call to mind a case where the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition suppressed an undoubtedly political meeting. The occasion was when the hon. Member for East Mayo proposed to address his constituents at Swineford. When the hon. Member can find a case of that kind in the course of my administration, I shall recognise some force in his remarks. The hon. Member asks for a Return of these meetings. I decline to give it him, because it would not tend to pacify Ireland. I do not mean—unless this House orders otherwise—to give any Return which, in my view, would rake up the embers of disquiet. I will now come to a more serious point. The hon. Member went into what is called the dark area—a portion of Clare, a portion of Limerick, and a portion of Kerry. The point of his attack was that the Clare juries at the Spring and Summer Assizes did not convict. Well, that does not disclose any new or surprising state of things, or any deteriora-

tion in the state of Clare. What the hon. Member tried to make out was that these counties have deteriorated since the withdrawal of the Crimes Act. I have never concealed for a moment how bad I think the state of the County Clare, and how bad for a short time I thought was a portion of Limerick and a portion of Kerry. I will tell the hon. Member something which is extremely inconvenient for his proposition, but which, in spite of Party feeling, I think the Committee will be glad to hear. I received yesterday, not for the purpose of this Debate, but in the ordinary course, the Reports of the Divisional Commissioners and the other Police Authorities in the South-Western Division, and the hon. Member and the Committee ought to be glad to hear that there is a marked, a steady, and apparently a durable improvement going on.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, his complaint was that Clare was in the hands of secret societies, and that the right hon. Gentleman knew it.

MR. J. MORLEY: I know nothing of the kind. These officers, who must know what they are speaking of, and who have no desire to make a case for one side or the other, report that there is a complete absence of agitation of any sort. With regard to the County of Clare, they reported that in Ennis and Corofin there is a great improvement; that there is a marked improvement in the district of Tulla; and, taking the county as a whole, these authorities have stated that its improvement is gradual and promises to be steady. A still more satisfactory Report is returned from Limerick. They report that the County of Limerick is peaceable, and that the districts of Abbeyfeale and Newcastle, which are in the dark area, are now as tranquil as any other part of the county. They also report as regards the County Kerry that there is a marked improvement. That, surely, is a sufficient answer to the hon. Member's contention. Reference has been made to the general figures as to agrarian crime all over Ireland. What are those figures? The agrarian outrages, exclusive of threatening letters and notices, from August 22, 1892, to August 23, 1893, numbered 207, against 237 in the corresponding period from 1891 to 1892, and if we include threatening letters and notices, then the total number of agrarian

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outrages for the period from August, 1892, to August, 1893, is 395, as against 437 for the period from August, 1891, to August, 1892. I do not say that it is a marvellous improvement, but from one cause or another a perceptible improvement has taken place in that particular class of crime. The hon. Member has referred to the case of Mr. Moloney, whose life was attempted in a particularly deliberate and cold-blooded manner in the County of Clare. Mr. Moloney was disabled by the wound he received from following his profession of a solicitor, and from attending to his duties as Registrar of Petty Sessions. I have examined into Mr. Moloney's application very carefully, and I am glad to be able to say that, though the Treasury think it will not be proper to place it upon this Vote, there are other resources from which a small sum—£50 I think the hon. Member mentioned—will be paid to satisfy Mr. Moloney's claim. The hon. Member then referred to the alleged persecution of Protestants by Catholics at Myross. I have examined very minutely into the affair; and though the hon. Member's account of the incidents of this alleged persecution does not in all minute particulars correspond with my information, there have been no doubt one or two acts of violence, not of a very serious kind, which appear to have arisen from a religious quarrel. The only point of difference between the hon. Member and myself is as to the particular place where a police hut ought to be erected in the neighbourhood. If the authorities on the spot think it desirable that the hut should be erected at the place mentioned by the hon. Member, then that course will be adopted. With regard to the question of the Magistrates, I, of course, am not responsible for what the Magistrates do, nor for those whom the Lord Chancellor in his discretion may appoint. At the same time, I am perfectly prepared to defend all that the Lord Chancellor has done in this matter. The Lord Chancellor has a most difficult and a most invidious task, and he has devoted to it an amount of labour which I am sure far exceeds all his judicial labours. I know this—that the Lord Chancellor has exercised his discretion with the desire to appoint no one on the Bench, whoever may be his sponsors, whose appointment cannot be fully and

amply justified upon the floor of this House. With regard to the case of Mr. O'Byrne, a Justice of the Peace in West Meath, I will inquire into the circumstances which the hon. Member has alleged. I am not sure, listening very carefully to what the hon. Member has said, that, even if all he has alleged were true, he has alleged anything with which it is my duty to interfere—but the case, even as it stands, marks no failure in the administrative vigilance of the present Irish Government. In the case of the appointment of the owners of licensed premises as Magistrates, the hon. Member wishes me to promise that if any publican is made a Justice of the Peace a bargain shall be made with him that he shall not adjudicate in licensing questions. The hon. Member says the Liberal Party are particularly bound to look into this matter.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, he had withdrawn that.

MR. J. MORLEY: I am glad the hon. Member withdraws it. He must have forgotten, when he made that remark, that he told his temperance friends in England that, bitterly and deeply though he regretted it, from the Liberal Party alone they had anything to expect in the way of temperance reforms, so that the hon. Member has no alternative but to withdraw the remark. I cannot answer the hon. Member upon the point which he has raised off-hand, but I think he will find that with one exception my right hon. and learned Friend the Lord Chancellor has not made a single publican a County Magistrate.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: But he has.

MR. J. MORLEY: I believe there is one exception, and that is the case of a gentleman who, though holding licensed premises, chances to be Chairman of the Town Commission. I believe my right hon. and learned Friend has not yet committed himself on the matter of principle, but, as a matter of fact, and as testing the accuracy of his statement, the case is as I have just stated it. As to the subject of the Donegal cess, I believe the hon. Member has been misinformed, because the difficulties have not arisen in the slightest degree in connection with the Gweedore case. But I hope to have information on this subject later on.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary has

referred to Motions for Adjournment from time to time during the last seven months on Irish affairs as if they were something exceptional. As far as my recollection carries me, I think that during that time the right hon. Gentleman has been peculiarly fortunate in his immunity from criticism and attack; but I do not suppose that this immunity will, even by himself, be wholly attributed to the individual merits of his administration. I have no wish to utter a single ill-considered word against his administration, but there are circumstances outside the question of the administration of Ireland which may have had no small effect on the character of the Debates in this House touching the administration of the right hon. Gentleman. With regard to the suppression of meetings, I am the last person to suggest that in any of the 21 cases referred to the right hon. Gentleman's interference was otherwise than justified. The right hon. Gentleman does not make any reply to the perfectly fair *tu quoque* argument of my hon. Friend as to the kind of measure meted out to the late Irish Administration when they also interfered with or suppressed public meetings in Ireland. But I am the last person to desire to drag up ancient controversies; and if the right hon. Gentleman will only consent to govern Ireland according to the principles that every responsible Government has held to be necessary, I shall not make his task more difficult by turning up speeches of his Colleagues to see whether any of their utterances are inconsistent with the course they and their Government are now pursuing. I do not profess to recollect the facts connected with my own suppression of a meeting in Mayo, but I am convinced that if the right hon. Gentleman will consult his officials, or even my own public defence—and I suppose the case was debated in this House—ample proof would be afforded that under whatever disguise the meeting was brought together, it was, in fact, a meeting either for the intimidation of individuals or for the promotion of some illegal conspiracy. Either of these conditions intervening, the Executive Government were bound to interfere with or suppress the meeting. I throw out that challenge without having in my mind the details. This I know—that never in the whole course of

the time I was responsible for the government of Ireland did it ever enter into my head to suppress a meeting called *bonâ fide* for the purpose of discussing any political matter whatever.

MR. MAC NEILL: Mitchelstown.

An hon. MEMBER: Yes; "remember Mitchelstown!"

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Never did I do so, and never would I commend it. The Committee knows well enough that if a Nationalist Member of Parliament is anxious to throw himself into these illegal transactions it is perfectly easy for him to cover his procedure by describing a meeting called to promote illegal objects by the name of a political gathering of his constituents. But no Nationalist Member is anxious to give the right hon. Gentleman trouble. No Nationalist Member is likely to put him in the embarrassing position of having to suppress a meeting in which that Member proposes to take an active part; but I think well enough of the right hon. Gentleman to believe that under such difficult circumstances his courage would not fail him, and that he would carry out consistently and to the end the principles which he has just avowed, and would suppress any meeting, called under whatever auspices, which he was convinced was of an illegal character. Reference has been made to the Myross case, in which there was something in the nature of religious persecution in a particular part of Galway. I do not think that anyone will complain of the action the right hon. Gentleman has taken in the matter, and I only allude to it because I think it has an important bearing on the statement I have constantly heard made inside and outside the House, that the religious differences are never of that character which lead to breaches of the peace or persecution of small bodies of persons living amongst those of a different religious persuasion. I do not wish to exaggerate the part which religious differences play in social life in Ireland. I agree with those who think that in large parts of the country the Roman Catholic priesthood themselves would be the first to deprecate any illegal action against any of their fellow-subjects because they happen to be Protestants; but in the history of Ireland it is impossible to unravel the

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tangled threads of religious difference. We might go back for the last three centuries, and take crisis after crisis, and it would be impossible to discover how much has been due to political and how much to religious differences. The religious question is there as an operative and important factor in Irish politics, and when it comes to the surface, as in this case, it should give pause to those who are ready to conclude that that chapter, at all events, of the unhappy past has been finally turned over, never to be re-opened. As to Mr. O'Byrne, he appears to have used his power as a Poor Law Guardian very unfairly, and his power as a Magistrate to assist him in defeating his creditors. It appears to be a scandalous case, and a most shocking violation of the rules which should guide the administration of justice. I will not enter into a question which the Chairman has ruled to be beyond our competence, and I will only make this remark: My hon. Friend was, undoubtedly, justified in calling attention to the fact that this breaker of the law was himself a Magistrate, and I am sure that hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway, who, I thought very unfairly, tried to close the mouth of my hon. Friend, must have forgotten the persistence with which they dragged up certain cases when I was Chief Secretary—cases in which a certain section of Magistrates, and in which the fact that they were Magistrates, was an endless topic of criticism.

MR. MAC NEILL: Captain Seagrave.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am not thinking of him; I am thinking of other cases. The details are not present to my mind, but I am sure the memories of hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway will carry them back to many cases in which the Magistrates were, or were supposed to be, interested in proceedings not creditable to the Bench. Mr. Drummond is often held up as an exemplar in his administration of Ireland; but, in the first place, he established the Irish Constabulary; and, in the second place, he instituted Resident Magistrates. I hope the case of Mr. O'Byrne will remind hon. Members that Mr. Drummond thought that in a country like Ireland justice could not more properly be administered by a Stipendiary than by an Unpaid

Magistracy. If Magistrates are to act in the way which Mr. O'Byrne is alleged to have done, the last state of Ireland will become worse than the first. I now come to the more important part of the case brought forward by my hon. Friend—namely, the measures taken by the Government for putting down agrarian offences. I am not going to quarrel over the comparative quiescence of Ireland under this Government or under the last, nor do I think it of great importance whether agrarian crime has diminished to the extent mentioned by the right hon. Gentleman. Everybody must rejoice that crime has diminished, but that is not the root of the matter. The condition of Ireland at any time is due undoubtedly, in part, to the manner in which the Criminal Law is administered, and the success with which prosecutions are carried out; but an enormous number of other circumstances come into play, and, in the long run, contribute their quota to the general result; and till we can distinguish between one cause and another, it is impossible to pronounce a final verdict as to how far the diminution of crime is due to the measures by any Government whatever. The right hon. Gentleman, as he was justified in doing, quoted statistics of agrarian crime, excluding and including threatening letters, but he has nothing to say of the two important classes of moonlighting and grave intimidation, which show not a diminution, but an actual increase during the 12 months the right hon. Gentleman has been in Office. If that is so—and it is not disputed by the Government—it must largely qualify, if not altogether destroy, the satisfaction we should otherwise feel at the diminution from 237 to 207 of the total number of agrarian crimes during the past year. Let us consider under what circumstances this diminution, such as it is, occurred—this diminution of all the offences combined, with an increase in two of the most serious classes of cases. It has occurred, it seems to me, under circumstances eminently favourable to the preservation of peace in Ireland, and which may not occur in future years. There are two circumstances especially which must have had a very great effect upon the condition of Ireland. One is the excellence of the harvest. Ireland has been blessed this year with an amount of material pro-

sperity such as she has not had, as far as my memory goes, for 20 years. I do not think she has enjoyed such prosperity since 1876 or 1877. We all know that agrarian offences partly arise out of agrarian difficulties between landlords and tenants, and unquestionably rich harvests and great prosperity of the farming interests must have the effect it always has had of diminishing the friction between landlords and tenants, and mitigating, or altogether removing, many of the causes of agrarian crime in Ireland. That is a circumstance which may not be repeated next year. The other circumstance is political. Everybody knows—and it is really not denied—that much of the difficulty of governing Ireland has been produced by Organisations which are in their essence political, and it is also a matter of notoriety that these Organisations have in many cases had as their most powerful instruments the Catholic curates, and in some cases the Catholic priests, of rural districts. Well, Sir, these great forces which certainly have not always been exerted in the cause of public order are now on the side of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. J. Morley). It is their interest and their business to make his task easier. They know as well as we know in this House that if his administration were to be a failure it would be a serious blow at the ulterior objects which they all have in view, and, therefore, they are bound by every motive of policy and every motive of gratitude to the present Government to make the task of the right hon. Gentleman as easy as possible. I confess that, under these circumstances, a diminution of 237 to 207, combined as it is with an increase in two of the most serious forms of crime, is as satisfactory as we might have hoped it would be. Such as it is, I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman and the House upon it, and I earnestly hope that there will be a continuance of the relative smallness of the amount of crime which now prevails in Ireland, and even a still further diminution in future years. My hon. Friend (Mr. T. W. Russell) began his speech by pointing out that out of 26 cases of agrarian crime in Clare, Kerry, and Limerick there was either an acquittal or disagreement in 25. The right hon. Gentleman, while not denying, as he cannot

deny, this fact, says, in effect—"Oh, why should I trouble my head about that? The state of Ireland is not worse than it was; in fact, it is better." [Mr. J. MORLEY was understood to dissent.] At all events, it causes him no anxiety. If the right hon. Gentleman did not say that, he said nothing. He gave an absolute go-by to the argument of the hon. Gentleman, and never attempted to reply at all. I thought the right hon. Gentleman entirely mistook the position taken up by my hon. Friend. I should not think it a conclusive argument were agrarian crime diminished by one-half, as long as I saw the agrarian criminal on every occasion get off scot-free. What should we think in London if, from causes quite outside the administration of the law, crime were to diminish, while, at the same time, the administration of justice were to become an absolute farce? Should we say—"Why bother our heads that jurymen will not convict, or that people are afraid to come forward and give evidence when the general attitude of the Metropolis is improving"? Should we say that this was a sufficient reason for leaving the instrument of the law unsharpened in our hands? The Home Secretary, if he used an argument so ludicrous as that, would not remain Home Secretary for 24 hours. The first duty thrown on every Government is to see that the administration of the law is carried out, that criminals are brought to trial, and that when the trials take place justice is done. Is that primary duty being exercised by the Government in Ireland? and if it is not being exercised by them, why not? If the Government could come forward and say—"This is a most unfortunate circumstance; but we cannot help it, as there is no power by which this state of things can be remedied," the Executive would have to be absolved from blame. New laws might have to be passed, but the Executive would have an excuse which would be regarded as sufficient. But that is not the position of the Government. The Government know perfectly well they have at their command facts which conclusively prove—and the figures given by my hon. Friend tend to prove it—that if only the Government will give change of venue, this shocking legal scandal will, at all events, be largely diminished. That it will come to an end is not, I am

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afraid, at all likely as long as there is such great difficulty as unfortunately exists in parts of Ireland in obtaining evidence. But the difficulty which arises from the intimidation of juries and from local circumstances affecting the verdicts of juries would be almost entirely removed by change of venue, and I have no doubt we might anticipate that a not inconsiderable portion of the guilty men brought to trial would be also brought to justice. The right hon. Gentleman promised, when this question was last raised, that he would carefully watch the course of events in Ireland, and that he would not be restrained either by anything he had said, or by anything which hon. Gentlemen opposite might say, from putting in force the full power of the law should the necessity for so doing be made clear. I appeal to the Committee whether the facts brought forward by my hon. Friend, and not traversed or contradicted for a moment by the Chief Secretary, are not sufficient to show that the clauses in the Crimes Act should be again put in force? The Government surely do not want more time. The right hon. Gentleman has now been in Office for a year and a few weeks. He has been able to study the course of justice at the Summer and the Winter Assizes, and has been able to see how it is possible or not to get verdicts in the localities where the crimes are committed. Unless he gets up and says experience proves that verdicts can be obtained, surely an immense and overwhelming responsibility rests upon him, and those who support him, for refusing to proclaim those districts under the Change of Venue Clauses of the Crimes Act, and thus bringing this judicial scandal to an end. I hope the Committee will believe me when I say that I do not make this request in any Party sense or for any Party object. I do not ask the right hon. Gentleman to do anything which I think he will feel impossible or even difficult. I do not ask him to deal with illegal conspiracy, or to renew those clauses of the Crimes Act which give increased powers of summary jurisdiction; I ask him only to make that an effective part of the law in Ireland which, in some nominal sense, is already part of the law there, which is at the present moment the law in Scotland, and which

would be put in force in England in 24 hours if the same state of things existed in England. I do say that if after the unwearying and unbroken experience of a year—all tending to support the accumulated experience of previous Administrations in Ireland—the right hon. Gentleman still persists in allowing men time after time to be brought up, who are undoubtedly guilty, but whom no jury will convict, the responsibility will rest upon him for the maladministration of that justice of which he should be the first defender, and which, I am sure on reflection, will be heavier than in his reflective moments he would desire.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. J. MORLEY, Newcastle-upon-Tyne): The right hon. Gentleman rather surprised me by recurring to the subject of the change of venue after having not long ago wound up a speech in this House with a very remarkable declaration the sincerity of which I did not doubt at the time and do not doubt now. The right hon. Gentleman wound up that speech by imploring me, if I should discover that it was impossible to get convictions in cases where clearly convictions ought to be obtained, that I should not scruple to restore the clauses giving effect to change of venue. He added that he, for one, would never make it a topic of Parliamentary protest if I did so. That has been in my mind ever since; but what surprises me is that the right hon. Gentleman should have made the same kind of declaration now, and the same kind of appeal, when, as far as I know, nothing new has happened.

MR. JACKSON (Leeds, N.): Another Assize has been held.

MR. J. MORLEY: No, I beg pardon. The Summer Assizes were in full course when that declaration was made.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Were in course, but were not finished.

MR. J. MORLEY: This is not a point on which I should be likely to be mistaken. I submit, and I insist, that there has been no change since that powerful appeal was made to me by the right hon. Gentleman, calling upon me to re-consider the attitude we have taken up in reference to change of venue. The facts mentioned by the hon. Member (Mr. T. W. Russell) are an old story. The pledge I gave to the House was that if, as the right hon. Gentleman now

says, I found that convictions, where convictions were desirable and important, could not be obtained without change of venue, no fear of being confronted with language I had used in former days about exceptional legislation would prevent my taking up that weapon again. Why, then, is that appeal repeated when, so far from circumstances making it desirable for us to re-consider the question, our experience is the other way? I will not dwell on the fact that the next Assizes are the Winter Assizes, when, as the right hon. Gentleman is aware, there is an actual change of venue; but I say that, under those circumstances, the question does not press at all. I must ask why at the moment when I am able to inform the Committee that, in the opinion of the responsible authority there is a marked and steady improvement in the only disturbed part of Ireland, and the only part where this difficulty of obtaining a conviction is really an important fact—why, at this moment, I should be reproached with having dropped the power of change of venue, and again appealed to to renew that power?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I was perhaps labouring under a mistake when I spoke, although I rather think not. I did not recall the precise date of the former discussion, but I certainly thought it took place early in the course of the Summer Assizes. The remark I intended to have made was that there was much of the Summer Assizes still to run, and I hoped the right hon. Gentleman would consider what the result of the Assizes were, and on that result would base any policy which circumstances might seem to require. When we reached the Debate this evening, I thought we had behind us what was never behind us before—namely, the record of the whole of the trials which had taken place. I thought that if, on looking back and forming our judgment, we found that the indications given by the earlier trials were fully borne out by the later trials, it was impossible to hope that justice would ever be done without change of venue in the three counties in question. The right hon. Gentleman seems to take a different view, and to think that he ought to be given from now to the next Spring Assizes to make up his mind on the question. I do not desire to press him

in the least unduly on the point; and as long as I understand that it is still in his mind, and that he does not entirely shut the door, I will not press the matter further.

*MR. BARTON (Armagh, Mid) should like to bring before the attention of the Committee some points which had not been brought before the House as yet, and as to which the Chief Secretary might avail himself of the opportunity of giving an explanation. The first of these was the policy of the Lord Lieutenant in accepting or refusing addresses. The action of Lord Houghton had created a great deal of dissatisfaction and misunderstanding among certain sections of the community in Ireland which the Chief Secretary might be able to clear up, and it would constitute a precedent for future Lords Lieutenant. Almost the only opportunities the Lord Lieutenant had of coming into touch with the people—outside the Court circle—were on these occasions when he visited different towns, and received deputations from different Bodies. A distinction had been sought to be drawn between Dublin and other towns. There was no distinction, except that in Dublin a large number of communities and societies had their headquarters; otherwise the matter was the same. Former Liberal Lords Lieutenant had always been approached by Conservative or Unionist Bodies; there had been no distinction of any kind, and invariably the Lord Lieutenant had received addresses from political opponents; and if not always agreeing with them, had treated them with courteous consideration. What occurred on this occasion? It might be right or it might be wrong, but it was quite unprecedented, and it was unequal treatment of the different sections of the community. When the Lord Lieutenant arrived in Dublin many Bodies approached him with addresses, including the Chamber of Commerce of Dublin and the Methodist Community in Ireland, through their Representative Body. Nobody could say these two latter addresses were not loyal and respectful in tone, but they were refused on the ground that they each contained a passage declaring the maintenance of the Legislative Union to be essential—

Mr. J. Morley

*THE CHAIRMAN (interposing) observed that the hon. and learned Member seemed to be raising a matter which was personal to the Lord Lieutenant, and, therefore, could not be properly discussed upon the Vote for the salary of the Chief Secretary.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: On the point of Order, at an earlier period of the Session I consulted the authorities of the House as to the—[*Cries of "Order!"*]

MR. SEXTON (Kerry, N.): I rise to Order. Surely, Sir, you will not permit an attempt by the hon. Member to overbear the Chair by referring to other authorities when you are the sole authority.

*THE CHAIRMAN: If the hon. Gentleman rises to a point of Order he can make it.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: All I was going to say was this: At an earlier period of the Session I intended to raise this question. I did what was natural under the circumstances, and consulted the authorities of the House as to the proper method, and they informed me I could do it on this Vote and not on any other.

MR. SEXTON: I submit that is an unjustifiable attempt to bring the opinion of other authorities to bear upon you in the sphere of Committee of Supply, where you are the sole authority.

*MR. BARTON, on the point of Order, asked to be allowed to say that this matter was distinctly discussed in the House of Lords, when Lord Kimberley stated that Lord Houghton did not come there to answer for himself, and that it was better that his action should be defended by the Chief Secretary in the House of Commons and by his Colleagues in the House of Lords. The Chief Secretary was Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, and the latter acted, presumably, upon his advice.

*THE CHAIRMAN: That is the opinion of Lord Kimberley, which is doubtless correct, so far as the House of Lords is concerned. He gave no opinion with regard to Committee of Supply. The question here is, what is open to the hon. Member in Committee of Supply? I pointed out that it is not open to him to challenge this personal action of the Lord Lieutenant as apart from the Chief Secretary. On the other hand, if it is a matter upon which the Lord Lieutenant has been

advised by the Chief Secretary, of course then it is open.

*MR. BARTON should assume the Lord Lieutenant acted on the advice of the Chief Secretary, and he did not think the right hon. Gentleman would deny this or refuse to accept responsibility. What was the fact about these addresses? In the first place, they were loyal and respectful in their tone, and no fault could be found with them except for this particular paragraph to which he had alluded; and, secondly, similar addresses had been presented by the same Bodies to Lord Spencer and Lord Aberdeen; but of course the one to Lord Spencer had no reference to Home Rule, whilst the one to Lord Aberdeen had.

MR. SEXTON, rising to Order, asked whether an act done by the Lord Lieutenant, as the Representative of the Queen, was an act for which the Chief Secretary should be called upon to answer.

THE CHAIRMAN thought not.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR respectfully submitted that if it were shown that the Lord Lieutenant had acted upon the advice of the Chief Secretary as he had done here, the discussion of his conduct would be in Order.

*THE CHAIRMAN said, that the hon. and learned Member must first show that the Chief Secretary advised the Lord Lieutenant.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, he understood that the Chief Secretary did not deny responsibility in this matter.

MR. J. MORLEY: I am not sure this ought to be stated, but I might say that the action of the Lord Lieutenant in this particular matter was taken by Lord Houghton personally as the Representative of the Queen. In stating this, however, I do not wish to dissociate myself in any way from Lord Houghton.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR desired to point out that, as the Lord Lieutenant's salary was not upon the Estimates, the only way of dealing with such matters as that now raised was to discuss them upon the salary of the Chief Secretary, who was the adviser of the Lord Lieutenant. What the Lord Lieutenant did as representing Her Majesty he must be taken to do upon the advice of his Chief Secretary.

MR. J. MORLEY : On the point of Order, Mr. Mellor, the right hon. Gentleman could not have the intention of informing the Committee that the Lord Lieutenant can do no act on his own personal responsibility. He is unlike the Sovereign in that particular. The Sovereign can do no act for which the Minister is not responsible, but I have never understood myself—the right hon. Gentleman knows more about the system than I do—that there are not some acts which the Lord Lieutenant cannot do himself.

***THE CHAIRMAN :** I think that is so. There are certain acts which the Lord Lieutenant does apart altogether from the Chief Secretary, but in Committee of Supply you can only criticise those acts of the Lord Lieutenant which he has done upon the advice of the Chief Secretary, as then the Chief Secretary is responsible for his advice, and it is, therefore, in order in such a case to move to reduce his salary. The hon. and learned Gentleman is not, therefore, in Order.

MR. MACARTNEY : On the point of Order—

THE CHAIRMAN : No, I cannot allow my ruling to be discussed.

MR. MACARTNEY : I have not stated my point of Order.

THE CHAIRMAN : I have already stated my decision, and, having decided the matter, there is an end to it.

***MR. BARTON** should certainly bow to the Chairman's ruling. If he had been allowed to proceed, he should have shown that his very point of complaint was that the Lord Lieutenant did not in this case act as representing Her Majesty, but as representing a Party. There was another matter to which he should certainly direct the attention of the Chief Secretary, which the right hon. Gentleman left in a very unsatisfactory condition when he last referred to it. He alluded to the exercise of the dispensing power in Ireland in the execution of civil processes and the charges of the right hon. Gentleman made against the late Government when he was defending himself on that point. Early in his term of Office the Chief Secretary issued a Circular forbidding police protection for the execution of the writs of the Superior Court at night. This was challenged by the Sheriffs as illegal, and ultimately the matter came to trial in the

Queen's Bench in Dublin, in a case in which the protection had been refused at night in pursuance of this Order. The Queen's Bench unanimously ruled that the Order of the Chief Secretary was quite illegal; that he had no power to do anything of the kind, and that he had, in fact, rendered himself amenable to the Criminal Law, and was liable to be tried by indictment, and to have a criminal information issued against him. The Chief Secretary had ever since declined to admit the correctness of that Judgment, and had intimated that he contemplated an appeal, on behalf of the Government, to the House of Lords, or legislation to alter the state of the law, but he had never given any explanation as to how this matter arose. It was said in the House of Lords that this was not an exercise of the dispensing power, and he supposed the argument of the Chief Secretary was that the dispensing power was not exercised when it was exercised under colour of the law, or when the Chief Secretary was acting under the advice of his legal advisers. But every exercise of the dispensing power had always been under colour of the law, and on the advice of the Law Officers, and sometimes even with the approval of the Judges. What did the Chief Secretary do in the House when brought face to face with the Judgment of the Queen's Bench? He stated in a speech on the 2nd February that out of 1,215 cases which arose during the administration of the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. A. J. Balfour), in which police protection was afforded for seizures at night, 712 were seizures under civil bill decrees. That was to say, that 712 statutable misdemeanours were aided and abetted by the police, and then he said that these acts were just as unlawful as any cattle lifting. He thought no Member of the House would recollect an instance where any Head of a Department had made a charge against his Predecessors in Office of anything approaching this character. But here was a charge not only against his Predecessors in Office, but also against the police in Ireland, the Sheriffs, and their subordinates, that he had been guilty of 712 statutable misdemeanours which were as unlawful as cattle lifting, for which, of course, they ought to be prosecuted, and which was a grave reflection upon them. This matter was

not merely a reflection upon the late Government, but, as was pointed out in a letter sent to the Press by the Sub-Sheriff of the County of Waterford, charges of this kind made by the Chief Secretary raised an additional incitement to the classes of disorder in Ireland, and made the administration of the law more difficult. Subsequently, the Chief Secretary told them he had made a mistake in the figures, and that there were only 66 cases on which he relied. Finally, the right hon. Gentleman only produced four, and he believed that not a single one of these had been substantiated, and that there was no foundation for the charge at all. He would really ask the Chief Secretary now, after he had had many months to consider the matter, Did he adhere to his statement that these statutable misdemeanours were committed, and these breaches of the law committed, by the officials of the late Government? This was most a serious matter; and although the charge was entirely groundless, it had never been withdrawn. Whilst he acknowledged the Chief Secretary had always treated his political opponents in that House with courtesy and consideration, there was one set of persons in Ireland to whom he had not extended the same treatment. He drew attention to the matter not on personal grounds, but because it was calculated to weaken and render more difficult the administration of the law in Ireland. He alluded to the Judges, in speaking of whom he believed the Chief Secretary had departed from the general rule of courtesy he had observed in his conduct of his Office. He had to mention the case of Judge Kelly, the County Court Judge of Clare. On the right hon. Gentleman's own admission, the state of Clare was a disgrace to Ireland, and it was, therefore, especially necessary that nothing should be said reflecting upon, or reducing the dignity and importance of, the County Court Judge of that county. What turned out to be a garbled and incorrect report of the observations of the learned Judge in charging the Grand Jury appeared in a local newspaper mixed up with his observations on a motion for the adjournment of certain cases. The main fact which the Judge called attention to was the uselessness of trying prisoners in County Clare—a fact which the Member for South Tyrone had made

perfectly clear that evening. The right hon. Gentleman was questioned about the words of the Judge by hon. Members below the Gangway, and asked if they met with his approval. His reply was that if such words were to be used by an English Judge he should consider them highly unbecoming. That was a clear reflection on the County Court Judge of Clare, for the words he was reported to have used, the language of which was not correctly reported, but which, in so far as they mentioned any fact, were strictly correct. Had the Chief Secretary asked the learned Judge for any explanation of the words before he made this statement? He had not. He really thought they were entitled to some explanation from the right hon. Gentleman on this subject. He (Mr. Barton) had been for many years at the Bar, and he had never heard a word reflecting on the impartiality of this Judge, who was himself a Catholic and a Liberal, appointed by the present Prime Minister. Apart from the personal pain the Chief Secretary's statement might have caused Mr. Kelly, it was a highly impolitic thing that anything should be said without the greatest care and inquiry reflecting on a County Court Judge, who had more to do with the administration of the law in Clare than even the Judges of Assize. It was, therefore, very important that nothing should be said at all calculated to bring him into disrespect or weaken his authority, and he thought the Chief Secretary would feel that the Judge might fairly complain. Again, coming to the Judges of the Superior Courts, the right hon. Gentleman, referring to some observations of Chief Justice O'Brien, had said, in answer to a question in that House, that an English Judge would not make occasions of this kind an opportunity of criticising the Executive Government. With all respect to the right hon. Gentleman, he believed an English Judge would; and he was certain he ought, if it was necessary to do so. He ventured to think that if official documents came before an English Judge, to which he had reason to make references in the interests of justice, he would not be deterred from doing so because these references might reflect on the Executive. The Chief Secretary then went on to say—

"If he chanced to be in politics opposed to the Executive, he was sure the English Judge would be doubly careful."

He respected the Irish Judges; he knew how unjustly these Judges were traduced, and how easy it was to gain a cheer at their expense in the House of Commons; and as the Chief Secretary was not a man who closed his mind to new impressions, he believed that before his term of Office was concluded the right hon. Gentleman would see how unfair and how unjustifiable were these attacks on the Irish Judges. He would say, in reply to the Chief Secretary, that no Minister should make Question time in the House of Commons the opportunity of attacking the Judges in Ireland; and he would add that when a Judge in the discharge of his duty had occasion to reflect on acts of the Executive, the right hon. Gentleman should be doubly careful in referring to them. It must be remembered that upon the Judges the Chief Secretary would have to rely for the vindication of the law in times of disorder.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Belfast, W.) said, he wished to take that opportunity of protesting against the doctrine recently laid down by the Chief Secretary that a Return containing information desired by Members of the House ought to be withheld, as it might militate against some persons in Ireland. That doctrine particularly came home to him, for he had frequently asked for information which he fairly thought he was entitled to receive, but which he did not receive because of this doctrine of the Chief Secretary. They were now face to face with a state of things in Ireland that he had often prophesied would come—a state of things under which apparent quietness and order would exist because crime had been effective in doing its work of terrorism and intimidation. The recent Assizes in Ireland had clearly shown that crime might be committed with absolute impunity. They had it from the Chief Secretary the other day, in answer to a question, that the trials of all the cases of agrarian crime at the recent Assizes had resulted in the criminals getting off scot-free. He was entitled to ask for the particulars of these cases, in order that hon. Members might understand the real condition of affairs, in Ireland, and that it was no answer to say when he asked for these particulars that

such information would affect some people in Ireland. There might be a reason why the right hon. Gentleman might not furnish the names of the persons tried, and he did not want those names, but there could be no reason whatever for objecting to the giving of the details of the crimes tried at these Assizes. The Chief Secretary had told him that these were facts he could make out for himself. He had been put to considerable trouble in searching through the Irish newspapers for this information, which he did not suppose was complete, in order that he might understand Ireland as the Chief Secretary with the official source of information at his disposal understood it. He thought the right hon. Gentleman might fairly have given him the information he had asked for: the information was at the hands of the officials of the Irish Office, and the Return would have been prepared in a few minutes. He again ventured to ask the Chief Secretary for this information, and he urged upon him that it was information which it was desirable that the House should have in its possession.

MR. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.) said, the Chief Secretary had urged that nothing had occurred since the last Debate in July on the question of change of venue to give any foundation for a further demand for a declaration of policy. But he would remind the right hon. Gentleman that the position he took up on the former occasion was that when the Assizes were over and the necessary information was accessible he would be prepared to meet any criticism on the subject. While he congratulated the right hon. Gentleman on the fact that crime had diminished, he pointed out that punishment had not been effective in any single instance where the crime had been the result of either agrarian or political feeling. While he congratulated the Chief Secretary that crime of a general character had diminished in Ireland, cases of an agrarian or political character were unaffected. As far as the Chief Secretary could consistently go he had acted since he had been in Office in conformity with the views of what were called "the people of Ireland" as to the administration of the country. He began by dismissing some capable officials (Colonel Turner, for

Mr. Barton

instance), and then he proceeded to release several prisoners—his second step in pandering to so-called public opinion in Ireland. Then the Government had acceded to the demand for increasing the Magistracy out of all regard to the necessity of the case by appointing to the Bench men whose only qualifications seemed to be that they belonged to one religious creed; and, lastly, he had lost few opportunities in this House of flouting anybody concerned in the administration of justice to get a little popular applause.

MR. J. MORLEY : Oh, oh !

MR. MACARTNEY said, he considered that the result of the administration of justice, and the fact that in no single case at the last Assizes were convictions obtained in agrarian cases, was a grave one requiring serious consideration. But this failure to obtain convictions was not confined to agrarian cases. It had extended to cases connected with the exercise by Irishmen of their civil rights when the exercise of those rights conflicted with popular political opinion. For instance, there was the case of Father Kelly, of Dromore West, Sligo. Father Kelly made himself notorious in his efforts to smother the legal expression by some of his parishioners of their opinions in connection with a Poor Law Guardian's election. Nothing could be more unhappy than the lot of an Irishman who wished to vote in opposition to the political opinions of his parish priest. If he did it by open voting he was intimidated by a crowd headed by a priest, and if he voted by ballot he was told there was nothing but fire to his heels and toes for him in another world. In this election there were two candidates, a Nationalist and a Unionist—a gentleman who had the additional crime of being a landed proprietor. It was bruited about that a certain number of tenants of Mr. Ormsby, the Unionist candidate, were going to vote for him in preference to the Nationalist candidate. Before the polling day the Constabulary distributed voting papers among the electors qualified; and as it was well known that intimidation of some kind would be used on these tenants of Mr. Ormsby, the District Inspector sent out with the ordinary constable a force of 10 men. On the 18th March Father Kelly met the District Inspector

and told him there would be opposition to these voters obtaining their votes and marking them with the name of the candidate they favoured, and the constables had the greatest difficulty in serving the voting papers on these unfortunate ratepayers. In some instances they failed altogether. Voting papers were taken by force from several of the electors, and in one or two cases physical assaults were committed, for which persons were afterwards tried. Father Kelly and several others were returned for trial, charged with riot and unlawful assembly in connection with this election. The jury—though this was not an agrarian case, and there were no rights of an injured tenantry to protect—acquitted Father Kelly and seven others; and on the following day, when four men were charged with assaulting the voters, they were acquitted also. It was perfectly evident that the spirit of agrarian agitation still existed, and could not be controlled by those assisting the Chief Secretary in preserving the peace. Where there was violent partisanship or political feeling influencing the general body of the populace, as the results of the late Assizes in Clare showed, it was absolutely impossible to say that juries would do their duty, or that justice would not be interfered with, whether from agrarian motives or the absolute determination of the majority to take away from the minority their civil rights. Never in the recent history of Ireland had there been a more flagrant attempt than that of Father Kelly and his associates to deprive their fellow-citizens of the just exercise of their civil rights. If parallel cases of this kind occurred again, or agrarian outrages continued, he appealed to the Chief Secretary to take advantage of the further powers which he possessed of strengthening the administration of the law in Ireland.

MR. DANE (Fermanagh, N.) inquired what was the position occupied by Sir West Ridgeway since his return from Tangiers? Was he still Under Secretary, or what was to be his future position? He would have rejoiced to think that the state of Ireland had improved, but his personal knowledge and the information that reached him left no doubt on his mind that there had been no such improvement. The condition of what was called the dark area was one which at the

present time very seriously exercised the minds of people who had to live in those districts. As the hon. Member for Antrim stated, the Unionists had been in hopes, from what the right hon. Gentleman had said in July last, that some steps would have been taken by him, having regard to the results of the two last Assizes, to improve the condition of those localities. In pursuance of a compact entered into by the Government with the Nationalist Members, they deprived themselves of the powers they had under the Act of 1887. The result of that action was that at the subsequent Assizes in the disturbed counties the jurors in every case either acquitted the prisoners or failed to agree. At the last Assizes 26 cases were tried. In 19 cases, notwithstanding the strong evidence against the prisoners, the jury gave a verdict of acquittal; in six cases they failed to agree, and one case was adjourned. He would like to know what the right hon. Gentleman intended to do with reference to those seven cases? Again, he failed to understand that the right hon. Gentleman had taken any steps with regard to the resolution passed at the meeting of Resident Magistrates and Local Justices in Clare, which called upon the Government in strong but respectful language to take steps, either by the powers they already possessed or by fresh legislation, to put down acts that were a disgrace to any civilised community. A copy of it was sent to the right hon. Gentleman and was duly acknowledged, but no action was taken by the Government with reference to it. In the Debate last March on the venue question the Chief Secretary stated that the Government were not quite powerless in the matter, for they could, if they thought it necessary, go to the Queen's Bench, and, in pursuance of their Common Law right, obtain an order for change of venue. Had the right hon. Gentleman exercised that right, and, if not, why had he not done so? The cases were, however, brought up at the Quarter Sessions, and in June last the learned County Court Judge in Clare expressed his views on the subject very fully, and said that trial by jury was a farce, and that he would try no case by jury there, for it would be perfect nonsense to do so. The matter was shortly afterwards brought before this House, and the Chief Secretary

Mr. Dane

stated that if such language had been used by an English Judge it would have been most unbecoming. Did the right hon. Gentleman think that a reference of that kind to the learned County Court Judge was calculated to further the ends of justice? Did he think that his references to Mr. Justice O'Brien, who was appointed by his own Government and who was an eminent Roman Catholic, and to that eminent and courageous Judge the Lord Chief Justice of Ireland, would tend to the due administration of justice, or inspire respect for law in the West of Ireland? Why did not the right hon. Gentleman obtain an order for change of venue before the Summer Assizes? He remained quiescent. Mr. Justice Gibson went down to those Assizes, and when he found that in every case the jurors either acquitted the prisoners or refused to convict them, although the evidence was conclusive against them, he declared that there was no use in continuing the trial of the cases, which amounted to a solemn comedy. Not only had the law failed to bring to justice criminals in the counties in the South and West of Ireland, but it was absolutely paralysed in other parts of the country. Could anything have been more disgraceful than the election at Dromore, in County Sligo, and the prosecution which followed, with the usual result? With reference to the disgraceful riots at Bundoran, only two prosecutions took place. That state of things had not ceased, for only on Sunday week, while four Protestant gentlemen were driving from Bundoran, they were waylaid and beaten, and he was further informed that the police who came to their assistance were also ill-treated. He would like to know what the Chief Secretary intended to do in regard to the counties where such outrages occurred? The right hon. Gentleman's statement that he had abandoned some of the provisions of the Act of 1887 because they were found to be futile as regarded the conviction of breakers of the law was not justified by facts, for in those counties 46 persons were prosecuted, and, what was more, were convicted upon inquiries held under Section 1 of the Act, and four of those were murder cases in the County of Kerry, immediately adjoining the plague-spot in County Clare. Why should the right hon. Gentleman have

deprived himself of the right which he possessed under Section 3 of the Act of 1887? Was that section futile? Out of 231 cases in which the venue had been changed, 106 resulted in the conviction and punishment of the offenders. Residents in Kerry and Clare had appealed to Unionist Members to bring these matters forward, because they possessed no Unionist Representatives themselves. Through the Unionist Members from Ireland the residents in those counties appealed to the House, and if they failed to obtain justice from this House they would appeal to the people of this country. In conclusion, he desired to put these two questions to the Chief Secretary—What was the exact position occupied by Sir West Ridgeway in this world; was he Under Secretary or was he not? And, secondly, what were the intentions of the Government with reference to the plague-spots in the West of Ireland?

MR. J. MORLEY said, that his action in connection with night seizures was easily explained. He found that practical inconvenience was caused by the necessity of police protection being afforded to Sheriffs during seizures by night; he found that the policy of Parliament appeared to have prohibited night seizures in the execution of civil bill decrees; he failed to see a difference in the policy between affording protection in the execution of civil bill decrees and the execution of *fi. fas.* or other decrees of Superior Courts; and he thought that the action of the Executive was to be decided by the reasonableness of the hours at which the protection was sought. His position was disputed, and he communicated with some of the Sheriffs, and said that if they desired to take a test case into Court the Government would offer no objection, and would even be glad to have a judicial decision on the point. The decision of the Court of Queen's Bench was adverse, but the subject was so important that the Government thought it right to take the judgment of the Court of Appeal, who decided that they had no jurisdiction in the matter, but two members of that Court expressed regret that they were unable to give such a decision as would allow the opinion of the House of Lords to be taken upon the point. He could not see why the hon. and learned

Gentleman had thought it worth while to bring this up again, when he could only receive the same explanations that had already been given.

*MR. BARTON: But the right hon. Gentleman made the accusation against the late Government.

MR. J. MORLEY said, the hon. and learned Member appeared to forget that he (Mr. J. Morley) had in the House expressed his regret for having been led, by the information he received, into an erroneous statement; but the hon. and learned Gentleman was wrong in saying there was not a single case of unlawful night seizure. He admitted that largely and substantially the statement was not well founded. Having satisfied himself that that was the character of the statement he withdrew it, and expressed his regret for having made it. The third objection of the hon. and learned Gentleman was that he (Mr. J. Morley) had used unfair and disparaging language of some of the Irish Judges. When he asked the hon. and learned Gentleman across the Table to substantiate his charge, the hon. and learned Gentleman's case broke down. The hon. and learned Gentleman said he (Mr. J. Morley) had made an attack on the Lord Chief Justice, and upon a County Court Judge in County Clare. In what he had said there was nothing in the nature of an attack: he had only said that the Lord Chief Justice had used language that should not have come from any Judge. Was it to be held that while a Judge was to be free to make a charge against the Government, a Member of the Executive Government was not to be allowed with bated breath to express an opinion that the Judge had put himself in a position it would have been better to have avoided? No one had a higher opinion or more respect than he had for some of the members of the Irish Bench, and, so far as he knew, they were not supporters of the present Government. For ability, authority, and weight of judgment they were not surpassed by any Judge in England or Scotland. It was not an unsolicited observation, but was an answer to a question; therefore he did not accept the hon. and learned Gentleman's charge—that he used the language of Irish Judges or that he intended to impair their authority, or whi

open to the charge of discourtesy to them. The hon. Member for South Antrim (Mr. Macartney) referred to the case of the failure of justice in Dromore West in regard to certain transactions in the County of Sligo, where Father O'Kelly and a number of other persons were put on their trial for riot, unlawful assembly, and general disturbance. They were, as the hon. Member truly said, acquitted; but, as the hon. Gentleman also admitted, there was in that case nothing whatever of an agrarian character. He regretted the view taken by the jury. Ecclesiastical feeling could not have entered into the matter, because, if his memory was right, seven or eight members of the jury were of some form of Protestant belief; they were not Catholics; therefore it was not due to religious feeling.

MR. DANE: How did the right hon. Gentleman ascertain that?

MR. J. MORLEY said, that, as a member of the Irish Bar, and one presumably acquainted with the policy of previous Conservative Governments, the hon. Gentleman must know it was idle to ask how they knew the religion of jurymen, and, therefore, the interruption of the hon. Member was uncalled for.

MR. MACARTNEY: The majority could not convict.

MR. J. MORLEY said, he was prepared to leave it there; but did the hon. Gentleman suppose that even in this country, where the administration of the law was so perfect, a year went by without some jury failing to record a conviction where the Judge and the general public thought a conviction was justified by the evidence? If the hon. Gentleman looked through the legal proceedings for a whole year he would find there were many such cases. He attached no importance to this particular case as an indication of the general want of respect for justice in Ireland. The only other case he need refer to was raised by the hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down—the case of Bundoran, which was the subject of repeated questions in the House; and if one thing was clearer than another, it was that, though on the try night of the Evangelists meeting in perfect order there was some disorder, after was short there was no disorder this House. The Evangelistic services

went on until the 12th or 13th August, and then, with excellent judgment and good feeling, on the 15th August an important Catholic anniversary, the Evangelists withdrew, and since then, so far as he knew, there had not been a word of any disturbance at Bundoran. The hon. and learned Gentleman said there was some suggestion of a similar case.

MR. DANE: On last Sunday week.

MR. J. MORLEY said, that all he could say was that he had had no information of any disturbance whatever, and, as the hon. and learned Gentleman was aware, the Government was pretty well informed on this matter. Those were the only points raised by hon. Gentlemen, and he had done his best to answer them.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, that as no reduction in the Chief Secretary's salary had been moved, though the discussion had been applicable to such a Motion, and as they had, perhaps, adequately dealt with the Chief Secretary in his personal capacity in regard to his policy in Ireland, and as there were several other items on which hon. Gentlemen wished to raise questions, he thought the general discussion might be allowed to come to an end.

ADMIRAL FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne) wished to call attention to the training ship at Belfast, for the purpose of getting the inspection of that ship changed. In regard to the English industrial training ships, the Home Secretary had kindly agreed to put the inspection under the Admiralty; but the *Grampian*, the industrial training ship at Belfast, was inspected by a civilian.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Will this shut out anything else?

MR. J. MORLEY: No.

ADMIRAL FIELD said, that no doubt good work might be done under existing circumstances if the ship was properly managed. He did not wish to reflect upon the Committee, who did their best; but, owing to the present mischievous system, the best was not made of the ship. Over £13 per head was contributed by the Treasury for the training of the lads on board. The ship was capable of accommodating and training 350 boys, but only 250 were allowed on board by the Treasury. In five years the ship had discharged 302 boys. The

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raison d'être was that the boys should be trained for the sea; but of the 302 boys discharged from the ship in the five years, only 48 went to sea, four entered the Army—he presumed as drummer boys—and the rest were discharged to shore. Seventy-nine of the boys were found physically unfit for sea life at all; and as this must have been known to the authorities they ought not to have been kept on board, and subjected to a training that could do them no good, whereas if they had been sent to school on shore some good might have been done with them. What he wanted to impress on the Chief Secretary for Ireland was that the ship should be inspected by a naval officer. The right hon. Gentleman would only have to apply to the Admiralty Court and ask for a commanding officer to be sent to inspect the ship, and no doubt a commanding officer would be sent from the neighbourhood, probably from the Coastguard ship at Kingstown. He also wished the right hon. Gentleman to stop the entry of these very young boys at the age of 11 years. There were several other schools—the Fox School at Belfast, another at Blackrock—and from these might be drawn boys that would be fit for the Service. The reason he called special attention to this was that in the Report for 1893 the civilian Inspector, Sir Rowland Blennerhasset, made the mistake of suggesting the abolition of the ship altogether, because it did not turn out sailor boys. If they were to adopt the suggestion it would raise a storm, and he would suggest that now they had this ship the Irish Government should take it under its wing and nurse it jealously. It was intended for the Mercantile Marine, no doubt, but it did not seem to have fulfilled its object. Out of the numbers discharged but a small percentage went to sea, and the whole thing was a solemn farce; they were getting no return for the £13 per head that was expended. What he wanted was that the Government should appoint a naval officer to see that the boys were physically fit for the work, and that they were properly trained, and he should not rest satisfied until the ship was inspected by naval men.

MR. KNOX (Cavan, W.) thought the hon. and gallant Admiral had a very

considerable case, and if the right hon. Gentleman was going to look into this question he hoped he would, at the same time, look into the question of the industrial schools at Belfast. There had been no increase in the certificate for industrial schools in Belfast since 1884, and yet the population had more than doubled, the result being that there were many cases where room could not be found for the children. This was felt by both Protestants and Catholics alike, and both were agreed in their demands for increased accommodation.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.) gathered from the speech of the hon. and gallant Admiral (Admiral Field) that this was a Protestant ship. Now, he objected to a Protestant ship unless there was a Catholic ship too, and, therefore, he should like to know how the matter really stood?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, the point referred to by the hon. and gallant Member (Colonel Nolan) was not the point raised by the hon. and gallant Admiral (Admiral Field). The ship might be a Protestant ship; but the point raised by the hon. and gallant Admiral was not that it was a Protestant ship, but that it was inefficient, and he (Mr. Balfour) was afraid that it was the fact that the ship was improperly managed. Sir Rowland Blennerhasset, he thought, was perfectly right in calling attention to the fact, and, from his point of view, he (Mr. Balfour) could not say it was wrong to make the suggestion that the ship should be abolished as an industrial school, though it might become an important training ship. With regard to what had fallen from the hon. and learned Gentleman who spoke last but one (Mr. Knox), there was an enormous difficulty in augmenting the number of these industrial schools in Ireland. Protestants and Catholics all agreed in trying to force on the Government new industrial schools and the augmentation of old industrial schools. More than half the cost of these schools was borne by the Government—by the British taxpayer; and as these schools were denominational schools of the strictest and most rigid type, and as the portion of public money spent on industrial schools in Ireland was largely in excess of the money spent in this country for the same purpose, he would impress upon the right hon. Gentleman the neces-

sity of watching this question with the greatest jealousy.

MR. MACARTNEY, without venturing to agree with his hon. and gallant Friend (Admiral Field), wished to say he thought the hon. and gallant Admiral had been unfair to the Committee of Management of the training ship. He rather understood from the hon. and gallant Admiral that the fact of the ship not performing its proper functions was in some way owing to the deficiency of the Committee. For the information of the Committee he would point out that the Report upon this ship said—

“The boys on the ship are well looked after by Captain O'Rourke and the officers under him. The Committee on shore are energetic and vigilant, and the Secretary, Mr. O'Dowd, is efficient.”

Then the Report went on to state that the boys, from various circumstances, were not sufficiently strong of physique to pass for the life of a sailor in Her Majesty's Service. He should heartily rejoice if an alteration in the system would have the effect of altering the physical constitution of these boys, and that those boys not fit for a sea life were trained for industrial pursuits in Belfast.

MR. J. MORLEY said that, so far as the question of the hon. and gallant Gentleman (Admiral Field) was concerned, he had already discussed the question with his right hon. Friend at the Admiralty, and it appeared to him they might adopt the course suggested by the hon. and gallant Admiral. He thought there would be no harm in the Captain of a ship, or some naval officer, going periodically to inspect the ship to ascertain how the training was going on, and that it was efficient. As to the remarks that fell from the right hon. Gentleman, he was glad to find that he had not forgotten the sense of woe that fell upon the person who filled the office of Chief Secretary. A dead set was made upon him to certify for a large number of new industrial schools. The grant already was quite enormous compared with England and Scotland; it was a most formidable grant, and he might say that, in regard to the pressure brought to bear upon the Chief Secretary to certify for industrial schools, unless a very good case were made out it would be the duty of the Executive Government to watch with the greatest jealousy all the de-

mands that were made. This must be his answer to the hon. and learned Member for Cavan (Mr. Knox). As to the efficiency and character of the schools, he was not sure much could be said, as that was a matter that would require further Debate when the question was raised on its own merits.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, he found in the Vote a salary of £600 was given to the Government draftsman. That they had passed away from; but he found here £1,400 was charged for journeys between London and Dublin of this gentleman. He could understand that in some Sessions that amount might be necessary.

MR. J. MORLEY: That is not for the expenses of this gentleman alone.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, the Irish Bills this Session only numbered three; and as they were very small matters—a Cholera Hospital Bill and a Sites Bill—he could not understand why £1,400 was charged for travelling expenses.

MR. SEXTON (Kerry, N.): It includes all the staff.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL was glad to see the hon. Member took an interest in Irish affairs; but he must persist in desiring some information on this point. Here was an item of £1,400, and there had practically been only three Bills for this gentleman to draft, for he did not suppose he had anything to do with the Home Rule Bill, and certainly he was not under the Gallery in charge of it. He maintained there was no necessity for this gentleman journeying between Dublin and London when he had nothing to do. He simply wanted an explanation of how the expense was incurred.

MR. J. MORLEY said, it was not merely in the drafting of Bills that the expense was incurred, but it was for charges, allowances, and the travelling expenses of the whole of the staff between Dublin and London and London and Dublin. Undoubtedly, travelling expenses must be made.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) said, it seemed to him that if the hon. Member objected to the travelling expenses the best thing would be for him to support Home Rule, as they would then necessarily come to an end.

SIR T. LEA (Londonderry, S.) said, there was another item—“D”—in regard to which he gave notice that he

would call attention in Committee of Supply to two points. One was the question of the increase of lunacy in Ireland, and the other was the appointment of the Board of Examiners of the asylums in Ireland. The latter point had been since then raised by the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell); therefore, he should pass over that with simply the remark that he trusted the Chief Secretary, when he came to consider the appointment of these Boards in Ireland, would see that the Presbyterians were fairly represented according to their population on the Boards as well as the Catholics, whom the right hon. Gentleman had already taken in hand. The other point was the question of the great increase of lunacy in Ireland. If he could have had a Tuesday or Friday he would have raised the question by an abstract Motion; but, as he was unable to get either day during the Session, he must do the best he could in Committee of Supply. Since 1851 the increase of lunacy in Ireland was remarkable. In that year the number of lunatics was 5,074, and in 1891 14,945; while, if lunatics and idiots together were taken, the numbers were 9,980 in the former year and 21,188 in the latter. Such an increase as this, with a decreasing population, might truly be called alarming. Since 1881 there had been a decrease of population of 11 per cent., while the increase of lunacy was no less than 28 per cent. The Reports of the Inspectors nearly all testified to the fact of the increase in lunacy. The Inspector at Killarney said his tables showed that—

“With a shrinking population not only have the numbers in the asylum actually increased, but the greater number of unregistered lunatics and idiots at large is also much greater, a state of things sufficient to attract the attention and excite the alarm of every one interested in the welfare of the country.”

So that they saw the increase was not confined to the workhouses and asylums. Then, again, wherever one turned in the Report, he found that the authorities were increasing the accommodation. Out of 22 asylums no fewer than 11 were engaged in enlarging their buildings. The case of the Belfast Asylum had been so often referred to in the House that he might take the Report, touching it as read. In the next case to which he

came—Carlow—it was stated, referring to the figures—

“This proves that the number of lunatics in the district is gradually increasing, and no diminution of persons requiring asylum care can be expected for many years to come.”

And the Inspector went on to say—

“Of necessity the overcrowding still continues,”
and—

“that rooms which are insufficient to contain the number of patients by day are used as sleeping accommodation by night for some of the inmates.”

It seemed to him (Sir T. Lea) that this was a matter requiring attention. He next came to Downpatrick, where the Inspector stated—

“Overcrowding is, in any asylum, the greatest evil which can exist, making the patients irritable, excitable, and discontented, and rendering their individual treatment, often essential to cure, almost impossible. But if overcrowding is an evil in any asylum it is doubly so in one like Downpatrick, which contains so large a percentage of dangerous and suicidal patients.”

And again—

“With nominal accommodation for 150 women there are no less than 201 actually resident.”

Surely in that case the accommodation was very bad, and the proper treatment of the inmates was impossible? A Enniscorthy it was said—

“The Governors are aware of the very great overcrowding in almost every part of the building. While there are 218 male patients resident, there is only day-room accommodation for 156, and sleeping accommodation for 181.”

At Kilkenny—

“The Asylum continues overcrowded, containing 35 patients over the number which it can properly accommodate, and necessitating the conversion of some of the day-room accommodation in dormitories.”

He passed by a number of other paragraphs from different parts of the country pointing to the same conclusion—that the accommodation was inadequate. At Richmond the Governors were satisfied as to the inadequacy of the accommodation, and it was there recorded that the high death-rate

“is in a great degree due to an outbreak of pneumonia and pleurisy, which proved most fatal.”

And it is added to this—

“The overcrowded state of the institution, in Dr. Norman's opinion, acted injuriously on the course of all bodily disease.”

At Waterford they had overcrowding also, although various additions to the buildings had been made from time to time. He did not think anyone would deny that in these circumstances the existing state of matters in relation to lunacy in Ireland and its treatment could be looked upon other than as bad in the extreme. What were the causes of this increase of lunacy? The Chief Secretary, when questioned on the subject, referred to the Committee of 1891. But the Committee which reported in 1891 did not deal with the causes, and the matter was one well deserving the attention of the Government. It dealt only with the question of further legislation. It could not be said that the increase arose from manufacturing life, for he found that whilst there was one lunatic in every 333 of the population in Down, one in every 310 in Antrim, and one in every 284 in Dublin—those being manufacturing districts—there was one in 126 in Meath, and one in every 149 in Carlow, one in every 149 in Kilkenny, and one in every 159 in Westmeath, which were agricultural counties, which showed that it was in agricultural Ireland they had the greater part of the lunacy of Ireland. He thought this was a fair proof that manufacturing life had nothing to do with the increase. It could not be said that it was attributable in any way to learning. The Reports of the Inspectors showed that whilst there were 3,635 described as well-educated "and able to read and write," the total number of lunatics was 12,133. From this, he supposed, it might be taken that the increase did not depend upon learning. He thought he should also refer the Committee to the defective arrangements for registration. The Reports showed that the system ought to be improved; they had not a full Return at present, and he hoped the Government would give that matter their attention. Well, dealing further with the causes, he might inform the Committee that some years ago he went over some of these lunatic asylums in Ireland, and he remembered once asking one of the Governors what he thought was the reason of the increase of lunacy. His reply was that it was due to the use of tea and whisky. He had carefully considered the question, and that

Sir T. Lea

was the conclusion he arrived at. The people used a large amount of indifferent tea, and they allowed it to stand for a long time before drinking it. His hon. Friend beside him (Mr. T. W. Russell) would deal with the case of the whisky; but he hoped the Government would soon give them a chance of dealing with it through the operation of Saturday evening and Sunday Closing laws. He would refer them to the Report of the Committee alluded to by the Chief Secretary, from which they would see that Ireland had a proportionately higher rate of lunacy in the counties that were tabulated, taking the population as per 100,000. This, with the other facts which he had laid before them, showed that there was some cause at work which it was the duty of the Government to discover. He left the matter to the Chief Secretary, but he would suggest that he should appoint a small Commission of experts to report. He believed such a Commission would present a very valuable Report; and there was not a man in the House, whatever his politics might be, who would not be glad to interest himself in applying a remedy to a state of affairs which was of the deepest importance, not only to Ireland, but to the whole country.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; Committee counted, and 40 Members being found present,

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, his hon. Friend had conferred a public service by drawing attention to this subject, which was one of the saddest that could be referred to, and demanded the attention of the Government. On the general question of the increase of lunacy in Ireland the Debate was most opportune. The figures were positively alarming. The Census Returns gave the total number of lunatics and idiots in Ireland as follows:—In 1851, 9,908; in 1861, 14,908; in 1871, 16,505; in 1881, 18,418; and, in 1891, 21,188, showing a steady and alarming increase ever since 1851, and he thought this was the first time that public attention had been called to the matter in the House of Commons. They had been so busy with other questions that this matter, although so serious and alarming, had never been referred to in any discussion during the last Parliament or the present Parliament. He had read

a great many suggestions with regard to this subject. Everybody, nearly, had some theory in regard to it. He had heard it stated that the increase was largely due to insufficient food in certain parts of Ireland; but although that seemed a reasonable inference to draw, it could not be maintained, because, on looking at the figures, it would be seen that whereas Dublin had one in 333 and Antrim one in 310, poor counties like Mayo, Kerry, and Galway had one in 282, 270, and 269 respectively, while Donegal, the poorest of them all, had only one lunatic or idiot out of 256 of its population. He did not think that in the face of these figures it would be possible to maintain that the increase in lunacy was due to insufficient food, because if there was insufficient food anywhere it was precisely in the Counties of Mayo, Kerry, Galway, and Donegal. His hon. Friend had attributed this increase in lunacy to tea and whisky, though why tea was put first he (Mr. T. W. Russell) did not know. He was not there to defend the tea-drinking that went on in Ireland, although he thought it had something to do with it; still less was he inclined to defend whisky-drinking. He was informed by competent authorities that there were three causes for the increase of lunacy—namely, politics, whisky, and tea. Undoubtedly, medical men of the South and West of Ireland regarded politics as a contributing cause, for whenever an Irishman got into trouble in regard to rent or crime he turned to whisky. His hon. Friend had made a suggestion—namely, that a small Commission of experts should be appointed to inquire into the subject. Now, the Government had appointed many Commissions; and though he did not find fault with them for so doing, he thought that such a Commission as that proposed, if appointed, would be more fruitful of results than the Commission started by the Government when they first came into Office to inquire into the condition of the evicted tenants. This was not a political question at all. It was entirely separated from politics, but was none the less interesting on that ground. He did not remember a discussion on the Chief Secretary's salary ever travelling on non-political grounds before, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would think the more kindly

of the suggestion which had been thrown out on that account.

MR. J. MORLEY: I find no fault with the hon. Baronet for introducing this subject, nor for the tone in which he discussed it, or the way in which he presented the case to the House. I agree with the hon. Member who has just sat down that this is not in any sense a political question. Whatever Party we belong to we must all feel that the facts disclosed in the Report of the Inspectors are really alarming, but the increase of lunacy in Ireland at an enormously rapid pace was not a surprise. Anyone acquainted with Ireland for the past four or five or six years must be aware that this increase of lunacy has been going on at an enormously rapid rate. Various theories have been advanced in explanation of the increase. Insufficiency of food is evidently not the explanation, as the hon. Member for South Tyrone has shown. That hon. Member has mentioned politics as one cause, but I would rather use the word "excitement" in connection with the state of the country, whether as to agrarian matters, politics, or crime. I have conversed with experts in Ireland during the last 12 months on this subject, and I find that even experts differ among themselves quite as much on this subject as doctors differ on other maladies. One suggested explanation, however, has not been touched upon, although some authorities place it as the first operative cause. It is the fact that the population is being depleted of its strongest and most robust elements by emigration, this depletion causing an inferior stock to be left behind, and rendering it more liable to this malady than before. Certainly this cause cannot be left out of sight. There is, undoubtedly, a tendency for the youngest and most robust to emigrate, and thus amongst those who remain behind there is a tendency to decline both in physical energy and mental strength. However that may be, this is not a time when we can profitably discuss the matter, for, after all, this is a special question for experts. What we have to face is the fact that there is this most alarming increase. If I thought that the issue of a Commission would throw any new light on the subject, I should not hesitate to take that step, but I am not satisfied as yet that a Commission—which would be a

Commission of distinguished experts sitting in London and inquiring in an abstract way, for the two Inspectors of Lunatics in Ireland, it seems to me, have collected together all the facts bearing on this phenomena — would throw much light on the matter. The Inspectors have gone very carefully into the statistics, and have examined the places where these unfortunate beings are treated, and I do not know what new class of facts or new views it is expected a Commission would be the means of bringing out. However, I will think very carefully over the question, and consult other persons with regard to it. It is one of the most important social facts in the condition of Ireland, and is well worthy the attention of the Government. Of course, if we have in Ireland a population in which the proportion of insane persons is constantly and rapidly on the increase, all other questions become subordinate and secondary. I will not say either yes or no to the suggestion that a Commission should be appointed, but I will consult members of the Lunacy Board and other persons on the subject. I regard this phenomena as one well worthy of the attention of the Government, and I am certain it is one of those phenomena which the Government of Ireland will undoubtedly feel itself called upon to deal with. I have studied this Report, and I find that, apart from the grave facts that have been discussed to-night, there is, in the treatment of these unfortunate beings in the asylums, and inside wards of workhouses, certainly vast room for improvement. I confess it is rather a shocking picture that is presented in this Report; the only consolatory thing in connection with it is that, as I am informed by those who are competent to know, the condition of things, unsatisfactory as it still is in the workhouse wards and district asylums, is a great improvement on that which existed five or ten years ago. At the same time, I must say that it is shocking to read of the scandalous state of things in the Belfast Asylum, for instance, and of the condition of affairs in the Richmond Asylum, where there is accommodation for 1,000 persons, but where 1,500 persons are crammed into the inadequate space available. The most striking of all the statistics in the Report are those given on page 43, showing as they do

that in the large district which this asylum deals with the population has decreased by 2 per cent., whilst the total number of lunatics has increased at the rate of 36 per cent. All I can promise the Committee is that the question shall have my immediate attention, and if I find that any good can be gained by issuing a Commission, and I am satisfied that the proper medical gentlemen will be willing to serve on it, I will certainly carry out the suggestion. The matter, however, requires consideration.

MR. JACKSON: I think the Committee will have heard with satisfaction the statement made by the right hon. Gentleman. There are two questions to be considered. One is the enormous increase in lunacy and its causes, and the other is the question which the Report of the Inspectors refers to almost on every page—namely, the want of accommodation at present existing, and the constant overcrowding of both the Asylum and Workhouse Boards dealing with pauper lunatics. The right hon. Gentleman has referred especially to the Richmond case, and I hope we may conclude from his sympathetic utterances that everything he can do to induce those who are responsible to make the additional provision necessary for dealing with lunatics, not only at Richmond but in Ireland generally, will be done. The inadequacy of the accommodation is certainly not confined to Richmond, nor is Richmond an extreme case. In the case of Richmond, I think it is shown clearly that the overcrowding results in a very serious depreciation of the health of those who live in the asylum. The figures given by the Inspectors of Lunacy, who I am sure are not only competent men, but are most anxious to do everything they can to discharge their duties, show that in Richmond, which is extremely overcrowded, there has been a very high death rate as compared with the ordinary and normal death rate. I do not quite understand the right hon. Gentleman's reference to Belfast. A question was asked to-day which seemed to indicate that, in the opinion of the hon. Member who asked it, Belfast Workhouse was in a very unsatisfactory state. I do not, however, find that such a statement is made in the Inspector's Report—indeed, the Inspector speaks rather highly of Belfast Workhouse.

Mr. J. Morley

MR. J. MORLEY : I spoke of Belfast Asylum.

MR. JACKSON : The right hon. Gentleman will remember that there is a proposal to build a separate Asylum for Belfast, and this will, no doubt, reduce the pressure as regards the Asylum. I have referred to the Belfast Workhouse, because I remember that about two years ago a question was raised about it which seemed to indicate that the lunatics were not properly attended to. I notice that the Inspectors in the present Report speak in very satisfactory terms of the improvement that has been made, although, speaking generally of the workhouses, they say it is quite impossible to give that attention and care to pauper lunatics under the existing arrangement and the existing law which the case demands. Lunatics get neither the attendance of experts nor the care which their mental condition requires in workhouses. The increase which has taken place in lunacy in Ireland is certainly very alarming, and is certainly not confined to one district. The right hon. Gentleman, I thought, rather hesitated to use the word "alarming," but I would point out that in the Report dealing with the Enniscorthy District Asylum, the Inspectors say that what is occurring in Wexford is happening in every part of Ireland—namely, that while the general population is rapidly shrinking, the number of the insane is increasing, and that the proportion of the lunatics and idiots is now 604 per 100,000 of the population—a very excessive and alarming number. I am sure everybody will admit that it is necessary to increase the accommodation for dealing with the cases that have already risen. With regard to the causes of the increase, it may be desirable that some inquiry should take place. I am sure that the right hon. Gentleman is alive to the importance of the question, and will try to do whatever is necessary to be done.

MR. HAYES FISHER (Fulham) remarked that whilst a most sympathetic speech had been delivered by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. J. Morley) many Members would not be altogether satisfied with the sceptical attitude he had adopted as to the value of any Commission that might be appointed. He believed a Commission would be of the

greatest value in enabling the Inspectors in Ireland to test their own statistics as to the cause and the cure of the increase of lunacy by comparison with those of England and Scotland. The right hon. Gentleman had repeated the theory that the increase of lunacy in Ireland was due to the depletion of the best stock in the agricultural counties. That theory might be tested at once by a Royal Commission, because, to a certain extent, the same forces were operating in England. The other theories that were put forward to account for the increase in lunacy might also be tested, and a great amount of information might be collected from England and Scotland on the question of cure. Indeed, he thought there was everything to gain by such a Commission, and nothing to lose. He would suggest that the Commission should comprise, besides the experts, one or two others who would take a practical common-sense view of the subject, and who might decide between the experts when they differed in their views. He hoped the request for the appointment of a Commission would be supported by some Members who represented the majority of the people of Ireland, and that all sections of the Committee might on one occasion act together in trying to solve one of the most difficult and intricate problems that any body of Ministers could have to solve.

MR. J. MORLEY : I do not think I shall be going too far if I now ask the Committee to give us this Vote.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, that before the Vote was taken he wished to refer to one question. The other day he asked the right hon. Gentleman whether he was prepared to re-enact Clause 13 of the Land Purchase Act for the purpose of allowing tenants who had been evicted to purchase their holdings under that Act? The right hon. Gentleman, in his reply, expressed some doubt whether the proposal would be received with favour on the other side. He (Mr. T. W. Russell) had to-night received an official letter from the Evicted Tenants' Association of Cork, copies of which had been sent to the hon. Member for Longford (Mr. J. M'Carthy), the hon. Member for Waterford (Mr. J. E. Redmond), and the Chief Secretary (Mr. J. Morley). All he need say was that the letter asked him to do his best to get the 13th section of

the Land Purchase Act re-enacted, and that it was signed by Mr. P. T. Murphy, Hon. Secretary of the Association. He (Mr. T. W. Russell) was responsible for the introduction of the clause into the Act: a great many cases had been settled under it, and his right hon. Friend the Member for Leeds (Mr. Jackson) stated, after the clause had run out, that if any desire for its re-enactment were expressed by Members below the Gangway he would have no objection to re-enacting it. In face of the request now made, he (Mr. T. W. Russell) hoped that the Chief Secretary would again pass the clause.

MR. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.) hoped the Chief Secretary would understand that his hon. Friend who had just sat down was only speaking for himself, and would not suppose that a measure such as that suggested would pass through the House without considerable opposition. On the question of lunacy, as the right hon. Gentleman had referred to the theory respecting emigration, he should like to point out that the Lunacy Commissioners in their Report observed that the increase of lunacy was not confined to Ireland, but had taken place in America and the Colonies and all over the civilised world. Lunacy had, therefore, increased in those countries to which a large number of the Irish population were emigrating, and, consequently, the theory did not appear to stand on very substantial ground. The largest figures given in the Report respecting the causes of lunacy were those with regard to hereditary influence—namely, 663; the next largest relating to intemperance—namely, 260. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman to take the opinion of those responsible for the administration of the Acts as to whether, in their belief, the causes which led to these results were sufficiently well known to the peasant population of Ireland. He knew that in the district in which he lived almost every case of insanity might be traced to the intermarriage between families in which there was a distinct hereditary taint of insanity; and he was confident that if the danger of such marriages were laid clearly before parties about to engage in them by persons of influence—whether it be the clergyman or the medical adviser—they would soon see a considerable abatement in the increase of lunacy. He wished to know

whether the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary could suggest any means for preventing the spread of this hereditary disease?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER wished to say a few words in regard to the Belfast Asylum, with which he was acquainted from top to bottom. He also knew the Richmond Asylum, and he would suggest to the Chief Secretary that if he made no change in regard to these institutions, he ought, at any rate, to turn his attention to the question of lunatics in workhouses, for in those establishments a very large number of persons were detained who ought not to be there at all. The condition of things at the Richmond and Belfast Asylums was almost intolerable in consequence of the state of overcrowding. He had had opportunities of comparing those asylums with kindred institutions in England and in Scotland. He did not think the authorities of the asylums were to blame; the aspersions which had been cast upon the management of these institutions had since been withdrawn, but the real fault was that there were no workhouse asylums. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would endeavour to secure the exclusion from the workhouses of those who ought not to be detained in them.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.) said, that as Chairman of a workhouse he was able to endorse the remarks of the last speaker. He rose, however, to deal with the suggestion of the hon. Member for South Tyrone, that the 13th clause of the Land Purchase Act should be re-enacted. He did not think that would sufficiently meet the case of the evicted tenants: it would, in fact, do more harm than good.

MR. JACKSON (Leeds, N.): I desire to ask the Chief Secretary a question as to the Veterinary Department. Everybody must have learned with great satisfaction that pleuropneumonia had been stamped out in Ireland. During the short time I was at the Irish Office it was my duty to deal with this question under difficult circumstances, and it did seem at that time almost impossible, with the measures it was in our power to take, to hope for such satisfactory results in so short a time. I should like to take this opportunity of saying I think it reflects the

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greatest credit on the officials in Ireland, and everyone will bear testimony to the efficient manner in which they have discharged their duties at the time. I have referred to grave complaints which were made about the condition of the Dublin dairies, and it was alleged that the dirty and filthy state of some of them had, to a large extent, led to increased difficulties in dealing with pleuro-pneumonia. I will not say it tended to spread disease, because if we are to rely upon scientific experts disease can only be conveyed by actual contact. I should, however, be glad to know from the right hon. Gentleman whether there has been any improvement in the condition of these dairies, for this constitutes a question seriously affecting the general health of the population of Dublin? I hope the subject has not been lost sight of by the authorities.

MR. SEXTON said, that in regard to the suggestion of the hon. Member for South Tyrone, that the 13th clause of the Land Purchase Act should be re-enacted, the hon. Gentleman had correctly described himself as the medium through which the clause came to be inserted. Unfortunately, the operation of the clause had been very limited. Only a few settlements had been effected under it. When the late Government was in Office he and his friends more than once asked the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Leeds to consent to renew the clause, but he over and over again refused, the formula of his reply being that if he could receive satisfactory evidence that a substantial number of landlords and tenants desired to avail themselves of it he would be willing to renew it. He supposed that such evidence had never been received, because up to the date of his leaving Office the right hon. Gentleman never made any overtures to them.

MR. JACKSON: No evidence was ever supplied to me.

MR. SEXTON said, the right hon. Gentleman preserved complete silence on the subject, and left them entirely in the dark. Personally, he admitted that the clause might do a certain amount of good, but he feared also that it might do not a little harm if the landlords, upon the renewal of it, represented to the tenants that there was no hope for them

of further relief, and that they had better at once take advantage of its provisions. The Chief Secretary had given them an assurance that next Session he would legislate on the general lines of the Report of the Royal Commission on the Evicted Tenants. He himself regarded such legislation as indispensable. While he would be glad to co-operate with anyone in Ireland in attempts to secure voluntary arrangements between landlords and tenants, and would in consequence support the request of the hon. Member for the re-enactment of the clause, he wished it to be understood that the Irish Members would not regard that renewal as a satisfactory substitute for the legislation promised by the Chief Secretary.

MR. J. MORLEY: I concur with the right hon. Gentleman opposite in his congratulations to the officials of the Veterinary Department on the success of their efforts to stamp out pleuro-pneumonia, and I should like, further, to do the right hon. Gentleman the justice of saying that he himself took an active part in stimulating the Department in that matter. I cannot say what has been done in regard to the dairies, for I believe the officials have mainly concentrated their efforts on the task of stamping out pleuro-pneumonia; but I will make inquiry into the matter, and I can promise that every care shall be taken to secure improved sanitation. In regard to the suggestion of the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell), I think the hon. Member for North Kerry has taken up a position which is perfectly reasonable. The hon. Member for South Tyrone asked me the other day if I would be willing to re-enact the 13th section of the Land Act of 1891. My answer was that before I could give any pledge I must first receive an assurance from hon. Members opposite that they would treat such a measure as non-contentious. If I had such an assurance I should be prepared to bring in such a Bill. That answer of mine was given entirely in the spirit indicated by the hon. Member for North Kerry, and I should not for a moment seek to substitute such a Bill for that more complete and more deep-reaching measure which I believe anybody responsible for the administration of Ireland would feel bound to introduce.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick's) said, that with regard to the question of pleuro-pneumonia, he desired to point out that Ireland was absolutely free from all sorts of cattle disease—it had, in fact, the cleanest bill of health of any country in Europe. He would suggest that the officials who had so admirably performed their duties and thus produced this good result ought to be placed on exactly the same footing as regards pensions as was held by the officials in the English Department that had to deal with these matters. He was, he might add, very glad to hear the Chief Secretary's statement on the subject of the evicted tenants.

MR. M. AUSTIN (Limerick, W) complained that in the Printing and Binding Departments in Dublin the work was done solely by unskilled labour—mainly that of boys—at low rate of wages, and in direct antagonism to the principles laid down by the Resolution of the House of Commons.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am sorry I was not here when an interesting discussion was raised upon a clause of a temporary character of the Land Act of 1891. I understand the point is, whether or not that clause shall be renewed—as it has hitherto been from year to year?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: It was a clause which lasted for a certain period. It has expired, and will now have to be re-enacted.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I thought it had been renewed. I understand the proposal of the hon. Member for South Tyrone is that it shall be renewed, and that that proposal has been to a certain extent endorsed by the hon. Member for North Kerry, while the Chief Secretary has indicated his willingness to act upon the suggestion. But the right hon. Gentleman has also intimated that he will not consider such action as relieving him of the pledges he has recently given to deal in a more satisfactory manner with the evicted tenants. I do not wish now to pronounce any final opinion on this subject. I entirely agree with my hon. Friend it would be eminently worth while to re-enact the clause if there were the slightest chance of its being taken advantage of, but I want to put this point to him. We all know that the clause has not been taken advantage of,

and that while landlords have been willing to come under it their tenants have refused to do so. Why did they so refuse? Simply because extravagant hopes were held out, partly by the Government in England who are supported by those leaders, that terms incomparably more favourable than those offered under the clause would in the long run be given. Does my hon. Friend think that with the Chief Secretary announcing in the very speech in which he consents to the renewal of the clause that he means to bring in another Bill differing in its principle and offering better terms to the tenants carrying out far more completely the objects which gentlemen below the Gangway have never concealed that they have in view—does he think that the re-enactment of the clause under such circumstances could have any good effect? If he does, I think his hope will prove illusory. If the Government were prepared to accept the re-enactment of the clause as a final solution of the question, then the proposal of my hon. Friend would lead to great and practical results. Until I have had an opportunity of further considering this question, I should not like to arrive at any final conclusion.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, he had received a letter from the Evicted Tenants' Association in Cork, requesting that this should be done. It was clear that some of the evicted tenants desired the re-enactment of the clause, and that they were a little sceptical about getting anything in advance of it. The re-enactment of the clause, too, would be a strong defence against extravagant claims, and would give an opening to those who desired a reasonable settlement.

MR. SEXTON said, the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition had delivered a very surprising speech. He seemed to have forgotten the nature of his own clause. He thought it had been renewed from time to time, and that it was only a question of including it in the Expiring Laws Continuance Bill. The clause, the Committee would remember, was inserted in the Bill which passed in August, 1891, and under it all agreements were to be concluded before February, 1892. They told him at the time that in the condition in which Ireland then was they did not think that any considerable number of agreements

could be come to, but that if a longer period were allowed much might be accomplished. As a matter of fact, when the clause ceased to have force a number of negotiations were in progress which had to be broken off. He was sure the right hon. Gentleman had no desire to continue to keep alive the embers of discontent and disorder in any part of Ireland. He realised that the simple re-enactment of the clause would not settle the question, but if there were landlords and evicted tenants who were anxious to come to agreement, and if this clause would help them to do so, surely the right hon. Gentleman would not stand in the way of its renewal.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Member has made a direct appeal to me. In the spirit of that appeal I heartily concur. My difficulty is one rather of fact—it is as to the historical interpretation of what occurred when the clause was inserted in the Bill. He says that he and his friends urged upon the Government of that day that six months was too short a period. But my opinion is that tenants who really wished to arrive at agreements found it quite possible to do so in the six months covered by the clause. That was proved by the action of many of the tenantry on the Ponsonby estate, a certain number of whom did come to an agreement within the half-year, and the reason why more advantage was not taken of the clause was that the tenants were encouraged by their leaders to hope that in time they would get incomparably better terms. If similar hopes are to be encouraged now, and are to exist in undiminished strength and vigour, of what use will it be to undergo the labour of again enacting this lapsed clause? As I said before, I should be sorry on the spur of the moment to express any final personal judgment, but so long as these men are to have dangled before them illusory hopes of a probably impossible settlement, so long the sober, moderate, and I think, in itself, not ineffectual proposal we made in 1891 will be prevented from producing its proper result. It is absurd to ask for a remedy, and, at the same time, renew the hopes and efforts which have in the past prevented that remedy effecting its object.

MR. J. MORLEY: In regard to the complaint made by the hon. Member for

West Limerick, I may remind him that my right hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury went at length into this subject the other night, and I can add nothing to what he said. I do not think any advantage will accrue further from discussing the question of the evicted tenants on this occasion.

Vote agreed to.

3. £941, to complete the sum for Charitable Donations and Bequests Office, Ireland.

4. £78,497, to complete the sum for Local Government Board, Ireland.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL called attention to the accommodation of pauper lunatics in Irish workhouses. In the first place, he did not know of any law by which these poor people were confined in workhouses. He therefore asked the Chief Secretary under what authority these lunatics, who were usually harmless, were confined there; and whether, if the overcrowding of the regular lunatic asylums involved the packing of the workhouses with these poor people, that fact did not increase the responsibility of the Government to take steps to find room for them? He thought it was a great hardship upon the respectable poor that they should be brought into contact daily with insane people. He thought there ought to be room found in the proper lunatic asylums for the lunatics of Ireland. He also desired to draw attention to the enormous expenditure attendant upon Poor Law relief in Ireland. The actual amount expended upon the relief of the poor was £872,000, but the amount expended upon the salaries of officials was altogether disproportionate to that sum, for it came to close upon £1,000,000. The ratepayers did not grudge the money spent on the relief of the poor, but they did grudge the money that went in salaries for officers, a great many of which were not needed at all. There were too many workhouses in Ireland, and there was no reason why they should not be amalgamated. This was a burning question in the North of Ireland, and he hoped the Chief Secretary would give his attention to it. We were threatened with an invasion of cholera. Did the right hon. Gentleman think that in the rural districts and small towns of

Ireland there were any proper precautions taken against it? The sanitary condition of the small towns in all parts of the country was of the most wretched character. In Castleisland, a town in Kerry, which he had recently visited, cholera would find a happy hunting-ground. The state of some of the dwellings and the sanitary conditions were perfectly horrible. Castleisland mainly consisted of a very long and tolerably wide street, in which there were 52 public-houses for 1,500 people. If whisky had anything to do with lunacy they ought to be all lunatics in Castleisland. Behind the main street there was an enormous mass of the foulest rookeries he had seen anywhere. He was shocked and appalled by the sight. There were no sanitary arrangements; the houses were without doors and windows; and huge piles of filth and pools of stagnant water were all around. Between 300 and 400 people lived in these houses in the most terrible condition. He thought that, in the first place, the Local Government Board was to blame for that state of things. The Local Government Board had undoubtedly the power to compel the landlord to do his duty.

MR. D. SULLIVAN (Westmeath): Will the hon. Gentleman say who is the landlord of Castleisland?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I do not know who he is; but whoever he is, Castleisland is a disgrace to him. I mean the landlord of the houses, and not the landlord of the soil.

MR. SEXTON: He is a Member of the House of Lords.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, he hoped the landlord would read what he had said about the town. The Local Government Board were undoubtedly to blame for the condition of these dwellings, inasmuch as they had the power to compel the landlords to put the dwellings into better condition and to condemn insanitary buildings.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): It shows the want of Home Rule.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, it did not show the want of Home Rule, but it showed the want of Local Government. Even if there were no fear of cholera, the Local Government Board ought to compel the landlords of towns and villages to see that the houses were

placed in better condition than at present.

MR. KNOX (Cavan, W.) said, he agreed with the hon. Member for South Tyrone in what he had said on the subject of lunatic asylums in Ireland. He believed that something was urgently needed to improve the condition of pauper lunatics in workhouses. The hon. Member for South Tyrone had not, however, touched the greatest difficulty in the way of such a reform. It should be remembered that pauper lunatics in workhouses were supported out of the poor rate, while the pauper lunatics in lunatic asylums were supported out of the cess. The cess was paid only by the occupier, while the poor rate was paid half by the owner, and half by the occupier; and there was, therefore, an unwillingness amongst the authorities of the workhouses to transfer pauper lunatics to the lunatic asylums and thereby make them chargeable entirely on the occupiers—for that would be throwing a grievous burden upon the occupiers. He thought that if the incidence of the rate for the maintenance of pauper lunatics in lunatic asylums was so arranged that the owner paid half and the occupier paid half, there would be no difficulty in carrying the necessary increases of county lunatic asylums; and he hoped the Government would give their attention to the matter.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said, he desired to call attention to the arrangements made by the Local Government Board in Belfast with respect to precautions against the cholera epidemic. It was perfectly clear, he thought, that the arrangements which existed in ports in communication with foreign countries were not adequate. In regard to Belfast, he said the Sanitary Authority had no jurisdiction at all over cases of infectious disease outside the limits of the Corporation boundaries. The Guardians of Belfast had a large area over which they had jurisdiction, and for some reason the Local Government Board had thought fit to nominate the Belfast Board of Guardians as the Sanitary Authority in cholera cases alone for the whole of the district from Larne to Castlefergus, covering the entire coast line of Belfast Lough; and for the whole of that district—except for a small portion—the Belfast Board of Guardians had absolutely no executive authority whatever.

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The last serious epidemic that was introduced into Belfast—an epidemic of small-pox—was introduced from a ship outside the jurisdiction of the Belfast Sanitary Authority, and there was practically absolutely no power in the Board of Guardians to enforce the performance of their orders on the Town Commissioners of the considerable number of towns included in the area to which he had referred. He hoped the Chief Secretary would take the matter into consideration, and try to devise some means by which the Boards of Guardians would have effective sanitary jurisdiction over the district.

MR. MACARTNEY said, that on the subject of pauper lunatics he desired to say, on behalf of the Boards of Guardians and officials of workhouses, that they were placed in some difficulty in the matter of giving pauper accommodation to lunatics and idiots, inasmuch as the workhouses were not originally designed for the accommodation of lunatics. The Guardians had first to provide the necessary wards for the accommodation of the ordinary inmates, and then fit up as best they could accommodation for the lunatics. He noticed that in the Report of the Commission on Lunacy this year there was a complaint that no Return was made by the authorities of workhouses in Ireland as to the admissions, discharges, and deaths of insane paupers. It seemed to him that that was a very legitimate complaint, and that the attention of the Local Government Board of Ireland ought to be directed to it. With regard to the amalgamation of workhouses—a subject in which he had taken a great deal of interest—he desired to say that in 1879 a Commission composed entirely of officials was appointed to inquire into the matter and report to Parliament. The Commission took the views of the Boards of Guardians on the subject, and it was clear that if the amalgamation of Unions had not proceeded as rapidly as it had been hoped, it was not the fault of the Local Government Board, but was due to the fact that in the great majority of Unions there was a strong feeling, especially among the elected Guardians, against any scheme of amalgamation. In that year 104 Unions declined to recommend a scheme of amalgamation, and of 11 Unions which agreed to amalgamate

five afterwards rescinded their resolution. The Commission entered on the inquiry evidently with a determination against the policy of amalgamation, and they certainly reported strongly against it. Nevertheless, the Report of the Local Government Board showed that where they had been enabled to carry out amalgamation in two or three cases, it had worked very satisfactorily. The Commission based their objection to the policy of amalgamation on the assumption that those who advocated it appeared to have been led astray by the figures given them with regard to the gross accommodation which could be afforded by workhouses in Ireland. It appeared that the accommodation of workhouses in Ireland was based upon the cubic contents of all the rooms, and not simply upon the cubic contents of the rooms used as sleeping rooms. The Commissioners, therefore, had no difficulty in showing in their Report that the estimated accommodation in the workhouses was double the real accommodation. If, therefore, there was to be any further movement in the way of accommodation, he thought there should first be a re-measurement of the workhouses. If that was not done, there would exist amongst those who had not given careful attention to the question, the opinion that Ireland had a surplus of workhouses; that there was a great deal of unnecessary expense thrown upon the ratepayers, and that enormous benefit would accrue in the way of relieving the rates if further amalgamation could be carried out. With regard to the question of sanitation in Ireland, no one would deny that the condition of many Irish villages was very deplorable. His hon. Friend had blamed the Local Government Board for their inertia. But the Local Government Board was not the only Body responsible. The primary Body which was to blame was the Board of Guardians in each locality, who were the people on the spot, who were brought into daily contact with these insanitary conditions of life, and it was upon their shoulders he was inclined to throw a greater weight of complaint than on those of the Local Government Board. There had recently been presented to the House an interesting Report on the condition of the agricultural labourers in the South and West of Ireland. Before quoting a passage from

this Report he might say generally that the administration of the Sanitary Laws in Ireland in the rural districts was almost absolutely a dead letter, for the reason that the Sanitary Inspectors were afraid of incurring the hostility of the Boards of Guardians, or of particular Guardians or ratepayers, by drawing attention to the numerous instances which were to be found, especially in some localities, of the absolute defiance of all laws of sanitation. Mr. Roger C. Richards, an Assistant Commissioner who had been appointed to report upon the condition of the agricultural labourer in certain districts in the Counties of Cavan, Dublin, Galway, and Tipperary, in his Report had the following paragraph:—

“In English districts fear of giving offence to property-owning Guardians often deters sanitary officers from fearlessly doing their duty. In Ireland, notwithstanding a greater degree of independence, a sanitary officer may still be subjected to many annoyances if he is inconveniently jealous. Every Guardian has the right of giving tickets, which entitle the holder, on presentation, to the immediate services of the medical officer. Guardians who consider their officer has been unduly active or persistent in condemning their property will sometimes retaliate by a too liberal distribution of these tickets. An amusing illustration of this was brought to my notice. In one Union some of the Guardians, feeling aggrieved by the action of their medical officer, showered these medical relief tickets very profusely, with the result that the doctor was summoned at all hours of the day and night to attend most trivial cases. Understanding the origin of these numerous calls, the doctor hit upon a method of relief. Wherever he found that he had been sent for unreasonably, he treated the case as most grave, and insisted that the parish priest should be sent for. The result was, that the priest was kept on the run as much as the doctor. The priest took the earliest opportunity of remonstrating with the doctor on the absurdity of his being called to administer the last ordinances to persons not at all *in extremis*; whereupon the doctor remarked, ‘I thought if there was an urgent necessity for my prompt attendance, there was equally such for yours.’ The shower of relief cards was stopped. The Chairman of the Board of Guardians often presides at the Petty Sessions where enforcing orders have to be granted, and is probably a property owner, and also a patient of the doctor who condemns.”

That was a statement of a person not prejudiced on either side of the question in Ireland; and he (Mr. Macartney) was bound to say that, while he thought the Local Government Board did not put in force all the powers with which it was armed by Parliament to insist upon a

Mr. Macartney

proper administration of the Sanitary Laws, still he could not relieve the Local Sanitary Authorities from the share of blame, which he thought ought to be attributed to their inactivity. It was the most difficult thing in the world, especially in Ireland, to persuade the ordinary peasant that he was endangering his own health or that of anyone else by his inactivity in removing the causes of insanitary conditions. He quite agreed there was room for additional activity on the part of the Local Government Board in arousing the attention of the Boards of Guardians, especially in these districts which had been reported upon in the South and West of Ireland, where certainly the sanitary conditions of the houses appeared to be deplorable. He must, at the same time, point out that the Commissioners had attributed the insanitary condition of these houses as much to the inattention of the occupiers as to the inattention of the owners of the houses. If there were any means by which it was possible to arouse this portion of the population of Ireland to a livelier sense of the dangers of living in such insanitary and unwholesome conditions, he should be delighted, whether it was brought about by the Local Government Board or by the greater activity of the Local Sanitary Authorities.

MR. J. MORLEY said, two or three points had been raised in the course of this discussion which he would now proceed to deal with. So far as the insane poor were concerned, he thought he stated in the earlier discussion his own sense of the extent to which he was shocked by the Report on this subject. At the same time, the hon. Member who had last spoken had overlooked what the hon. and learned Member for Cavan (Mr. Knox) had pointed out—namely, that the transfer of these poor people from the lunatic wards of the workhouses to the district asylums meant a difference in the incidence of the cost of maintenance. The Report of the Committee of 1890 dealt with this subject very fully. It was only fair to the Irish Government to say that at this moment they were making proposals to the Treasury for the purpose of making the enlargement of the accommodation of the district asylums an easier task than it now was. At present the loans which had been advanced were payable in 20 years,

and it was hoped that if the Governors of these institutions responded to the pressure put upon them to improve the accommodation and give more room and better treatment and comfort to these unfortunate beings, that then the burdens should be spread over a greater number of years. He hoped that the Treasury would give a favourable consideration to proposals which the Irish Government had made to them at the suggestion of the Board of Control in Ireland. He would just make one remark upon the subject of district asylums. He at one time had some special interest in this particular subject, and he knew it was the opinion of many experts on this dreadful disease of lunacy that this aggregation of large bodies of insane in one room and in one exercising yard, and so forth, was, on the whole, an extremely doubtful course. Some of the best experts were of opinion that the Scotch were wiser in resorting in a very considerable degree to boarding out. Of course, that was a matter which, if a Commission were appointed, would probably be reported upon. The hon. Member for South Tyrone pointed out the disparity between the amount expended in relief and the amount expended in salaries.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I made a slight mistake. I find the total poor relief expenditure was £872,000, and the total expenditure of the Guardians altogether was £1,400,000. I was quite wrong in saying that was due to salaries. It is only part of that, and I apologise for the mistake I have made.

MR. J. MORLEY: Then that argument disappears.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: This expenditure, of course, is not so large, but there is a great disparity between the expenditure on poor relief, strictly speaking, and salaries; and my argument was that these salaries might be saved to a large extent by the amalgamation of the workhouses.

MR. J. MORLEY: There is only £141,000 for salaries against £872,000 for relief. That is very much the same proportion as obtains in England, where the total is £8,600,000; and £1,500,000 of that is expended in salaries against £7,000,000 expended in relief. The proportion, therefore, between England and Ireland is practically the same.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Ireland is a much poorer country.

MR. J. MORLEY replied that the poverty of the country did not affect the hon. Member's complaint against the Local Government Board, that an extraordinary amount went in salaries compared with the amount expended in the relief of the poor. As to the amalgamation of workhouses, there, again, they must proceed with caution. If they adopted a policy of amalgamation and went in rashly for a general amalgamation, they would land themselves in great difficulty, and the same argument, with a difference that he had used about enlarged lunatic asylums, was also applicable to the great workhouses. He was not at all satisfied that monster workhouses were a good thing. Amalgamation might lead to a lowering of the rates, but that was not the only thing they had to consider, and it was a matter in which they should move very cautiously. He was glad to note the healthy tone of the hon. Member's (Mr. Macartney's) observations, and his remarks on the responsibility of the Local Authorities, who, he had stated, should do their duty. The hon. Member had said that the whole responsibility in this matter should not be thrown on the Local Government Board. In Ireland they had got too much of Central Authority, and that authority a weak one, and every well-wisher of self-reliance would like to throw upon the Local Authorities the burden of looking after their own affairs. As to the re-measurement of workhouses, he could not deal with that question off-hand, but he would inquire into it. As to the orders issued with respect to cholera, a question which had been raised especially by the hon. Member for West Belfast, he was informed both by the Local Authorities in Ireland and by the Local Government Board in this country that in Ireland they were keeping step by step with the English Local Government Board. He believed there was not a single precaution the English Board had taken which the Irish Local Government Board was not equally taking and pressing upon the Local Authorities. He had with him an exact account of all the measures taken by the Local Government Board in Ireland, and he believed they were doing all they could to stir up the Local Sanitary Authorities to take the precautions which it would be wise

to adopt. The hon. Member seemed to think that the Local Government Board had made a mistake in selecting the Local Authorities. He could not say what were the considerations which prompted that choice, but it would seem, at first sight, as if the Corporation were the more proper authority. He would inquire what the reasons were, and the hon. Member might rest assured that they should press upon the authorities—whether Boards of Guardians or other bodies—the necessity of not neglecting any portion of their duty.

MR. WOLFF (Belfast, E.) pointed out that in Belfast the Local Authority had no means of preventing communication between vessels lying in Belfast Lough and small ports like Carrickfergus on the shores of the Lough. He would be glad if the right hon. Gentleman could give his attention to this matter, and insure that effectual means would be taken to prevent the introduction of cholera into Ireland in this way.

MR. J. MORLEY said, he would inquire what was done at Hull and Liverpool by the Sanitary Authorities, and he would see that the same precautions were adopted at Belfast.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR remarked that it was agreed on all hands that the accommodation given to pauper lunatics and idiots was very inadequate from the point of view of the lunatics themselves, and was positively injurious to the non-lunatic inhabitants of the workhouses. The reason these unfortunate persons were taken to a place where they were imperfectly treated, and where they did great harm to other individuals, was that in the case of the workhouses the charge was borne by landlord and tenant alike, whereas if they were sent to the county lunatic asylum the whole cost would fall on the occupier. The occupier, therefore, who was the controlling agent, determined they should go to a place where half the charge should be borne by the landowners. The motive was not a very high one, but it was a very intelligible one. On the subject of boarding out, though he was aware the plan had many advocates, yet he hoped it should be applied to Ireland with a cautious and sparing hand. There was not, as yet, in Ireland the kind of population among whom boarding out was practised in Scotland with good effects. They could

not send these unfortunate beings to the poor cabins which were the only places in many districts of the country where they could be boarded out, and until the condition of the Irish peasant was raised to something like the level of the Lowland Scotch peasant, he did not think boarding out could be practised with any good results either to the patient or to the family with whom he was boarded. The amalgamation of workhouses was another matter that must be cautiously practised. There were at present in two contiguous Unions two sets of elected Guardians, two sets of persons with considerable social status and dignity, and a proportion of those persons would of necessity lose that social status and dignity by amalgamation and by the consequent diminution in the number of the Guardians. He was afraid experience taught that while division of authority was easy amalgamation was exceedingly difficult. As to the question of equalisation of rates, he believed it would be found that while a poorer district did not object to amalgamate with a richer one, the richer had the strongest objection to be amalgamated with the poorer. There were no more obstinate opponents to deal with than people struggling to protect their pockets. He did not agree with the Chief Secretary that the unit of Poor Law administration should be a small one; his belief was that in order to make the Poor Law system all it might be there must be large areas. Thus, and thus alone, would they be able to carry out that grading, that discrimination between different classes of inmates by which they might alleviate the lot of those who were there by no fault of their own, and distinguish between them and those who simply employed the poorhouse, not as a legitimate source of relief, but as a daily resort when other and perhaps less allowable means of livelihood failed them. He did not desire to argue that matter further, but he thought the Chief Secretary would be ill-advised if he were, on the ground of abstract preference for small areas of Poor Law administration, to neglect any opportunities which offered themselves for increasing the size of the Unions. There was only one other point raised in this Debate on which he should like to say one word. His hon. Friend opposite gave an account which, he was sure, all

Mr. J. Morley

the Committee would feel came from his heart, of his own personal experience in an urban district in Ireland. The story he told them was a shocking story, and gave them a view of the condition of the inhabitants of this wretched urban area which, he was sure, must have filled everyone who heard it with horror and disgust. But the only question here was not whether this state of things needed a remedy, but how it was to be remedied, and on whom lay the fault of the existing state of things. His hon. Friend was inclined to blame two sets of people, who were, he believed, innocent—namely, the Local Government Inspector and the landlord. A landlord who deliberately bought at a very cheap rate wretched insanitary dwellings with a view of earning a large percentage of profit on his investment was a man for whom no one in that House would have the smallest mercy. But he assumed that the owner of the soil, and possibly the owner of the houses, did not belong to this class, and that the case was one in which an unfortunate landowner had been left the property in this condition by those who preceded him. [Mr. T. W. RUSSELL assented.] What was the landlord to do with the property, since it was said that he was responsible? He received no rent for it, and to rebuild the houses in a sanitary condition meant, in such circumstances, financial ruin. The only other alternative was wholesale eviction of the inhabitants; and were hon. Members prepared to recommend that course? Were they going to require the landlord to turn all the people out into the street or the workhouse? Was that their solution of this great social difficulty? He felt, whatever else the Committee might say, at all events they would not press upon the Legislature any plan so drastic, and he feared so inefficacious, as that; therefore, he did not see how it was possible either to throw the blame for the existing state of things for the most part on the landlord, or to require the landlord to apply an instant and effectual remedy. Then, did the blame rest with the Inspector? From the inquiries and observations he had made when Chief Secretary, he believed that the Inspector of the Local Government Board who should go through many districts in Ireland and insist that the letter of the law should be carried out to its fullest

extent would require police protection in every part of the country. He would be treated worse than a process server, and would be hounded out of the place visited as the greatest curse which had been inflicted on an injured peasantry. But the right hon. Gentleman said it was a case for the healthy exercise of local administration. They all desired to see this remedy carried out, but they must not desire too much. The truth was, that hon. Members were constantly running after two inconsistent ideas. They wanted the thing well done, and they wanted it done by the Local Authority. They could not have both, however. If they wanted the work well done, it must be done by a strong and centralised administration; and the evil here was not that the system was centralised, but that it was not strong enough. If they abolished the Local Government Board control they would throw the whole thing into the hands of the elected Guardians, and they would give up, for a generation at least, the slightest hope or prospect of having a sanitary condition of things in the villages of the South and West. It was contrary to the customs and habits of the people, and they would not of their own proper motion alter the practice which had been going on for generations, the evils of which they did not recognise, and, indeed, which many persons in England and Scotland—far above them in education and other advantages—refused to recognise themselves. He was not going to discuss the Local Veto Bill, but he would just say they would find the same thing if sobriety depended on Local Authorities. Sobriety and sanitation could not be forced on a people, and they would not spring up as the mere product of Local Government. They had first to persuade the people that it was a thing to be aimed at, at much cost, considerable expense, and change of cherished habits. Until they had done that, it was not the least use to throw down these platitudes about cultivating Local Government in Ireland and elsewhere, and trusting to that, and to that alone, to remedy all the difficulties under which they suffered. He confessed that neither by the help of the Local Government Board, nor by the help of the Local Authorities in Ireland, did he expect, for many years to come, to see a complete change in this respect

in Ireland. He did not blame the Irish for it. He did not think they were responsible for the present condition; he did not think anybody was responsible. But it was there; and just as they would not get, in a backward English village, any ideas of the kind they were accustomed to connect with the word "sanitation," so it was hopeless to expect a better state of things in Ireland, and all the Chief Secretary could do was to require his Inspectors gradually and slowly to make the people feel how much they had to gain by altering the unhappy external circumstances under which, unfortunately, too many of them lived.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.) denied altogether that the Local Authorities in Ireland had done nothing in the way of effecting improvements in sanitation and other matters. Take, for instance, North Galway. During the last few years they had erected excellent waterworks for the town of Tuam, and all the county towns in Ireland had taken to bringing in water from a distance of two, or three miles, and in many other respects considerable improvements had been made. He would promise the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition, if he would propose a Vote out of Imperial Funds for the purpose of sanitary improvements in Ireland, he (Colonel Nolan) would go with him against all Party ties whatsoever on that point. Unless he did something of that kind he did not know what use it was for the right hon. Gentleman to attack them, because at present the rates of the Local Authorities were very high for the improvements they had already effected. They could not do everything all at once, and particularly in districts where the money was required to feed the people rather more than it was to carry out these ideas of sanitation. With regard to the precautions against an outbreak of cholera, he did not think the steps which had been adopted in Ireland were sufficiently practical. The Chief Secretary had issued Circulars and taken up a Bill of his (Colonel Nolan's), but the Lords had spoiled it as much as they could in the interests of vested property. The Chief Secretary when he copied, or nearly copied, this Bill got it into such a state—

Mr. A. J. Bal'our

THE CHAIRMAN (MR. A. O'CONNOR): I must ask the hon. and gallant Gentleman to make his observations relevant to the subject of the Vote.

COLONEL NOLAN said, the point to which he wished to draw attention was the inadequacy of the arrangements made by the Local Government Board in Ireland, of which the Chief Secretary was the head, for grappling with the cholera. The state of the law was such that the Local Authorities could not take a site now for a cholera hospital until cholera appeared in that district.

MR. J. MORLEY said, the hon. and gallant Gentleman was mistaken. The particular clause which he seemed to think had been omitted was, as a matter of fact, contained in the Bill.

COLONEL NOLAN was glad to find that in this instance the Local Government Board behaved as a sensible body. He expressed the opinion that the Local Government Board ought to have a number of wooden or iron hospitals in Dublin or elsewhere, together with a number of trained nurses, so that they might be ready to cope with the cholera should it break out in any district, however remote, and should not leave these matters to the Local Authorities, who could not bear the expenses.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL wished to know whether the Chief Secretary could give any information as to how the rents had been paid of the cottages which were built under the Labourers Act?

MR. J. MORLEY thought the information which the hon. Gentleman desired would be found in the last Report of the Local Government Board; but, if not, he would make inquiries. In answer to the hon. and gallant Gentleman, he had to say he had already informed the Committee that the Irish Local Government Board had taken the same steps that had been taken by the English Local Government Board, and had used, and were using, every precaution which the most apprehensive mind could desire to see carried out.

COLONEL NOLAN insisted on the necessity of a supply of iron or wooden hospitals being kept in Dublin or some other place, so that they might be ready for any emergency.

Vote agreed to.

5. £3,327, to complete the sum for Public Record Office, Ireland, agreed to.

6. £19,528, to complete the sum for Public Works Office, Ireland.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL desired to ask what was the amount of money that had been paid for the first of the two Training Colleges?

MR. SEXTON said, the Training Colleges were not public works.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, the money was paid through the Public Works Department, and the work was done under the superintendence of the Board of Works. All that I desire to know is this—

MR. SEXTON: There was no work done. These Training Colleges are already built. There is nothing for the Public Works to supervise, and I submit that on the Vote for Public Works you cannot deal with these institutions.

THE CHAIRMAN: That is so.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Yes, but this money has been paid through the Board of Works. I do not want to raise any discussion on the principle of the matter, but I want to know—

MR. SEXTON: It comes up on the Education Vote.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, of course, if the matter was out of Order on this Vote, and he could raise it on the Education Vote, he would be satisfied; but he should have thought the Board of Works Vote was a very convenient Vote on which to raise the matter.

THE CHAIRMAN ruled that the matter was out of Order on this Vote.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I see on the Board of Works Report that they have expended this year £40,000. I contend, therefore, it comes on the Vote for the Board of Works.

MR. SEXTON said, the charge for these Colleges appeared on the Education Vote.

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, the question was raised some days ago on the Public Buildings Vote.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, that was as to the sanitary question.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, it was the same question that had been mentioned by the hon. Member now.

SIR T. LEA (Londonderry, S.) said, he wanted to know, on an item which he saw on the Paper, whether there was a certificated architect for the Board of Works, and, if so, whether any buildings could be dealt with until this gentleman had submitted his views to the Board? He was especially referring to lunatic asylums, and he thought with regard to the new buildings that were going on they should be informed how that matter was dealt with.

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, there was an architect for superintending asylums, and also provision for special advice in regard to all other Public Buildings.

MR. JACKSON (Leeds, N.) said, the right hon. Gentleman had not gone so far as he might. When a vacancy arose in the post of engineer for these works a gentleman was appointed at a less salary than formerly. There was a Departmental Inquiry into the question, and it was thought that for ordinary purposes a man could be got for less than £8,000 or £12,000 a year—that a man could be got for £600 or £700, and it was thought right and wise that when the Board of Works were undertaking any large work there should be a power of consultation as regarded plans with this gentleman. But the Board of Works were entirely responsible. He considered the arrangement satisfactory, so far as he had been able to judge it.

MR. MACARTNEY said, he would again direct attention to the case of the Kingstown Harbour. He had had an assurance from the Chief Secretary already, but he wanted him to go one step further, and he did not see there was any difficulty in the work—the very necessary work—going on at once. He had made inquiries, and he understood that there was no difficulty in the way if the Treasury would only authorise the Board of Works to deal with the matter. That was the only difficulty in the way. He was aware that the right hon. Gentleman was greatly interested in this work, and he hoped he would give them some assurance on the point.

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, undoubtedly his right hon. Friend was

very anxious that this work should be carried out. He (Sir J. T. Hibbert) was also very anxious about it. It was only a few weeks ago that his right hon. Friend had an opportunity of seeing the plans, and he thought he might to-night assure the hon. Member that anything that could be done in the direction he alluded to would be done, as they were anxious that improvements should be hastened.

MR. MACARTNEY said, it was simply a question of providing the money.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, he was aware of all the circumstances.

SIR J. GORST (Cambridge University) said, he would like to know what the present Vote provided for.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT was understood to say that the Vote only went as far as was necessary at present.

MR. JACKSON said, he did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman's mind had been given to this Vote particularly, but he thought he ought to do so in connection with the reduction of the number of applications for loans for land improvements. There was a very much less sum asked for last year than in the year before. If that were so the expenses of administration ought to be reduced.

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, the number of applications for the last three years had varied very little, though there had been a variation in the amount of money dealt with. He did not know about the applications this year, but they thought it safe to provide on the basis that the applications would be at the same rate. He thought it was necessary they should provide for the future in this way.

MR. DANE said, he would like to ask if the Government intended to construct a deep-water pier at Killybegs. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Sir J. T. Hibbert), in his recent visit to the district, saw the parish priest, Father Martin, and he left the people under the impression that a pier would be made out into deep water. The light railway which was recently opened to Killybegs would open up that portion of Donegal very much, but its efficiency would be greatly impaired unless there was a deep-water pier constructed at its terminus at Killybegs.

COLONEL NOLAN said, there could be no doubt that a pier at Killybegs would be a great advantage, not only to

the fisheries, but to the general trade of the district, and he thought it was the duty of the right hon. Gentleman to offer every encouragement he could to such public works as would be opened by the construction of such piers. These piers were necessary to the material development of the country. They were aware of the disadvantages that prevailed at present, and he believed a very large sum had been drawn from the Post Office Savings Bank, which was a serious thing as an indication of the present state of trade and industry, and a warning of the urgency of public works being instituted.

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, he would point out to the hon. and gallant Gentleman that the question of spending money on public works was not raised here. There was a great deal to be done in these matters, and a great deal had been done during the last few years; but such works as the hon. and gallant Gentleman seemed to indicate would require much consideration. With reference to the Killybegs Pier, he had visited the place, and was impressed with the necessity of something being done in the matter. The Treasury had made a request to the Congested Districts Board to give some assistance towards this object, and if the Congested Districts Board did so they would provide a similar sum next year, so he hoped this desired object would soon be carried out. There could be no doubt that the pier would be of great advantage, and it was most desirable that something should be done.

SIR J. GORST said, he also had visited Killybegs prior to the late Government leaving Office, and he was very much impressed with the desirability of having this pier constructed. He had no doubt the right hon. Gentleman had been similarly impressed. But there was one matter about which he would like to have some information—and that was with regard to the arrangements made by the late Government and the operations at the point where the railway stopped. If the railway was now opened, and if matters remained as they were, he feared a large sum of public money had been wasted.

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, certain things were projected, no doubt, and the Government had carried these out to the best of their ability. The manner in

Sir J. T. Hibbert

which the work had been done might not be satisfactory, but he did not wish to throw blame on the late Government; and certainly any difficulty that had arisen to future work was not a matter for which the present Administration could be blamed.

SIR J. GORST said, he did not wish to convey that the right hon. Gentleman was to blame. This was an example of the evil of changing Governments. He appreciated the position of the right hon. Gentleman, and he would only say that he hoped he would do what he could to have the works at Killybegs carried to completion.

Vote agreed to.

7. £8,670, to complete the sum for Registrar General's Office, Ireland.

COLONEL NOLAN said, he would suggest that the record as regarded Roman Catholic marriages should be carried out in a more complete manner.

MR. J. MORLEY said, he would inquire into the matter.

Vote agreed to.

8. £4,683, to complete the sum for Valuation and Boundary Survey, Ireland.

MR. JACKSON said, there seemed to have been some re-organisation of the Office, because there appeared to be a great change in the Estimate as affecting the officers. There was a large reduction, which certainly pointed to re-organisation. Was the right hon. Gentleman in a position to give some information?

MR. J. MORLEY said, his right hon. Friend the Financial Secretary had left the House, but, not to cause delay, he would promise to furnish a reply on Report.

Vote agreed to.

9. £46,806, to complete the sum for Law Charges and Criminal Prosecutions, Ireland, agreed to.

10. £65,006, to complete the sum for Supreme Court of Judicature and Other Legal Departments in Ireland, agreed to.

11. £40,467, to complete the sum for Irish Land Commission.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, there were several matters to which he desired to call attention in connection with the Vote for the Land Commission. In the first place, the Auditor General in his Report pointed out, at the close of a very long correspondence running over several years, that the Land Commissioners had suffered a loss of £16,000 on the Land Purchase and Settlement Company, Limited, formed in 1883 under the Chairmanship of Mr. Parnell, with the present Attorney General and one of the Members for Manchester on the Board of Directors. The nominal capital of the company was £250,000, but only £4,669 was subscribed; but what the company lacked in capital they made up by borrowing, and under the Tramways Act of 1883 they borrowed £42,300 from the British Treasury. With that money they purchased the Bodkin estate in County Galway; the idea being to migrate people from the congested districts into the open space and to give them larger holdings. Well, as a simple fact, not a single human being was ever migrated to that estate, and the whole policy of the company came to grief. There never was an attempt made to find out the object of the company, and what the Auditor General pointed out was that the company was bound to repay the money in half-yearly instalments, spread over 40 years. The company only paid two instalments and then came to a dead stop, and the Irish Land Commission had been obliged to sell the estate to the tenants at a dead loss of £16,000, and the Auditor General, after three or four years' correspondence, had at last elicited the fact that the loss was due to the Land Commission not seeing that there was sufficient security for the advances made. This was a serious state of matters, and if it had occurred with the tenant occupiers it would have seriously injured the Land Purchase Act. He wished to know if the facts were as he stated? There was another question to which he desired to call attention—namely, the block in the Register of Titles Department of the Land Court. Under the Land Purchase Act of 1885 purchasing tenants were bound to register their titles, but no machinery had been provided for it, and the result was the whole thing came to a deadlock, and under the Act of

1885 nothing could possibly be done. The block was so enormous that scarcely any impression had been made, and the purchasing tenant could not borrow money from the Board of Works to improve his holding, or do anything, unless he could prove his title. There were 26,000 or 27,000 cases, and he asked what arrangements had been made by the Government or the officers of the Irish Land Commission to meet this extraordinary state of affairs. The next point to which he desired to call attention was the situation as regarded the fair rent question in Ireland. He noticed that there were on the Vote the salaries of 24 Lay Commissioners. There were absolutely 29 Commissioners at work, but he supposed the doubtful five were not permanent Commissioners. They were, presumably, only brought in for a specific time to do work that was urgent. And in addition to these there were four Legal Commissioners. During the past 18 months the Commissioners had only been able to fix 8,000 fair rents. That struck him as very slow progress indeed. He admitted that the work was being done now more efficiently than it had ever been done before. The original method was a rough-and-ready one; that was to say, the Commissioners ascertained the actual rental and Griffith's valuation, and then heard the statement of the tenant and the proposal of the landlord, and from that hotch-potch cut out the rent. But now the thing was done more carefully. A map was used; the soil of each field was carefully inspected and marked down on the map. He asked the right hon. Gentleman to say whether something could not be done to expedite the work. He had not been able to find out how many cases were listed; but the right hon. Gentleman could, perhaps, tell him how many cases had yet to be dealt with, and to give the amount of the average reductions that had been made during the last 12 months. In regard to land purchase, it was said that the Act of 1891 would never work, but he found that £1,200,000 had been applied for since that measure came into operation. The progress since 1891 had been not quite equal to the progress made under the Ashbourne Act, but they must remember that the present was a time when neither buyers nor sellers were keen to get to work. The buyer was not keen, with the Government of Ireland in an unsettled state, and a measure like the Government of Ireland Bill before the country. He was waiting to see if the Bill passed, and if it would give him better terms. But in spite of that drawback, as he had said, since 1891 upwards of £1,200,000 had been applied for. And now he was afraid he must go back to what the Chief Secretary would regard as an old story—namely, the delay as to land purchase on the Verner estate in his own constituency, to which he had already called the attention of the Chief Secretary. There had been a delay of four or five years. He did not know who was to blame. He only knew it was not the tenants, who had done everything in their power to become the owners of their holdings, which were, many of them, very small, and consisting of mountain land. He hoped the Chief Secretary would be able to tell them to-night whether any progress had been made on that estate in order to bring matters to a conclusion. In the case of Mr. Gunning Moore, of Cookstown, County Tyrone, there had also been gross delay. This gentleman had written to him to say that if he had known there would have been so much difficulty in the transfer of this small property to the tenant, nothing would have induced him to go into the Land Court. He (Mr. T. W. Russell) would ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to inquire into that case. Then, there was another question which he thought the right hon. Gentleman must have been turning over in his mind in view of the immediate future. They were now nearing the period when the first of the judicial leases would expire. The Land Act was passed in 1881, and many of the Ulster tenants went into the Court at once and secured their reduction. In the natural order of events the judicial leases running for 15 years would very shortly expire, and he wished to know whether the tenants would have to go into the Court again and enter once more upon this weary round, or whether the Government had any plan by which a proceeding that would be calamitous both to tenants and landlords might be obviated.

COLONEL NOLAN said, that with regard to the Bodkin estate it was true

Mr. T. W. Russell

that the company to which the hon. Member had referred was started by the late Mr. Parnell and a number of other gentlemen, one of whom was a Conservative Member of Parliament, for the purpose of carrying out the work of migration. He did not believe a single subscriber—except, perhaps, one or two small holders—ever expected to get a single shilling out of the Company. It was a mistake to say that no one had migrated to the estate and that no one had got any value out of it. Persons living in the neighbourhood had taken land upon it, and in that way had got their holdings increased. In that way some 40 or 50 tenants received great benefit. No doubt the Company failed, but that was due chiefly to political causes. There was a political agitation at the time—he would not say whether it was right or wrong—and the effect was to put a stop entirely to the inflow of subscriptions. The total sum subscribed was under £5,000, and, of course, it was impossible to carry on the Company with such a sum as that. In addition to that, the Company was seriously handicapped by having to pay a half or a quarter per cent. interest on borrowed money more than was paid under succeeding Land Acts. When the estate was acquired the Company could borrow as cheaply as outside tenants, but in a short time Acts were passed to reduce the interest paid by future borrowing tenants, which Acts did not relieve the Company. The Company was subscribed to to set an example in Ireland, which was very badly needed.

MR. J. MORLEY: The hon. and gallant Gentleman who has just sat down has explained, as far as he could, the circumstances that attended the formation of the Company, which the hon. Member for South Tyrone began by calling attention to. I have only to make one or two observations from the point of view of the Land Commissioners; and, in the first place, I would point out that these transactions took place when not one of the present body of Land Commissioners was in office. The present Commissioners, therefore, are not responsible. It is also fair to the Commissioners of that day to point out that the Commissioners could only make the advance with the consent of the Treasury of the day. The undertaking turned out to be disastrous, but I do not think that any

economic or political moral is to be drawn from that failure. It was very unfortunate that a sum of £30,000 should have been thrown away, but the Commissioners of that time and many other persons thought that the proposal of Mr. Parnell presented one opening for solving the Land Question in Ireland. As to the registration of titles, the operation of the excellently designed Act now in force has not been all that we could have desired, or all that it was expected to be. Those tenants who have purchased since 1892 have had the registration provided gratuitously for them, which was not the case with the tenants who purchased before that year. The condition of things now is that out of 24,000 purchasers under the old Act 8,000 have applied for registration; but even in this case there appear to have been difficulties, and a year ago the case was laid before the Irish Government. The Irish Government represented the matter to the Treasury, and the Treasury assented to an arrangement, which has undoubtedly removed somewhat of the sting of the position in which the purchasers anterior to 1892 found themselves. The Commissioners have dealt with 7,000 cases, and although that is not entirely satisfactory the Committee will see that to take away the 7,000 cases reduces the 24,000 to a considerable extent. As to the cases since 1892, owing to causes which it would not be useful to go into now, there arose an unfortunate block; but I can say that arrangements have been made for melting it down; and I hope that by this time next year, though I do not expect that complete registration will have been effected, in both cases all arrears will have been wiped off. The Land Commissioners are as anxious as they can be to facilitate this great operation, and I need not say that anything that I can do in the way of putting pressure upon the Treasury I shall be glad to do. Complaint has been made that the 29 temporary Commissioners plus the four Legal Commissioners have only dealt with 8,000 cases of fixing fair rents; but, surely, when my hon. Friend reflects upon the character of the operations which have to be carried out he will see that that is not an unreasonably small number. The hon. Member asked how many cases of fair rent are now listed. As I understand the matter, on the 31st July there were

the effect of stopping land purchase, which is, to my mind, the one simple satisfactory solution of the Irish Land Question. Anyone who applies even a grain of sand for the purpose of stopping the machinery by which that operation is carried on is performing a very ill service to the tenants of Ireland. As to the Land Registration Bill, the right hon. Gentleman was good enough to associate my name with that very important measure. I claimed, at the time the Bill was before the House, and I claim now, no credit for that very fine piece of legislative work, which was entirely carried out by Mr. Justice Madden. The right hon. Gentleman says that certain difficulties have rather hampered the working of that Act, but that he has the matter in hand. I gather that he hopes to be able to oil the wheels of the machine next year, and expects to give a much better report of the proceedings of the Act than he can give at present. There is another question on which I should like to say a word, and which, I think, is of much more importance than the right hon. Gentleman is inclined to attribute to it. The hon. and gallant Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan) took up the cudgels in defence of Mr. Parnell's Company for promoting migration in Ireland, and he said that while the Company had been a financial failure, it was not true to assert that it had done no good to the class it was intended to serve, for, although it was a fact that no migration, purely speaking, was carried out under it, the holdings of many persons living on the estates purchased had been increased, and, therefore, the position of the tenants had considerably improved. Well, Sir, I hope that all Irish land reformers will take the lesson of that Company to heart. I believe in it is to be found the whole moral of dealing with the agrarian question in congested districts. There are still those who flatter themselves that migration on a large scale from one part of the country to another is possible, just as there are sanguine individuals who believe that similar operations can be carried out with success in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. I fear that neither in the one case nor in the other is any such procedure possible, and, apart from the reasons which are to be found in the habits of the people, there is one economic reason which stands

out plainly, namely, that if you are going to bring people from outside into a new district you must build them houses, make fences for them, drain the land, and indulge in general expenditure which they cannot themselves meet. I do not believe that any philanthropic company can ever carry out these operations, and I do not believe the taxpayers of this country will ever assent to carry them out. If, however, you are prepared to proceed on a more modest scale in Ireland, and to buy where you can estates in which there is land which can be added to existing holdings, though I believe such estates will be rare; still, when you can get them, it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that you will be able to add to existing holdings such an amount of land as shall take them out of the category of congested holdings, and turn them into farms on which the agricultural population can obtain a decent livelihood. The idea that you are going to cut up grazing farms, that you are going to divide vast estates in Galway and migrate people to them from other parts of Ireland is, I believe, an absolutely vain expectation, which would entail financial bankruptcy on any Company which acted upon it, and evils of even a worse kind on any Government that was rash enough to support it. By all means try every sane and rational experiment for mitigating the evils which prevail in a barren country like the West of Ireland or the West of Scotland, but do not anticipate that such a scheme as that can be satisfactorily carried out. I suppose we have now heard the last of this unhappy undertaking. I am sure that it was entered upon by Mr. Parnell, by the hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel Nolan), and by other Members of this House, and the general public, in the most earnest hope that it would do good to the population whose benefit it was primarily intended to serve, and do not believe that any great mismanagement can be charged to the Company. Under these circumstances, the failure of the experiment points to some fundamental and initial vice in it, and the record of that failure and its cost to this country will remain as a monument of warning and a beacon to those who again take in hand the difficult, perplexed, and thorny questions which attach in Ireland and Scotland to

the question of the migration of the people.

SIR T. LEA thought that very little justice had been done to the scheme which the right hon. Gentleman had just referred to. Six or eight persons, including himself (Sir T. Lea), subscribed £100 apiece in order that the question of migration might be fairly tried. They chose an estate in Galway, on part of which there was a congested population, and, as they could not move the houses of the tenants who were congested, they gave portions of the grazing land to each of the tenants. It was an experiment that was well worth trying, because at that time there was a strong, even a violent, feeling on the part of the Nationalist Members that the emigration policy of the late Government was entirely wrong, and that if a successful trial could be made of migration they would be able to prove that the people of Ireland would remain at home to cultivate their own farms instead of going to the other side of the world. The experiment failed, he believed, because the price it was necessary to pay for the land was very high, although he feared that under any circumstances it would hardly have been a success. With reference to land purchase, he took it that the £10,000,000 granted by Parliament had now been pretty well allotted. He wished to know what would be done with reference to applications when the £10,000,000 were exhausted. Would the repayment of the sums borrowed under the Ashbourne Act go to meet such applications. He wished also to know whether the Chief Commissioner and the Purchase Commissioners were now acting as one body. The Land Act of 1881 was not working as well as could be wished, and he would impress on the right hon. Gentleman the importance of abolishing all unnecessary red tape in the working of the Land Department and of bringing in a Bill to abolish all the unfortunate restrictions contained in the measure of 1871.

MR. JACKSON: It will be in the recollection of the Committee that under the Act of 1871 Land Stock was issued. It has been frequently stated that Land Stock is not a very good security, and that that is one of the reasons why the Land Purchase Act is not working satisfactorily. In that Act there is a

power by which, with the consent of the Treasury, Land Stock can be exchanged for Consols. Within recent times we have had Consols very nearly at par, and I should be glad if the right hon. Gentleman would tell us to what extent the power of exchanging Land Stock for Consols has been exercised. It would be useful for us to know whether those who have taken Land Stock are so satisfied with it that they have not exchanged it for Consols or whether they have exercised their option of exchanging it; and, if so, to what extent? I have also a word to say with reference to the difficulty of dealing with titles on the part of the Land Commission in regard to Land Purchase. When I was in the Irish Office the question came up, and the Treasury were asked to sanction some additional local assistance in order to deal more quickly with the examination of titles, so as to prevent any unnecessary delay in registration. It was then promised that if the additional assistance were found to be effectual, further assistance would be given in order to what I may call balance the office, because at that time the position was this: The work of the office prior to the stage of the examination of title and subsequent to that stage was pretty well balanced; the only delay that occurred was in connection with the examination of the title. Can the right hon. Gentleman say whether the delay has now been overcome, and whether the examination of the title keeps pace with the other work of the Department?

MR. DANE (Fermanagh, N.) said, he considered the explanations in reference to the Land Commission Court were most unsatisfactory. Out of 24,000 purchasers prior to the 1st January, 1892, no single one had had the title registered; while of 3,000 who had purchased since, only 550 had had their titles registered. That was all the work accomplished in 18 months. The Land Commissioners in their Report stated that they applied to the Treasury for assistance, and the only assistance, and but slight aid was given. Certainly they stated that the initiatory steps had been taken in 7,000 out of the 24,000 purchases he had already referred to, but undoubtedly red-tapeism had been carried too far in that Department. The Land Commission Court was responsible to the State for due inquiry into all titles,

and to do its work effectually it ought to have a competent staff of men. If the Treasury would not provide such a staff then no Member of the House was entitled to blame the Land Commission or the Chief Secretary. There was nothing like putting the saddle on the right horse in such a case. Would the Secretary to the Treasury inform the Committee what further assistance was applied for, and to what extent it was granted? He quite endorsed the statement of the hon. Member for South Tyrone as to the feeling on this subject which prevailed in the North of Ireland, and the uneasiness which the tenant farmers there felt as to their lot under future land legislation. Under the Bill recently before the House it was arranged that the Land Question should be reserved to the Imperial Parliament for a period of three years, but surely it was desirable that this registration of title should be completed as promptly as possible. He hoped the Secretary to the Treasury would look at this business from a large-minded point of view, and that he would grant the Department substantial and material assistance to enable it to grapple with the great block in its work.

MR. J. MORLEY: The late Chief Secretary has asked how far the exchange of Guaranteed Land Stock for Consols has proceeded. I believe, as a fact, there has only been a very small operation; but if the right hon. Gentleman will put down a question I will obtain the required information. The hon. Member who last spoke followed the right hon. Gentleman in pressing for further assistance from the Treasury in the matter of the examination of titles. All I can say is that at the present moment there is no question open between the Land Commission and the Treasury. All the demands of the Land Commission have, to some extent, been met by the Treasury, and, as far as I know, they are wanting nothing. The hon. Baronet asked whether I was thinking of amending defects in the Land Act passed by the right hon. Gentleman opposite. But the right hon. Gentleman himself said in a previous part of to-night's discussion that it was unreasonable to ask whether I was already turning over in my mind the Land Bill which I might think it expedient to bring in in the year 1895, and I think the same considerations

justify me in saying I have not yet thought how the Act of the right hon. Gentleman can be made better. What is quite certain is that some Amendment is necessary, as the central prominent prediction which we made, and which constituted our reason for opposing the Act, has come true. I am told by those who have no political bias in the matter that so long as the landlord is to be paid in Guaranteed Land Stock, and so long as the Insurance Fund is to be exacted from the tenants, so long will the Act work slowly.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, the delay in settling matters on an estate in County Tyrone, to which he had drawn attention, was due not to the Land Commission, but to the solicitor to the landlord's agent. The tenants had done their share; the Land Commission had done all in its power, and could not the right hon. Gentleman now do something to get the matter concluded? One party ought not to have the power of causing all this delay; and if it was not possible under the Act to prevent it, then it showed a drawback in the Act itself.

MR. J. MORLEY: I am pretty sure that the Land Commission have left no stone unturned to bring the matter to a conclusion.

Vote agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed

"That a sum, not exceeding £75,093, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894, for the Salaries, Allowances, Expenses, and Pensions of various County Court Officers, of Divisional Commissioners, and of Magistrates in Ireland, and the Expenses of Revision."

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I hope the right hon. Gentleman will now let us report Progress. In the whole history of this House for the last 15 years the Irish Estimates have never been discussed so briefly and in so businesslike a spirit as they have been to-night. That has been partly due to the silence of hon. Members from Ireland, who by their cries now show an intense desire to go on with the work; but seeing that the Committee have passed such Votes as those for the Chief Secretary, the Local Government Board, Public Works, and the Land Commission, as well as a large number of minor Votes, I do not think

it will be suggested that it is unreasonable we should now ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer to agree to report Progress at 1 o'clock.

SIR W. HARCOURT : I agree with the right hon. Gentleman that the amicable spirit in which the discussion has been carried on to-night is a subject for congratulation. The right hon. Gentleman says that the Irish Votes in former times have taken a longer period to discuss, while the hon. Member for South Tyrone asks if there is any precedent for taking all the Irish Votes in one night. I do not know that there is any precedent, but I do not conceive that the hon. Member could bestow a greater blessing on this House, or become a greater benefactor, than by creating such a precedent. I am averse to entering into a conflict on a subject of this kind, because I know the ultimate result is a loss of time. I desire to accelerate the completion of Supply, and I am afraid that if to-night we entered into an angry contest we should not advance that object. At the same time, when the right hon. Gentleman speaks of adjourning at 1 o'clock, I may point out that that is entirely contrary to precedent. I have the figures of what occurred under the Government of which he was a Member, to show what has been the practice on the later days of Supply. In the first year of that Government's administration the House was in Committee of Supply on September 5, and sat until half-past 4; on September 6 it sat till 4.50, and on September 8 till 4.30. In 1889, on August 22, it sat till 20 past 3; on August 23 till 40 minutes past 2, and on Saturday, the 24th, from noon until 9.30 p.m. In 1891 it sat on July 30 till 2.30, and on July 31 till 4 o'clock. During those years the late Mr. Smith was the Leader of the House and he certainly was not a tyrannical Leader. To suggest that we should cease the consideration of Supply at 1 o'clock, or soon after, is to recommend a complete departure from the practice which has obtained in recent years. I submit these considerations to the Committee in perfect good humour, and I hope hon. Members will consent to follow the example of previous years and apply themselves to business till a later hour. I have one suggestion to make which the right hon. Gentleman may be

Mr. A. J. Balfour

inclined to accept, and that is that we should at least be allowed to take the non-contentious Votes.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, there was a good deal in that suggestion. There were several Votes which, so far as he was concerned, were non-contentious; but there were four or five, such as the Constabulary Vote, which certainly required debating. In former Sessions the Constabulary Vote had occupied two or three nights.

MR. SEXTON : It is non-contentious now.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, the Vote for Irish Education was also contentious.

MR. MACARTNEY said, that although doubtless some of the Votes were practically non-contentious he did not see that anything would be gained by taking them now. They could be disposed of just as quickly to-morrow. The Chief Secretary would not say that any disposition had been shown to discuss any Vote at undue length. He, personally, had abstained from raising several questions which, under other circumstances, he should have discussed.

MR. J. MORLEY : I think the only contentious Votes are those for Constabulary, Education, County Courts, and Queen's Colleges. I understand we may take the rest.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR : To a certain extent, I agree it does not matter much whether we take the non-contentious Votes to-night or to-morrow night; but as the Government desire to take them, I shall be the last to raise any objection. Let me just say, on the general statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that we cannot take his figures without an examination of the circumstances of each Sitting. In the first place, even if we stop Supply now, we have other business which will probably keep us another hour; and, in the second place, in former Sessions the last hours of prolonged Sittings were usually spent in disagreeable wrangles, and were not devoted to the serious business of Supply. I agree, however, to the course suggested by the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

12. £60,709, to complete the sum for Dublin Metropolitan Police, agreed to.

13. £78,532, to complete the sum for Prisons (Ireland), agreed to.

14. £55,702, to complete the sum for Reformatory and Industrial Schools (Ireland), agreed to.

15. £3,958, to complete the sum for Dundrum Criminal Lunatic Asylum (Ireland), agreed to.

CLASS IV.

16. £605, to complete the sum for Endowed Schools Commissioners (Ireland), agreed to.

17. £1,445, to complete the sum for National Gallery of Ireland, agreed to.

CLASS VI.

18. £3,933, to complete the sum for Pauper Lunatics (Ireland), agreed to.

19. £1,621, to complete the sum for Hospitals and Charities (Ireland), agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported To-morrow ; Committee to sit again To-morrow.

SUPPLY—REPORT.

Resolutions [13th September] reported, and agreed to.—[See page 1057.]

SAVINGS BANKS BILL.—(No. 292.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. A. MORLEY, Nottingham, E.): I do not think I need detain the House in moving the Second Reading of this Bill. The Government desire to raise the annual limit of deposits from £30, at which it has stood since 1828, to £100 ; but, in view of the opposition that was raised to that, we have agreed to make the limit £50. I regret that that step has been necessary. I believe the limit of £100 is strongly desired by the country ; but if we had not made the concession, the Bill would have been a controversial Bill, and would have been lost for the Session. I beg to move the Second Reading.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(Mr. A. Morley.)

SIR T. LEA (Londonderry, S.) protested against the Bill, on the ground that it would deprive Irish banks of a large number of deposits. In England it did not matter, because the money

came from England, and was invested in Consols. But the Post Office Savings Banks in Ireland would be the means of taking out of Ireland and investing in Consols money which, if placed in the ordinary Irish banks, would be used to encourage trade and agriculture by loans to farmers, merchants, and traders. He did not propose to move the rejection of the Bill, but would content himself with that protest on behalf of the Irish banks.

MR. GODSON (Kidderminster) said the effect of the Bill would be to draw a large number of small sums of money into the Government net to be invested in Consols. He considered that every inducement ought to be given for retaining as much money as possible in the agricultural districts, where it was so much wanted. From the point of view of the bankers, the Bill was not a good one ; but, on the whole, the Government had fairly met them, and they accepted the compromise as to the limit of the annual deposits.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) said, he was not surprised at the opposition of the bankers, but he could not help thinking that they were not altogether justifiable in their opposition. The substantial banks did not get the savings of the poorer classes, because they required larger sums on deposit than the poorer classes could command. The poorer classes were, therefore, driven to invest in those Societies of whose failures so much had been heard recently. He welcomed the Bill, as it would tend to prevent the poorer classes being robbed by these Societies in the future, his only regret being that the Government had not retained the limit of £100.

*SIR A. ROLLIT (Islington, S.) said that, as a Member of the Inspection Committee, he regretted the Government had been compelled to give way in the matter of reducing the amount of deposits. But as there was no alternative, the Government had acted wisely in agreeing to the compromise. He was sure this increase in the facilities for investing in Consols would greatly benefit investors, and be a source of strength to the State.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

PISTOLS BILL.—(No. 425.)

CONSIDERATION.

Bill, as amended, considered.

*MR. HOPWOOD (Lancashire, S.E., Middleton) said, that if the Government intended to go on with this Bill, in spite of the opposition of their Radical supporters—though it was said that no contentious measure would be taken—he had no choice but to submit the Amendments standing in his name, which were many and important. He would first submit to Mr. Speaker a point of Order. He understood that on the Report stage, if he had Amendments to a clause, he should move those Amendments first, though he intended to move to reject the whole clause. If he were right in that, he would proceed to move the first Amendment, the insertion of the words “other than a householder, for protection of person or property,” which was not upon the Paper, and which applied to Clause 1, Sub-section 3.

MR. SPEAKER said he would so put the Question that the hon. Member might speak at first against the whole clause.

MR. HOPWOOD said, the 1st clause contained the gist and effect of the Bill. He had several objections to make to it. In the first place, he contended that it was absolutely unnecessary; that it was not warranted by the Returns which had been furnished recently at the request of the Home Office; that it was non-effective, and that it attacked the natural right of everybody who desired to arm himself for his own protection, and not to harm anybody else. The Government appeared to think that there were so many accidents with firearms that some such Bill as this was required. But the evidence adduced in support of it was based on three Returns only—one, of the number of accidents arising from revolvers and other firearms which had been treated in hospitals throughout England during 1890-91-92; a second, of the number of Coroners' inquests on such accidents; and the third, of the number of outrages by burglars carrying firearms during five years ended 31st December, 1892. The first Return showed the small number of cases of suicide and homicide upon which the Government were prepared to found this Bill, which should never have been introduced by a Liberal Government, and he did not think it could be proved

that in these cases—there were only 19 fatal accidents for three years—the pistols were purchased for the deliberate purpose of destroying life. Were the parties who sold such weapons to be responsible for the actions of those who purchased? In the case of Coroners' inquests, they had only 49 instances. Then, as regarded armed burglars, the statistics available were equally satisfactory from his point of view. The first column showed “No policeman shot,” several wounded. The number of burglars who were found with arms not used was small—31—and the number who escaped by use of arms—he was taking a period of five years—was even smaller—18. On the basis of these Returns, which the Government had before them, they were not justified in proceeding with a measure of this kind. If the Bill were to pass, why should they have a prohibition as to children under 18 years of age? There were very few of those present who in their earlier years had not pistols in their hands, and who was the worse for it? He said this grandmotherly legislation was not required, and they should make a firm stand against it, so far as it was in their power as a minority to resist it. They regretted to see this relaxation of firmness on the part of the Government, and one so robust in character as the Home Secretary bring it in. Why should not Englishmen arm themselves? It was natural, and they ought not to interfere with such a right. Why did they not interfere with catapults?—these did more injury than the other weapons. Another objection he had to the Bill was that it was class legislation, tending to create class distinction, and sure to be injurious to trade. The Bill at first proposed to secure to the gunmakers and pawnbrokers a monopoly in the trade. He said the disabilities imposed by the Bill were of a character that the trade should not suffer under. While the Bill prohibited buying and selling, it did not prohibit barter and exchanging, nor lending, nor giving; its provisions were so contradictory that it could not be effective. He did not wish to detain the House, but he thought they should mark their sense of the Government action in introducing such legislation. The Bill had been amended, but the provisions introduced were not such as they could be content

with. The provision as to the sale or purchase of pistols really effected no more than the Gun Licences Act did. He pointed out the vexatious restraint on naval and military officers. If any subject of the Queen wanted to buy a pistol or a revolver it was his business and his right to do so without being obliged to sign a document to show that he was an officer. Why were these irritating proceedings to be imposed upon Englishmen? Then, again, they had the provision requiring the production of a certificate from the Board of Trade as to whether a man desiring to purchase was the master or mate in the Merchant Service. Why should that be necessary? Suppose a man wanted to emigrate, he must produce a statement signed by himself, and attested by a Justice of the Peace, to the effect that he was about to emigrate within 14 days from the date of the purchase of the pistol. Was that not irritating, provoking, and absurd legislation? In the case of a foreigner, if he wanted to buy a pistol in this country under this Bill, he would have to produce a statement signed by him, and endorsed by the Consular officer for the country to which he belonged, that he was about to leave the United Kingdom within 14 days from the date of purchase. The clause further stated—

"A pistol or ammunition suitable only for a pistol may not be sold to a person apparently under the age of 18 years, or bought by a person under that age."

They were going to protect these young people against themselves, but yet, whilst it was proposed to restrict the sale of pistols, any of these young people could buy half a pound of gunpowder and blow themselves and their relatives up. Sub-section 5 of the clause said—

"This section shall apply only in the case of the sale of a pistol by any person in the course of trade or business."

As he had pointed out, any person might barter any number of pistols he liked, and this Bill did not prevent any system of exchange in any form. A man might import pistols wholesale from abroad, and then give them to whom he pleased, and the Bill would not touch him in the least. In another clause it was provided that a person under 18 years of age who used a pistol was liable to be fined £10 or sent to gaol for a month. Just fancy that! Who was to pay the fine—the

father or the mother? And who was to be sent to gaol? He supposed the child. Then in this same clause the laws of evidence were reversed. It was provided—

"For the purpose of this section a person on whose behalf any sale is made by an apprentice or servant shall be taken to be the seller, but such a person will not be liable under this Act if he proves that he has taken all reasonable means to prevent the committal of an offence against this section."

The moment he proved his own innocence he was not liable to any penalty. But would it be believed that, although this was a criminal offence, there was no provision in the Bill to enable him to be a witness; therefore he could not prove that he had taken reasonable means to prevent an offence being committed if he had to depend upon himself alone. It was clear the Bill was controversial, and he hoped the House would pause before proceeding with it, and would support him in rejecting this clause, which was a vital part of the measure.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, to leave out Clause 1.—(*Mr. Hopwood.*)

Question proposed, "That Sub-sections (1) and (2) of Clause 1 stand part of the Bill."

MR. A. C. MORTON desired to move the Adjournment of the Debate. It was quite evident this was a contentious Bill, and it ought not, therefore, to be gone on with. The Government had dropped many good Bills, including Bills that would be of use to the country, pleading that for want of time they could not pass them. Another reason for the Adjournment of the Debate was that the present Bill was thoroughly bad, as his hon. and learned Friend had shown, and they ought, at the very least, to have further time for considering it. With a view of obtaining that further time he begged to move the Adjournment of the Debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. A. C. Morton.*)

SIR W. HARCOURT thought it would have been better if the hon. Gentleman had allowed a Division to take place on the clause—a course which would have enabled them to have seen how far the Bill was contentious or not. It was desirable they should know how

many Members there were who were really hostile to the Bill, and when they knew that they should know how to deal with the Bill.

MR. CONYBEARE thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer must have seen by this time that there was quite enough contentious matter in the Bill to induce several of the Radical Members, at any rate, to fight it with very considerable inconvenience to the House and the Government; therefore he hoped the right hon. Gentleman, in the Division which he was inviting, would be satisfied that it would be better to drop the Bill, so that the efforts of the Government might be devoted to some more worthy measure.

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes 37 ; Noes 96.—(Division List, No. 306.)

Original Question again proposed.

MR. HOPWOOD said, he would now like to know whether the Chancellor of the Exchequer considered the Bill contentious? The minority, though small, were resolute upon the subject.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, he was prepared to move the Adjournment of the Debate.

SIR W. HARCOURT said, he was not disposed to push matters too far, and he would agree to the adjournment of the Debate if the hon. and learned Member would move it.

COLONEL NOLAN moved the Adjournment of the House. That, he thought, would meet the difficulty.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(Colonel Nolan.)

*MR. SPEAKER: The Amendment before the House is, that Clause 10 be omitted. The Question I have to put is as to the omission of that clause.

MR. HOPWOOD said, he understood that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was willing to agree to the Adjournment.

*MR. SPEAKER: The Question I have to put is, "That Clause 1 stand part of the Bill."

Sir W. Harcourt

MR. W. S. B. M'LAREN (Cheshire, Crewe) said, he would point out, as a matter of Order, that the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Galway had moved the Adjournment of the House.

*MR. SPEAKER: The Motion before the House is with regard to the retention or omission of the clause. The Amendment is, "That this House do now adjourn."

Question put, and negatived,

Original Question again proposed.

MR. M'LAREN was understood to suggest that he believed the Government and hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway were willing that the Debate should stand adjourned.

SIR W. HARCOURT said, he was willing that the Debate should be adjourned.

COLONEL NOLAN said, he was willing to move that. He only moved the Adjournment of the House, as he thought it would be more convenient.

MR. M'LAREN said, there was a little confusion, and to put matters in order he would move, "That the Debate on Clause 1 stand adjourned."

MR. HOPWOOD rose, but—

*MR. SPEAKER said, the Question is, "That the Debate on Clause 1 stand adjourned."

Question put, and agreed to.

Debate adjourned till To-morrow.

PUBLIC AUTHORITIES PROTECTION

BILL [*Lords*].—(No. 270.)

COMMITTEE.

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, he would like to understand whether this was a Consolidation Bill, as stated the other night, or whether it was a Bill to amend the law?

SIR W. HARCOURT was understood to say it was a Bill to consolidate certain Acts and secure uniformity.

Bill reported, with Amendments; as amended, to be considered To-morrow.

SALE OF GOODS (*re-committed*) BILL.

[Lords].—(No. 441.)

COMMITTEE.

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

MR. S. T. EVANS (Glamorgan, Mid) said, he understood the Government had agreed to allow Clause 22 to stand over.

*THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir C. RUSSELL, Hackney, S.) said, that was so; the question would be dealt with at a later stage.

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston) said, the object of this was, he presumed, to make the Bill a purely Consolidation Bill.

*SIR C. RUSSELL said, he could not commit himself to that. It was principally a Consolidation Bill.

MR. CLOUGH (Portsmouth) said, he begged to move the following new clause:—

(Protection of third parties.)

"Where the possession of goods is delivered by the owner to any person under an agreement for a sale, or for an intended sale, or under any agreement whereby a right or option is given to such person to purchase the goods, and such goods are thereafter sold or pledged by the person so in possession to any person who shall receive possession of the same in good faith, the owner shall not be entitled to recover the goods from the purchaser or pledgee by any process of law or otherwise."

He proposed to add to the end of the clause the words—

"Except on payment by the owner of any amount which the purchaser or pledgee may have paid or advanced on the delivery of such goods to him."

He offered in justification of his clause the statement the Attorney General had just made to the House—namely, that this was not simply a Codification Bill. To explain the clause, he would point out that a purchaser under a hire agreement might obtain goods—say, a watch, although it might be any article from a wedding ring to a piece of furniture—and being a person of limited means might desire to raise money on it. He took it to the pawnbroker. The hire trader insisted on the payment of the instalments when due, and a default in such payments having occurred he followed up the watch, and insisted on the purchaser either paying the instalment or returning the article. The purchaser

had to declare that the article was not in his possession; then the pawnticket was demanded, and the hire trader went with it to the pawnbroker and insisted on the article pledged being given up. Here they had three parties to the transaction, the pawnbroker being the third. At present the pawnbroker, under such circumstances, was bound to deliver up the article pawned, and had no remedy against the person who had pawned it. He was deprived of his security, and his only remedy was to commence an action for fraud. This showed the necessity for the new clause. He maintained that the pawnbroker, under these circumstances, had a right to be protected by law, his having been a perfectly legitimate trading transaction. If the article was worth more than the third party had advanced on it, let the hire trader pay the money so advanced; but it was evidently most unjust that the person who had advanced money should be compelled to give up the article, and that the hire trader should get back the article, and enjoy the money already paid on it in the shape of instalments. The hire trader ought to bear the loss, his remedy being against the purchaser whom he had trusted with his goods. Many persons obtained goods under the hire system, and after paying one instalment pledged the goods which were afterwards claimed by the hire trader, who made the pawnbroker no restitution whatever. This mode of doing business opened the door to fraud. It was an inducement to persons without money or with small means to incur liabilities which they had no means of meeting. The clause covered not only pawnbrokers but auctioneers, and he held that the former class particularly, who were the poor man's brokers, had as much right to be protected as bankers who held bills of exchange.

Clause brought up, and read a first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT hoped the Attorney General would accept the clause.

*SIR A. ROLLIT did not intend to oppose the clause, but thought it raised

highly controversial matter. He thought it should be amended, so that an inequitable advantage could not be taken of the person owning the goods. But he was of opinion that the state of things contemplated by the clause was already, to some extent, met by the Factors' Act.

*SIR C. RUSSELL said, he could not accept the clause. With certain modifications, there was a good deal to be said in favour of it, but, on the other hand, it certainly raised most highly controversial matter. It raised the question of rights of property under the hire system, and as the Bill was substantially one for consolidation the proposal could not now be entertained. The matter, as had been already pointed out, was dealt with, to a certain extent, in the existing law, which was reproduced in Clause 25 of the Bill.

Question put, and negatived.

Bill reported, without Amendment; to be read the third time To-morrow.

FERTILISERS AND FEEDING STUFFS BILL.

Lords' Amendments considered.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.) moved to disagree with the Lords Amendment which substituted the words "What is the least percentage," for "as nearly as he can."

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR, Clackmannan, &c.): I think my hon. and gallant Friend has not quite apprehended the object of the Amendment. The clause relates to warranty respecting the sale of fertilisers. When the Bill was in another place the Lord Chancellor made a criticism to which there seems to be no answer, that the words "as nearly as he can" are inconsistent with the notion of warranty. Accordingly, on the Lord Chancellor's Motion, the words "What is the least percentage" were substituted. Of course, it will always be open to the person giving the warranty to fix the standard as low as he likes.

Lords' Amendment agreed to.

Other Amendments agreed to.

Sir A. Rollit

MERCHANT SHIPPING BILL.—(No. 446.)

Read a second time.

Resolved, That it is expedient that the Merchant Shipping Bill be committed to a Joint Committee of Lords and Commons.—(*Mr. Mundella.*)

Ordered, That a Message be sent to the Lords to communicate this Resolution, and desire their concurrence.

MADRAS AND BOMBAY ARMIES BILL [Lords].—(No. 413.)

As amended, considered; read the third time, and passed, with an Amendment.

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS.

MR. S. T. EVANS (Glamorgan, Mid) said, he wished to know, now that the Motion for Adjournment was made, as soon as Government Business was disposed of, what became of the Bills which were placed below the Government Bills on the Paper? He would suggest to the Government that they might go through them one evening, so that they might be placed on the Paper for the Autumn Sitting.

*MR. SPEAKER: Under present circumstances they are promoted, so to speak, from day to day. The suggestion of the hon. Member is for the Government to consider.

MR. S. T. EVANS said, it was impossible to give instructions to the Clerk at the Table, as the Orders were not called on.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member could defer a Bill to a later date at the commencement of Business—after the Private Business is disposed of at the commencement of the Sitting.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick's): Will this Closure be continued?

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. MARJORIBANKS, Berwickshire): Yes.

Motion agreed to.

House adjourned at five minutes before Three o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 15th September 1893.

QUESTIONS.

MILITARY COURTS MARTIAL IN INDIA.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War will he inquire whether a sergeant of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders was tried at Kasanli, India, on the 17th July, on a charge of drunkenness, and, expecting to be summarily dealt with, in reply to the usual question of his Commanding Officer, admitted and expressed regret for the offence; was the sergeant remanded to a District Court Martial, and then, on a plea of "not guilty" being put in, did the Court, deeming the evidence insufficient, call witnesses to prove the admission made to the Commanding Officer; did the prisoner protest that this was no confession, quoting par. 72, c. 6, M.M. (large edition), and was the objection overruled on the authority of par. 81, c. 6; was the prisoner then convicted on his alleged confession, although before a Court Martial itself a plea of "guilty" may be withdrawn and cannot be availed of to prejudice the accused; and whether, in view of the fact that such procedure and reception of evidence raise a large question of principle affecting the rights of soldiers, and also considering that men will be placed in a position of great difficulty in answering the questions of their Commanding Officers when expecting to be summarily dealt with, the Military Authorities will give the matter their immediate attention?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling, &c.): It is impossible to answer this question without referring to the proceedings of the Court Martial, which are not in our possession. The Commander-in-Chief in India has been asked to forward them to the War Office with a full Report on the whole case.

VOL. XVII. [FOURTH SERIES.]

EVICTIONS ON THE MARQUESS OF SLIGO'S PROPERTY.

DR. R. AMBROSE (Louth, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that there are evictions taking place on the Marquess of Sligo's property without notice having been served on the Relieving Officer; whether the landlord or the Sheriff is bound by law to give such notice; if he is aware that the Sheriff has been written to by the Westport Board of Guardians and asked to give the required notice, but refused to do so; and whether he will see that either the Sheriff or the police will give such notice?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. J. MORLEY, Newcastle-upon-Tyne): There were four evictions on the estate referred to on August 9 and 21, but, except in one instance, the tenants were re-admitted as caretakers, and in several other cases evictions were avoided by settlements with the tenants concerned. Neither the landlord nor the Sheriff is required by law to give any notice to the tenants of the intention to evict; the decree or order of the Court is supposed to be sufficient in this respect. But the law does require that notice shall be served on the Relieving Officer before evicting; and this requirement, I am informed, has always been carried out. The Sub-Sheriff states that he has no recollection of having been written to by the Board of Guardians on the subject.

DR. AMBROSE: Has the right hon. Gentleman read the report of the proceedings of the Guardians in *The Mayo News* of last Saturday?

MR. J. MORLEY: I have not had that report before me.

MR. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.): Was not notice given to the Relieving Officer?

MR. J. MORLEY: I believe the Sub-Sheriff informed the Relieving Officer.

IRISH PRISON WARDER MATES.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can explain why a warder named Mates was in April, 1887, transferred from Tullamore to Limerick, and subsequently

from Limerick to Cork ; and whether the warder named has been granted any compensation for the personal expense and hardship entailed by these removals ?

MR. J. MORLEY : The General Prisons Board inform me that Warder Mates was transferred from Tullamore Prison to Limerick Female Prison for the performance there of certain duties, and that, subsequently, in the interests of the Public Service, he was transferred to Cork Prison. The cost of the transfers was in each case borne by the Prisons Department.

CAPTAIN DONELAN : Did Mates receive any compensation for his removal ?

MR. J. MORLEY : I presume he did not. If a warder or any other official is transferred he receives no compensation beyond the expense of the transfer.

INSANITARY BAKEHOUSES IN LONDON.

MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston) : I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the startling revelations which have recently been made concerning the insanitary state of bakehouses in Marylebone, at the East End, and other parts of London, the filthy conditions under which bread is made, the terribly prolonged hours of labour of the operative bakers, and their low rate of wages ; and whether the Local Authorities are making any efforts to remedy the evils ; and if they are not, whether he will forthwith take the necessary steps for ascertaining the truth concerning the condition of the places in which the food of so many millions of people is prepared, the condition of the operative bakers who prepare it, and, if necessary, rigidly enforce the authority vested in him by "The Public Health (London) Act, 1891" ?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. H. H. FOWLER, Wolverhampton, E.) : The attention of the Local Government Board has not been drawn to the revelations as to the condition of bakehouses in Marylebone, the East End, and other parts of London. It devolves on the Local Sanitary Authorities to put in force the provisions of the law with regard to the sanitary condition of bakehouses,

Captain Donelan

and I have not received any communication alleging default on the part of Sanitary Authorities or their officers in this matter. If there is a failure on the part of any Sanitary Authority to discharge their duty with regard to bakehouses, complaint can be made to the London County Council, who are empowered to take action with a view to the enforcement of the law. Speaking from memory, I may add that the Local Government Board cannot interfere except at the instance of the London County Council.

FIJI.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) : I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies the date when Sir J. B. Thurston was appointed Governor of Fiji ; and is it usual to retain a Colonial Governor for more than six years in one Governorship ?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. S. BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar) : Sir J. Thurston's Commission as Governor was dated the 9th December, 1887, and he assumed the government on the 27th February, 1888, from which day the usual six years will date. In reply to the second question, I may say that it is not usual to extend the term of a Colonial Governor beyond six years, but it has been done.

THE SCOTTISH BOARD OF SUPERVISION.

MR. BEITH (Inverness) : I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he has received recently a communication from the Town Clerk of Inverness protesting against the ineptitude of the Board of Supervision for the relief of the poor in Scotland, in regard to the administration of the laws relating to public health ; if he is aware that, beyond issuing an occasional Circular as to a possible epidemic of cholera, no practical measures have been taken by the Board of Supervision in Edinburgh to anticipate this evil ; if he will favourably consider the various suggestions made in the communication from Inverness ; and, in particular, that questions relating to public health be removed from the control of the Board of Supervision and be placed under a Department created

for the purpose; and if he will, without delay, take practical steps to secure that Local Authorities (urban and rural) in Scotland be urged and required to exercise their powers for enforcing sanitary improvements in view of possible conditions which every day become more probable?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Sir G. TREVELYAN, Glasgow, Bridgeton): I have received and considered the communication from the Town Clerk of Inverness referred to by the hon. Member. The Board of Supervision are in frequent correspondence with Local Authorities as to sanitation and water supply, and their officers communicate with the local officials when visiting their districts, and report to the Board. The Scottish ports have all been inspected and reported on, many of them repeatedly, by the Board's inspecting officers; every port is now believed to be provided with the means of isolating cases of cholera; the attention of all Local Authorities has been called by special letters, as above described, to the weak points noted in the Annual Reports of the local sanitary officers, and the replies show that these points are receiving earnest consideration; every sanitary medical officer in Scotland has been required to report specially whether, in his opinion, the preparations in his district are adequate to meet the threatened epidemic, and when any doubt was expressed strong pressure was applied to the Local Authorities. The Board of Supervision is careful to make known to all Port Local Authorities the existence of disease in Continental ports. In the face of these facts, I do not consider that the allegations made by the Town Clerk of Inverness regarding the action of the Board are accurate. As I have already stated in this House, I am prepared at the earliest opportunity to take up the question of the re-organisation of the Board with a view, amongst others, of placing matters relating to public health on the most satisfactory basis.

Mr. BEITH: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the Sanitary Congress at Ayr the other day expressed a strong opinion against the "antiquated and useless Board of Supervision," and favoured the creation of a Central Board of Health for Scotland? Is it not the universal opinion

in Scotland that the Board of Supervision is fitted only for the administration of the Poor Law, and is not an Organisation calculated to effectively administer the duties of a Public Health Board?

SIR G. TREVELYAN: In the discussion that took place on the Estimates I expressed an opinion that while the Board of Supervision did its utmost in these matters, it was not a satisfactory Organisation for purposes connected with the public health.

HIGHGATE WOODS.

Mr. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Notts, Mansfield): I beg to ask the hon. Member for Stoke-upon-Trent, as a Church Estates Commissioner, whether the Ecclesiastical Commissioners have consented to sell to the Hornsey Charity Trustees a strip of land in Muswell Hill Road, abutting on Churchyard Bottom Wood, Highgate, on condition that an existing road through the adjacent land belonging to such Trustees is widened by 10 feet; whether this is preliminary to a scheme for building on the site of the Wood, or on a portion thereof; and whether, before the adoption of any such scheme, Parliament and other Public Bodies will have an opportunity of expressing an opinion respecting it?

***THE COMPTROLLER OF THE HOUSEHOLD** (Mr. LEVESON-GOWER, Stoke-upon-Trent): The answer to the first paragraph of the question is "Yes." The Commissioners gave for a public park the Gravel Pit Wood, comprising 69 acres, in the year 1886, and in the same year they provisionally agreed on terms for a sale to the Hornsey Local Board of the Churchyard Bottom Wood, of about 49 acres, adjoining the Gravel Pit Wood, subject to the necessary Parliamentary powers being obtained. This sale was not, however, carried out. The condition made by the Commissioners as to the widening of the existing road was for the purpose of providing better access for building purposes to the land belonging to them beyond Gravel Pit Wood, as well as to the Wood itself, in the event of a sale of the Wood to a Public Authority not being effected. In reply to a similar question in the year 1887, it was stated that the Commissioners are not prepared to give the undertaking asked for in the last paragraph of the question.

*MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS : Am I to understand that it is the intention to destroy that portion of Highgate Woods by building on it ?

MR. LEVESON-GOWER : No, Sir ; my hon. Friend must not understand anything of the kind.

LABOURERS' COTTAGES IN IRELAND.

MR. P. J. O'BRIEN (Tipperary, N.) : I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland what was the nature and substance of the Report furnished to the Local Government Board by their Inspector, Mr. Bourke, as the result of his recent inquiry at Borrisokane into the scheme formulated by the Guardians of that Union for the erection of labourers' cottages in their district ; whether he is aware that the Guardians, acting on the representations presented to them and the Reports of their sanitary officers, sanctioned and approved of a scheme for the erection of 32 cottages within the Union ; that this scheme met with practically no opposition from the owners on whose lands the cottages were proposed to be erected ; and that, notwithstanding, Mr. Bourke rejected 21 out of the entire number, and if he will state on what grounds ; whether, out of the 14 cottages approved of in the Division of Cloughjordan, 13 were rejected ; and if he is aware that in this division several labourers have recently been evicted from their previous holdings, and are now without house or home ; and that, as stated by a Guardian (Mr. Delaney) at a meeting of the Board, when one poor man, who had been dispossessed and was at the time only in temporary shelter of a barn, complained to the Inspector, he was told it was good enough for him ; and whether, having regard to the serious nature of this case, he will cause full inquiry to be made into all the circumstances ?

MR. J. MORLEY : It is true, as stated, that out of 32 cottages included in the scheme 21 were rejected by the Inspector. Of these 21 cottages, 13 were rejected on the ground that the persons for whom they were intended at present inhabited houses capable of being repaired ; three on the ground that the persons for whom they were intended inhabited houses not unfit for human habitation, and not condemned by the Medical Officer of Health ; two on account of no

water supply being near the sites ; one because the farm on which it was proposed to erect is too small ; one owing to the site being placed on the wrong person's farm, and one was withdrawn at the inquiry. To some of the sites there was considerable opposition, but in the majority of cases no opposition was raised in reference to the houses occupied by the 13 persons above-mentioned. Mr. Bourke, the Inspector, reports as follows :—

“The houses in question are situated for the most part in the towns of Borrisokane and Cloughjordan, those in the latter town being substantial stone and mortar buildings two or three storeys high with slated roofs. It is true that in nearly every case a certain amount of repairs would require to be done to them in order to make them comfortable dwellings ; but as the Sanitary Authority have power to insist on the owners carrying out these repairs, if they wish to continue to let the houses, and have also power if they see fit to acquire these houses and improve them themselves, I do not feel justified in recommending that new cottages should be erected at the expense of the ratepayers, and buildings such as I have described allowed to become untenanted, as many of the houses in Cloughjordan at present are.”

As to the statement in paragraph 3 of the question, out of 14 cottages proposed for the Cloughjordan Division 10, and not 13, were rejected by the Inspector. The Clerk of Borrisokane Union states that three labourers were evicted in Cloughjordan Division ; that for one of them a cottage is intended to be erected ; that another of them was found by the Inspector dwelling in a house quite capable of being repaired, and the third was found in a habitation which is part of a substantial farm-house. Mr. Bourke, the Inspector, reports that he was not, nor is he aware of any labourers in the Cloughjordan Division being without house or home ; and the Guardians of the Division assured him that there was ample accommodation in the town for all the labourers dwelling there, a statement which the Inspector's own observation corroborated. The Inspector states that he never told any man living in a barn that it was “good enough for him.” If the Board of Guardians, who have the result of the inquiry and the Inspector's reasons for rejecting the cottages before them, are able to show that the Inspector was mistaken or misinformed in any particular instance they can, by applying to the Local Government Board, have the case re-considered.

THE MERCHANT SHIPPING BILL.

MR. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the Merchant Shipping Bill proposes to consolidate the law relating to merchant shipping; whether he is aware that the Bill, and the Schedules as drafted, leaves three clauses of the principal Act of 1854 unrepealed, one also in the repeal Act of the same year, and several clauses in other and subsequent Acts; whether he will state to the House his reasons for this partial repeal; and whether he will accept Amendments to place the unrepealed enactments in the Schedule?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. MUNDELLA, Sheffield, Brightside): The Merchant Shipping Bill, which has now been read a second time, purposes to consolidate the various Acts of Parliament relating to the Mercantile Marine, and repeals those Acts so far as they are re-enacted by the Bill. Any sections unrepealed have been allowed to remain in force on the ground that they do not relate to merchant shipping, and refer to other subjects not included in consolidation. The three sections of the Act of 1854 to which the hon. Member refers relate, so far as unrepealed, solely to fishing boats registered under an Act passed in 1868 for the purpose of carrying out a Convention with France; another section deals with pensions to past officers, which would be more properly dealt with by a Statute Law Revision Act; and the remaining sections alluded to deal with subjects other than merchant shipping.

MR. HOWELL: Is it the fact that Section 16 of the Repeal Act is not incorporated in this Bill?

*MR. MUNDELLA: I should not like to answer that offhand; but the hon. Member may rest assured that the Joint Committee which has to deal with this question will see that this Bill consolidates everything that relates to merchant shipping.

POOR LAW CONSOLIDATION.

MR. HOWELL: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, in view of the uncertainties of the law as regards the relief of the poor and the administration of the Poor Laws, he will introduce a Bill

in the next Session of Parliament to consolidate the law, or, failing that, whether he will cause a Digest of the laws to be prepared, printed, and circulated to Members of this House?

MR. H. H. FOWLER: I will submit the suggestion to the Statute Law Committee, with a view to their seeing whether a consolidation of the Poor Laws can be prepared. But I must tell the hon. Member that the Acts and Orders are very voluminous.

MR. HOWELL: Is there not a Digest of them at the Local Government Board Offices, and would not that suffice?

MR. H. H. FOWLER: We have no Digest.

MASHONALAND.

MR. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether communication between Cape Colony and Mashonaland is now closed by the Matabele route by Lo Bengula; whether there is any other safe route at present to Forts Victoria and Salisbury *via* Port Beira and the Beira Railway; and whether all postal communication to the British South Africa Company's territory goes by the Beira route, and to what extent that will expedite the transmission of letters to that country?

MR. S. BUXTON: According to all our information, the various land routes into Mashonaland are open. The Beira route is quite safe; but the railway is not yet reported to be open, it being understood that Mr. Rhodes has started for Beira with the object of opening it. It is not believed that the Beira route is much used for postal purposes from the Cape, and, even when the railway is opened, its use would not expedite the transmission of letters.

MR. WEBSTER: May I inquire whether the Government have received any further information from Sir Henry Loch with reference to Mashonaland?

MR. S. BUXTON: Papers received up to a few days ago will, I hope, be distributed on Monday. We have nothing since.

FUNDS FOR TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION.

MR. BENSON (Oxfordshire, Woodstock): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, in the

event of any failure on the part of County Councils to make use of their powers under "The Local Taxation (Customs and Excise Act, 1890," for the furtherance of technical instruction, the Government will consider the question whether the whole fund dealt with by that Act should continue to be distributed among County Councils as at present, or whether some alteration of the law is not required; and whether, in considering this question, the Government will have regard to the fact that the assignment of this fund to Local Authorities was not proposed to Parliament as a measure of relief to local rates out of general taxation, but for the furtherance of a purpose of public utility for which Local Authorities would not otherwise have had funds available?

MR. H. H. FOWLER: Under the Local Taxation Act, 1890, the County Councils and the Town Councils of county boroughs were empowered to apply the additional subventions received by them under that Act to purposes of technical and intermediate instruction; but no legal obligation was then imposed on the Councils so to apply these moneys. I am glad to say that a very large proportion of the Councils have complied with what may be fairly called the intention of Parliament in making these additional grants. I find that of 62 counties in England and Wales 54 applied the whole of the additional grant to technical and intermediate instruction, and in the remaining eight counties a portion of the grant was so applied. With regard to the 64 county boroughs, 50 have so applied the whole and 10 a part of the amount. In one no decision had been arrived at by the Town Council, and with respect to the remaining three it is stated that, although Returns have not been received, it is believed that the whole amount has been appropriated in this manner. A recent Return has been laid on the Table giving the details of the manner in which the Councils have devoted these funds for the purposes of science, art, technical, and manual instruction. I hope that it will not be necessary to propose any legislation in order to insure the application of these grants to technical education.

MR. LODER (Brighton): Can the right hon. Gentleman inform the House

Mr. Benson

whether the London County Council have distributed a portion or the whole of the funds allotted to them for the purpose of technical education?

MR. H. H. FOWLER: I believe that they have, but I should not like to say definitely without inquiring. I will tell the hon. Gentleman to-morrow.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that in many instances the instruction is of an absurdly elementary character, such as teaching the girls to grate nutmegs?

MR. H. H. FOWLER: The Local Government Board have no power to interfere with the County Council in such matters.

POLICE INTERFERENCE WITH THE GALBALLY SHOPKEEPERS.

MR. FINUCANE (Limerick, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that several shopkeepers of Galbally, County Limerick, have recently complained of the undue interference of Sergeant Kennedy with the conduct of their business on the grounds that he has often summoned farmers for having left their horses and carts outside the doors of shopkeepers whilst buying necessities, one such summons having been dismissed on 12th April last, although the street has been often blocked by carts opposite the doors of his friends and relatives; is it in accordance with the Police Regulations to have any member of the Force serving in a district in which he has relatives; and will an investigation be ordered into the conduct of Sergeant Kennedy?

MR. J. MORLEY: The Inspector General reports that it is not true that the shopkeepers at the place referred to have recently complained of the action of Sergeant Kennedy for undue interference with the conduct of their business in the manner indicated. A summons at the suit of a constable was dismissed as stated on the 12th April last. The sergeant has no relations in the district in which he serves, and is reported by the Constabulary Authorities as a most efficient member of his rank. I understand that one person in the locality claims to be a connection of the sergeant, but the sergeant states his only acquaintance with this person was

through the medium of the Petty Sessions Court, where he had him fined on two occasions.

MR. FINUCANE: I have personal knowledge of the facts, which are directly contrary to those supplied to the right hon. Gentleman. May I submit them to him?

MR. J. MORLEY: If the hon. Gentleman will give me any information I will cause further inquiry to be made.

SESSIONAL PAPERS.

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston): In the absence of the hon. Member for West Salford, I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware of the inconvenience which arises from the absence of any general Index to the Sessional Papers of the House for the period 1880 to 1889, similar to that which was ordered to be printed on 16th March, 1880, for the period 1870 to 1879; whether he can make arrangements for the issue of such an Index at an early date; and when the annual Index to the Sessional Papers for 1892 is likely to be available?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Sir J. T. HIBBERT, Oldham): I am informed that the compilation of the general Index to the Sessional Papers of the House for the period 1880 to 1889 can, practically, only be proceeded with when the House is not sitting; and, though great progress was made last year, I fear that the shortness of the Recess this year will retard the work, but I hope that it will be completed next year. A proof copy of the annual Index for 1892 has been in use in the Library since February last, and I hope that no unnecessary delay will occur before the final issue.

DEFRAUDING CABMEN.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that one, Henry Harris, solicitor and a commissioner for affidavits, has been ordered within 14 days to pay three cabdrivers sums varying from 10s. to 21s. for fares, and that he has refused to comply with the order, so that none of these poor men have received either their money or the costs which they have necessarily incurred; whether he can assist these men; and whether he can

provide some means of easy recovery of their fares for cabdrivers who have been defrauded more than once by the same individual?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. ASQUITH, Fife, E.): The answer to the first paragraph is in the affirmative. With regard to the second and third paragraphs, I regret that in the existing state of the law I cannot assist the men, but I will take the earliest opportunity of endeavouring to amend the law. The Chief Magistrate reports to me that in the opinion of all the Metropolitan Magistrates the present state of the law ought to be remedied.

DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE ON QUARRIES.

MR. AINSWORTH (Cumberland, Egremont): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if the Departmental Committee appointed to inquire into the working of quarries has made its Report, or when it will do so?

MR. ASQUITH: The Report has not yet been received; the inquiry is expected to be finished before the 1st of November.

POSTAL CLERK CLAYDON.

MR. MACDONALD (Tower Hamlets, Bow): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether a temporary clerk named Claydon was recently given a special increment of £60 per annum, bringing his salary up to £204; and, if so, what special circumstances justified this increment; and whether there are hundreds of appointed clerks, with many more years' service, receiving less salaries and performing far more responsible duties.

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. A. MORLEY, Nottingham, E.): The servants of the late Submarine Telegraph Company, of whom Mr. Claydon was one, were promised appointments on the Post Office Establishment, and this promise it was not possible to redeem in Mr. Claydon's case on account of his inability to procure the medical certificate required by the Civil Service Commissioners. As some compensation for his disappointment, he has been given a fixed salary somewhat in advance of that received by his fellow-officers; but this salary, unlike theirs, will not progress by annual incre-

ments, neither will he be entitled to pension on retirement.

OPEN AIR MEETINGS AND STREET OBSTRUCTION.

MR. MACDONALD : I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Metropolitan Police have instructions to regard all public meetings held at street corners and attended by more than 10 persons as obstructive of traffic ; if not, could he state what are the exceptions and who decides what meetings are to be exceptions, and what Act of Parliament, if any, authorises these instructions ?

MR. ASQUITH : No ; the Metropolitan Police have no such instructions. No meeting is interfered with by the police unless it occasions serious obstruction to the traffic. Each meeting, therefore, is judged on its merits, and the question whether it occasions serious obstruction depends for an answer on a number of local circumstances, such as the area and position of the place where the meeting is held, the amount of traffic, and the like. I am not aware of any Act of Parliament that could authorise such instructions.

MR. MACDONALD : Did not one of the Magistrates in a recent case hold that all street meetings were contrary to law if attended by more than 10 persons, whether obstructions were caused or not ?

MR. ASQUITH : In reference to that dictum, it would be presumptuous in me to criticise the Magistrate's exposition of the law. In my opinion, however, the police ought not to interfere unless the meeting creates a serious obstruction to traffic.

H.M.S. "COLOSSUS."

MR. GOURLEY (Sunderland) : I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether H.M.S. *Colossus*, whilst on her way home to pay off (after being on the Mediterranean Station for three years), owing to the loss of the *Victoria* has been ordered back, thus causing many of the crew to break their leave and otherwise misconduct themselves, five being sent to prison at Malta, three placed in cells, and others subjected to minor punishments ; and whether the Admiralty will consider the advisability of not keeping the men of this vessel so long sepa-

Mr. A. Morley

rated from their relatives in a time of peace ?

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Sir U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH, Lancashire, Clitheroe) : The *Colossus* was on her way home when, in consequence of the loss of the *Victoria*, it was necessary to detain her on the station for some time longer, in the interests of the Public Service. No Report has been received of such misconduct on the part of the crew as is suggested in the question. H.M.S. *Anson* was commissioned on the 12th instant, and will shortly relieve the *Colossus*.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES : Can the right hon. Gentleman say why the *Trafalgar*, which was commissioned after the *Colossus*, was relieved before her ?

SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH : I must ask for notice of that question.

H.M.S. "CAMPERDOWN."

MR. GOURLEY : I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he can inform the House the cost of the damage sustained by the *Camperdown* arising out of the collision with the *Victoria* inclusive and exclusive of the cost of the crew ; whether it is true that the "A" frame of the port propeller shafting is so damaged as to necessitate the return of the vessel to the United Kingdom for repairs, there being neither facilities or plant for doing the work at Malta ; and whether the Admiralty in future will provide that vessels of this and all other classes shall always have on board spare shafting propellers and other spare gear which cannot be obtained in the event of accident abroad ?

SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH : The actual cost is not yet known, but the estimate for repairing the damage to the *Camperdown* is £2,500. A slight defect, unconnected with the collision, has been discovered in the "A" frame which carries the port propeller shafting. This can be remedied without bringing the ship home. Spare gear, including spare propeller-blades, are carried by all Her Majesty's ships to the extent which experience has shown to be desirable. The *Camperdown* had spare shafting also.

ST. KATHERINE'S HOSPITAL.

MR. CREMER : I beg to ask the hon. Member for Merionethshire, as a

Charity Commissioner, whether any effort is being made to give effect to the recommendations contained in the Report which Mr. Skirrow, years ago, presented to the Charity Commissioners concerning the manner in which the funds of St. Katherine's Hospital, in the Regent's Park, were being appropriated; whether the present master receives a stipend of £1,200 per year, and lives in the house assigned to him as an official residence, or lets it, as his predecessor did, for £700 per year, and adds that amount to his stipend; what are the duties of his office; whether the brethren who receive £300 and the sisters who receive £200 per annum now reside in the houses allotted to them or let the houses and receive the rents; how many boys and girls are being educated out of the funds of the hospital; how much of the endowment is expended upon education, and how much upon salaries, gifts, and expenses of management; and why the scheme for the reform of the hospital, which was prepared years ago by the Charity Commissioners and practically endorsed by the School Board for London, which inquired into the endowments of the hospital, has not been carried into effect?

***THE PARLIAMENTARY CHARITY COMMISSIONER (Mr. T. E. ELLIS, Merionethshire):** As it has more than once been stated, in reply to questions put by the hon. Member, the Commissioners have no power to deal by scheme with St. Katherine's Hospital, except upon a sufficient application. No such application has been made to them. The master receives the salary of £1,200 a year, including an allowance of £400 in respect of house rent. The house assigned as the master's residence was sold in the year 1888, and the proceeds added to the general endowment of the hospital. The Commissioners have no other information as to the duties of the office of master than that which is contained in the documents already before Parliament — namely, Mr. Skirrow's Report presented to the House of Lords in 1866, the Report of the Royal Commission presented to both Houses of Parliament in 1871, and the Rules by which the hospital is governed, which were laid on the Table of the House in 1889. The Commissioners have no information as to the residence of the

brethren and sisters; nor are they aware how many boys and girls are now being educated out of the funds of the hospital. The expenditure of the endowment is apportioned as follows in the accounts for the year 1892:—Education, £561; salaries, £3,209; gifts, £190; expenses of management, £3,193. The Charity Commissioners have prepared no such scheme as is suggested by the question. The Charity Commissioners cannot deal with this Charity, except with the consent of the majority of the Governors. I regret that consent has not been given to deal with what seems to me to be a scandal.

***MR. CREMER:** May I ask whether, in view of the extraordinary statements made by the hon. Gentleman concerning the waste and extravagance in this Charity, and in view of the fact that one of the Charity Commissioners, Mr. Skirrow, made a Report on the hospital some years ago, the Charity Commissioners will not deem it part of their duty to take immediately the necessary steps to reform the institution?

***MR. T. E. ELLIS:** Whatever may be the views of the Charity Commissioners on the matter, they cannot deal with this Charity, because, according to the law, they have no authority to make schemes for Charities whose incomes exceed £50, except with the permission of the Governing Body of that Charity. The Commissioners have tried on several occasions to secure legislation altering this, but unfortunately they have failed.

MR. BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich): Will the hon. Gentleman invite the Governing Body of this Charity to make the application to which he refers?

***MR. T. E. ELLIS:** An invitation has, I believe, been made, but has not been accepted.

***MR. C. WILLIAMS:** Is the master of the hospital a clergyman or a layman?

***MR. T. E. ELLIS:** I cannot say, but will obtain the information if the hon. Gentleman desires it.

THE SALE OF DISEASED MEAT IN LONDON.

MR. F. FRYE (Kensington, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that two men, named John May and John Palmer, dealers in meat, are now

awaiting their trial on a charge of having sold at their shops, situate at Charterhouse Street, Clerkenwell, diseased meat to retail butchers in London; and whether he has any reason to believe that diseased meat is being sold to an alarming extent, and that this traffic has been going on in this street for many years; whether he is aware that the matter has been under the consideration of the City Commissioners of Sewers and the Inspectors of Meat of the Central Meat Market who knew of these sales, but are powerless to interfere, Charterhouse Street being outside the jurisdiction of the City; and what steps he proposes to take in the matter?

MR. H. H. FOWLER: I am inquiring into this matter. The question only appeared on the Paper for the first time this morning, and I have no information on the subject.

HYDRAULIC CRANES FOR MAIL TRANSFERENCE.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick's): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he is aware that, although the Dublin Steam Packet Company offered some years ago to erect hydraulic cranes, and although the Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford Railway Company built special vans to enable the quick mechanical transference of the mails from the jetty to the steamer, the Government and the London and North Western Railway opposed this expediting arrangement, and refused to sanction its introduction; and whether this matter will be reconsidered?

MR. A. MORLEY: The transfer of the mails to and from the steamers and the trains at Holyhead and Kingstown by machinery has been under consideration again and again for many years past; but the saving of time is extremely problematical, and, apart from the question of expense, there are practical difficulties, which the Department has never yet seen its way to overcome. Under the present plan of loading and unloading by means of porters, the mails, which are of very varying bulk and weight, are packed in the trains in such a way as to facilitate the sorting duties which have to be performed *en route*, and the subsequent disposal of bags for roadside stations. A transfer in crates would be less convenient in

many respects, and not only would vans of a special construction be required, but also additional vans, which would increase the weight of the trains, and tend to hinder the observance of punctuality.

IRISH POOR LAW DIETARY.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will take measures to have the dietary scale of Irish Poor Law Unions raised and put on the same basis as those of Great Britain; and whether he will also inquire into the general treatment of the inmates, particularly respecting those over 60 years of age, in Ireland, and have them treated on a similar system with that prevailing in England and Scotland?

MR. J. MORLEY: I have already told my hon. Friend that I hope to have an opportunity of discussing this matter with the Irish Local Government Board in a week or two, and I should not like to express any opinion till I have done so, nor can I grant the Return of which the hon. Member has given notice until I see how the land lies.

MR. FIELD: I will not move for the Return till next Session.

STAFF COLLEGE EXAMINATION PAPERS.

MR. POWELL WILLIAMS (Birmingham, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that doubts have arisen as to the meaning of the words "Geography of Europe south of the Danube and west of the Rhine," in A. O., 138, with regard to the next Staff College examination; and whether he will issue a more definite description of the area to be studied?

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The words are undoubtedly rather vague, and the Director General of Military Education will issue a full description of the area in question.

THE BECHUANALAND PROTECTORATE.

MR. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Government have agreed to give a grant of £20,000 per annum for 10 years (on conditions) towards the proposed railway extension in the Bechuanaland Pro-

Mr. F. Frye

tectorate ; and whether he is aware that the late Government refused to give any such grant without the previous consent of the House of Commons, as set out in telegram of 11th June, 1892, and in letter of 14th June, 1892 ?

MR. S. BUXTON : As regards the first part of the question, I have to state that Her Majesty's Government have intimated their willingness, on certain conditions, to approve of the Bechuanaland Government subsidising the railway extension in question. The subsidy would, if granted, amount to £10,000 a year for 10 years on the completion to the satisfaction of the Bechuanaland Government of the railway to Gaberone's, with the addition of a similar amount for a similar period on the completion of the line to Palapye. The grant of the subsidy would not involve any additional charge to Imperial Funds, as the greater facility of transport would enable the Bechuanaland Government to effect savings equal to or exceeding the subsidy—apart from the increase of revenue that might be expected to result from the opening up of the country to settlers, and apart from the strategic and other advantages arising from railway connection between the Southern and Northern Protectorates. The possibility of the Bechuanaland Government entering into such an agreement, and its ability to fulfil it if made, must depend on the willingness of this House to continue the annual Bechuanaland Grant in Aid ; and as to this Her Majesty's Government have not committed and cannot commit the House of Commons, which, of course, remains free to approve or refuse the Votes in Supply, as proposed by the Government. No agreement has yet been made between the Bechuanaland Government and the Railway Company ; and it is understood that the latter is not yet in a position to commit itself to concluding the proposed Agreement, or to making the subsidised extension. In regard to the second part of the question, I have to observe that the attitude of the late Government appears to have been correct, and not to have differed in substance from that of the present Government.

MR. A. C. MORTON : May I ask if it is the intention of the Government to obtain the assent of the House of

Commons to the Agreement before it is finally signed ?

MR. S. BUXTON : No. This Agreement, if made, will be in the same position as other subsidies of a somewhat like nature. The House of Commons can, of course, refuse to pass it ultimately.

MR. A. C. MORTON : My question was whether the Government intended to ask the assent of the House of Commons to the Agreement before it was signed, and not afterwards ?

MR. S. BUXTON : No.

***SIR C. W. DILKE** (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) : There is a sum in the Estimates of £100,000 for the Bechuanaland Protectorate. Last year £18,000 was returned out of a like grant ; yet the same amount is asked for this year. Will it be in Order to discuss the question of this railroad on the Vote in Aid of the Bechuanaland Government ?

MR. S. BUXTON : The Grant in Aid of the Bechuanaland Government affords an opportunity for raising any question of administration for which the Colonial Office is more or less responsible ; and under these conditions, no doubt, a Debate might be raised. But there is no grant towards the railroad in the Votes for this year, nor is there likely to be for some years to come.

MR. BARROW (Southwark, Bermondsey) : What is the length of the line ?

MR. S. BUXTON : When completed it will be about 400 miles long.

MR. PAUL (Edinburgh, S.) : If a saving is not made, and there is a consequent deficit in the Revenues of Bechuanaland, who will make that deficit good ?

MR. S. BUXTON : The proposition is that the Government of Bechuanaland will be able to produce savings which will not only meet the guarantee to be given, but will probably be in excess of it. But if there is a deficit it will have to come out of the Grant in Aid.

MR. A. C. MORTON : Would the Chancellor of the Exchequer put down the Bechuanaland Vote for discussion at a reasonable hour ?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EX-CHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby) : They say that at night all cats are gray ; and at this period of the Session all hours are reasonable.

MR. A. C. MORTON: Does the right hon. Gentleman consider that a reasonable answer?

[No reply was given.]

NAVAL EXPENDITURE.

MR. POWELL WILLIAMS: In the absence of the hon. Member for West Belfast, I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what was the total sum, whether derived from a cash provision or otherwise, expended during the last financial year upon construction for the Royal Navy; and by what amount does such sum exceed or fall short of the sum to be expended during the current year?

*SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: The estimated expenditure from cash provision and otherwise upon new construction in 1893-4 (exclusive of contract ships building under the Naval Defence Act, the charge for which falls on the Consolidated Fund, and is spread equally over seven years) is £2,398,600. To this ought to be added the provision of £45,125 made under Vote 8 (see footnote, page 164 of the Estimates) for Transferable Gun-mountings and Auxiliary Machinery for the New Ships, making a total of £2,443,725, as compared with the actual expenditure of £2,268,000 in 1892-3, or an increased estimated expenditure in the current year of about £175,000. The difference between these figures and those given on September 1, in reply to my hon. Friend the Member for Gateshead, is due to two causes—first, the inclusion in 1893-4 of £50,000, being savings from previous years; secondly, the substitution in the case of 1892-3 of the ascertained actual expenditure (per Expense Accounts) for the cash provision made in the Estimates.

CHOLERA AND RUSSIAN IMMIGRANTS.

MR. MACDONA (Southwark, Rotherhithe): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that 101 immigrants from cholera districts in Russia arrived in the Thames on 13th instant on the steamship *Adler* and 85 from Bremen; that the steamship *Ellida* with 26 from Libau also arrived in the Thames at the same time; whether he is aware that all these are Russian and Polish Jews, and most of them immigrants of the poorer class coming from cholera-stricken districts; whether the Government has given

orders for the bedding and filthy rags coming with these immigrants to be disinfected or destroyed; and whether, while the danger of an outbreak of cholera exists, the Government will take such measures as will immediately prevent any further immigration of foreign paupers into this country?

MR. H. H. FOWLER: I understand that Russian immigrants have been arriving in the Thames from Bremen, Memel, and Libau, and that the Medical Officer of the Port of London prohibited the landing of 75 of the 85 immigrants from Bremen and of the 26 from Libau, pending their furnishing satisfactory evidence as to their addresses. If the bedding and clothing of the immigrants are in a filthy state they could not be delivered outside or landed, except on conditions as to disinfection or destruction. From the point of view of public health, the measures embodied in the Board's Regulations, which the Board believe are most efficiently carried out in the Port of London, appear to be sufficient. I may add that the Local Government Board understand that the German Authorities retain under medical observation for seven days all Russian Jews crossing the frontier; two more days' detention generally takes place at Berlin, during which time they are cleansed and their clothing disinfected; and, finally, before proceeding to German outports, they are again medically inspected.

IRISH NATIONAL BOARD SCHOOLS.

MR. MANDEVILLE (Tipperary, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland is there anything in the Rules regarding vested schools under the National Board in Ireland to prevent their being used as circulating libraries on Sundays?

MR. J. MORLEY: I am informed by the Commissioners of National Education that under the Rules referred to they could not permit the use of vested national schools as circulating libraries, as such libraries are not intended exclusively for the education of the children attending national schools—a requirement which is enjoined by the Rules.

POOR LAW COMMISSION REPORT, 1884.

MR. POWELL WILLIAMS: In the absence of the hon. Member for North St. Pancras, I beg to ask the President

of the Local Government Board whether he will have the Poor Law Commissioners' First Report of 1834 reprinted in a convenient form and circulated amongst Members of the House, and sold to the public at a cheap price, as such Report contains valuable information on important questions now very much discussed in the country?

MR. H. H. FOWLER: The Report referred to was reprinted and issued as a Parliamentary Paper in 1885, at the price of 2s. 5d.

MR. POWELL WILLIAMS: I understand that it is out of print.

MR. H. H. FOWLER: That is not asked in the question. I have reason to believe there are plenty of copies, but I will inquire.

AUXILIARY LETTER CARRIERS.

MR. BUTCHER (York): I beg to ask the Postmaster General what qualifications or services are necessary before an auxiliary letter carrier is raised to the position of a postman, entitled to pension and allowances; and whether some auxiliary letter carriers receive certain special allowances, while others do not; and, if so, what is the reason for such a difference?

MR. A. MORLEY: All auxiliary postmen who conduct themselves well, and fulfil the conditions prescribed by the Civil Service Commissioners, are appointed established postmen as opportunity offers. In the few cases in which an auxiliary postman receives a special allowance, it is for some special duty which he performs in addition to his regular duty as auxiliary.

DISCHARGES OF WORKMEN FROM DEVONPORT DOCKYARD.

MR. E. J. C. MORTON (Devonport): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether it is the case that a discharge of workmen under the War Office at the Gun Wharf at Devonport is in contemplation; whether he is aware that a Trades Union among these workmen has been recently formed, and the workmen attribute the discharges alleged to be in contemplation to the establishment of the Union; and whether he will undertake that no man shall suffer or be discharged on the ground that he is a member of the Union?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. WOODALL, Hanley): The only discharges contemplated at Devonport are those of a few men who were taken on temporarily on account of extra work during the camping season. Workmen are entirely mistaken in supposing that they are in any way prejudiced by being members of Trade Unions; and they may rest assured that they will not suffer in any way on that account.

THE ROYAL NIGER COMPANY.

MR. T. BAYLEY (Derbyshire, Chesterfield): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he will make inquiries into the definite charges made by Mr. W. E. Jinks, in a letter which appeared in the Liverpool newspapers of 13th September, where he states that Mr. Wallace and Mr. Servel, servants of the Royal Niger Company, when the Natives under their charge laid down their arms, and wanted to be sent back to their homes because they had not sufficient food and water, the head man of the Natives and 17 others were killed and many wounded, and that Sir James Marshall, who is in the employ of the Company, has stated that he did not consider the men were in the wrong; that in a Memorial to Her Majesty's Representative at Lagos, signed by over 100 merchants and ministers of all denominations and 36 Native Chiefs, in which they direct attention to the case of the men who were recently disarmed, enclosed in a compound, and shot down at Lokoja, because they refused to continue a dangerous journey, in which they had already suffered the greatest privations; and if he has seen the Memorial?

***THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir E. GREY, Northumberland, Berwick):** This is not a new case; a question respecting it was put and answered in the House on the 14th of December, 1888. It was inquired into, and the result went to show that if very severe measures had not been taken the Mission Station would have been destroyed.

THE FEATHERSTONE RIOTS.

MR. NUSSEY (Pontefract): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention

has been directed to the verdict of the jury in the case of the inquest on the men killed at the riots at Featherstone, which took place on Thursday, 7th September; whether he is aware that the jury unanimously agreed that had the district not been deprived of police, who had been sent to Doncaster Races, there would have been no necessity for the presence of the military; whether he is aware that the jury, while regretting that such extreme measures as firing on the crowd had been adopted by the authorities, refused to give a verdict in the case of James Gibbs as to whether it was justifiable homicide or not; and whether he will direct that a full inquiry shall be held as to the measures taken for the preservation of peace?

MR. ASQUITH: I am aware that in the inquest to which my hon. Friend refers the jury expressed their opinion to the effect stated in the 2nd and 3rd paragraphs of the question. In the inquest in the case of James Duggan, the other of the two men who were killed, the jury returned a verdict of justifiable homicide. I have called for the depositions taken at both inquests and a full Report of all the proceedings. Until I have had an opportunity of reading and carefully considering the evidence, and obtaining such further information as then appears to me to bear upon the question, I must defer answering my hon. Friend's concluding inquiry.

THE INDIAN BUDGET.

MR. NAOROJI (Finsbury, Central): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in view of the inconvenience which is being caused to Members by not knowing which Amendment will come first on the Indian Budget, he will, to-morrow, fix a day for the Committee, so that the ballot for precedence of Amendments may take place on Monday?

SIR W. HARCOURT: On Monday.

SIR J. GORST (Cambridge University): The right hon. Gentleman yesterday said the Debate on the Indian Budget would be taken on the same day as the Second Reading of the Appropriation Bill. Would it not be more convenient to commence it on the day appointed for the Committee stage of that Bill?

Mr. Nussey

SIR W. HARCOURT: I shall have something to say about that presently.

NEW ANTRIM CEMETERY.

MR. SEXTON (Kerry, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Mr. J. K. Miller, of Muckamore, County Antrim, on calling at the office of the clerk of the Antrim Union, on the 26th June last, in order to purchase a grave in the New Antrim Cemetery for the interment of his child, found no one in attendance; and, on a second visit, and after waiting half-an-hour, was informed by a porter that the clerk of the Union, and also the master, had gone to Oldstone Fair, and that the time of their return was uncertain; and that Mr. Miller, as a last resource, applied to the caretaker at the cemetery, who at first refused to open the grave or receive payment except on an order from the clerk, but eventually yielded on the request of a medical man who happened to be present; whether he is also aware that the Guardians, whilst acknowledging receipt of the payment, refuse to give Mr. Miller the usual certificate of ownership of the grave, and call upon him to attend before them and explain why he said he would report their officials for neglect of duty; and what action the Local Government Board will take on Mr. Miller's complaints?

MR. J. MORLEY: The occurrences referred to in the first paragraph took place on the 13th June, and the facts are generally as stated. The Rule requires that one day's notice should be given to the caretaker prior to an interment, except in certain cases, of which, however, the present was not one. It is a fact that the clerk to the Burial Board accepted payment of the fee through the caretaker, and sent Mr. Miller a receipt for the same, but it is not the fact, I am told, that the Board have called upon him to attend before them and explain his conduct. The Burial Board require him to make a formal application to them for a certificate of ownership, as that has been the procedure hitherto adopted. The Burial Board certified that the caretaker has no power to let graves, and that application should be made direct to them in such matters; but I think that, by friendly intervention on the part of the Local Government Board, and in view of

all the circumstances, the Burial Board may be induced to waive the point in the present instance.

CONNSWATER RIVER.

MR. SEXTON : I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Connswater River at Belfast is in a condition dangerous to the public health, owing to pollution by sewage and discharges of fluid at high temperature from distilleries and ropeworks ; and whether, as representations to the Local Bodies concerned have proved ineffectual, adequate measures will be taken to abate the nuisance ?

MR. J. MORLEY : The fact is as stated in the first paragraph. The local Sanitary Authorities have agreed, however, to cleanse the river, and it is expected there will be no delay in proceeding with the work. The Local Government Board have also sanctioned a loan for the carrying out of an extensive scheme for intercepting the sewage matter at present flowing into the river.

IRISH NATIONAL ASSISTANT TEACHERS.

MR. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.) : I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland in how many cases were temporary assistants paid salary under Regulation 170 (A) of the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland for the month of vacation ; and whether such payments were properly made, and in what districts did they occur ?

MR. J. MORLEY : Since the 1st January, 1892, the number of cases in which salary was paid to temporary assistants under the Rule referred to was 62. The payments were properly made, and were comprised in 26 districts, a list of which I will hand the hon. Member.

MR. MACARTNEY : Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the auditor called attention to the fact that the payments were not properly made ?

MR. J. MORLEY : My attention has not been called to that, but I will inquire.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS.

SIR R. TEMPLE (Surrey, Kingston) : I beg to ask whether the arrangement made with regard to moving the Adjourn-

ment of the House after Government Business has been disposed of and before private Members' Bills come on is to be adhered to during the several stages of the Appropriation Bill ?

SIR W. HARCOURT : I have already stated that it will be adhered to during the present Sittings.

THE IRISH MAGISTRACY.

MR. SEXTON : I handed in a question on this subject last Monday, but it seems not to have got into the Paper. Can the Chief Secretary inform me of the total number of County and Borough Justices in Ireland, and how many of each class have been appointed since he came into Office ?

MR. J. MORLEY : The total number of Magistrates in counties and boroughs in Ireland appointed since the present Government came into Office is 410, of which number 332 are County Justices and 78 Borough Justices. I cannot say what the total number of Magistrates is, but the Parliamentary Return will show it.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (Manchester, E.) : Can the right hon. Gentleman say whether any of the Magistrates appointed were holders of licences ?

MR. J. MORLEY : I believe that some of the Borough Magistrates are, but I cannot say as to the counties. I may be able to answer as to that later.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) : Is it not the fact that, when Lord O'Hagan was Lord Chancellor, all holders of licences were bound to give up their licences on their appointment to the Magistracy ?

MR. J. MORLEY : That was before my time.

THE OUTBREAK OF CHOLERA AT ASHBOURNE.

MR. HANBURY (Preston) : I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade whether he can give the House any information as to the extent and character of the outbreak of cholera at Ashbourne, and especially whether the Local Government Board have any knowledge of the general sanitary condition of the town and the very unsatisfactory condition of the water supply ?

MR. H. H. FOWLER : I despatched a Local Government Board Inspector to

Ashbourne immediately on learning of this outbreak. He reports to me that this particular yard is of a very dirty and disreputable character. There are 39 residents in this one yard. There have been 15 attacks and nine deaths. In one house there were six cases and three deaths. When I tell the House the circumstances of the yard, I think they will not be surprised at the outbreak. There is a water-closet, used by tramps, paupers, and strangers, attached to a public-house. The soil pipe of this water-closet leaks into the soil within 2 ft. of the well. The well has now been pumped out and filled in with quicklime, and since those measures have been taken no fresh attack has, up to midday to-day, taken place. Dr. Low reports also that there is much enteric fever and diarrhoea in Ashbourne, and that it has a bad sanitary reputation. I can assure my hon. Friend and the House that I mean to push this case to the extreme, with a view to seeing what the powers of the Local Government Board really are, if the Rural Sanitary Authorities decline, as I have no reason to suppose they will, to deal with the matter.

MR. SEXTON: Bearing in mind the statement made by the Leader of the Opposition yesterday as to the insanitary condition of towns in Ireland, may I ask the Chief Secretary if he has reason to believe any Irish town is in as bad a state as Ashbourne?

MR. J. MORLEY was understood to say he hoped not, but he had no information on the matter.

THE COURSE OF PUBLIC BUSINESS.

SIR W. HARCOURT: It may be convenient to the House that I should state that my hon. and learned Friend the Member for the Middleton Division of Lancashire has convinced me that the Pistols Bill is controversial; consequently, the Bill will not be proceeded with. I must congratulate my hon. and learned Friend on having triumphantly vindicated the right of free pistol shooting at all ages. The Government have been more fortunate in their diagnosis of what is likely to prove controversial in the other Bills on the Paper, and that they have received the assent of the House is due to exertions on both sides. I wish to mention one matter which I think

deserves the consideration of the House. When the Votes in Supply are finished there will, I hope, be a whole day available for the Report stage, and I may remind the House that on former occasions when we have desired to accelerate the close of the Session it has been the practice to discuss Votes, which could not be discussed at great length in Committee, on that stage, when a whole day is available. If we are fortunate enough to finish Supply on Saturday there will be the whole of Monday available for the Report stage. As to the Indian Budget, I do not wish at all to diminish the time available for its discussion, but rather to extend it, and it would be a great pity, if there were any time available after the Second Reading of the Appropriation Bill on Tuesday, that it should not be given to the Indian Budget. The Bills on the Paper, with the exception of the Expiring Laws Continuance Bill, will, I hope, be disposed of by Saturday, and if Committee of Supply is concluded on that day the Report of the Votes can be considered on Monday.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: With regard to the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman relative to the Indian Budget, I think that probably the arrangement he suggests is a convenient one. If the discussion on the Second Reading of the Appropriation Bill were to last a considerable time, the Debate ought to be adjourned at a reasonably early hour and resumed on the following day. The right hon. Gentleman appears to think that it would be possible to finish Supply to-morrow; but as there are 50 Votes to be passed, some of which are likely to give rise to a good deal of discussion, I doubt whether the whole subject can be disposed of this week unless hon. Members are subjected to an undue strain. The Government, I feel sure, will admit that the Opposition have not unduly prolonged the discussion of the Estimates.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I think that the necessities of the case would be met if the more important Votes were reported first on Monday. By that means opportunity will be given for discussing them sufficiently. I do not propose to set any limit to the hours during which the House will be asked to sit to-morrow.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think the right hon. Gentleman must have forgotten what passed on that day week when he

Mr. H. H. Fowler

said that he proposed to follow the example of the late Government respecting Saturday Sittings, and to close the Debate at 7 o'clock. I trust that the right hon. Gentleman will adhere to that arrangement.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I intend to adhere to the example of the late Government, under whom at the end of a Session Sittings were prolonged to a much later hour than 7 o'clock.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I certainly understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that he would not prolong Saturday Sittings beyond 7 o'clock.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I did not make that arrangement with respect to all Saturday Sittings, but only with respect to last Saturday. As to-morrow will be the last Saturday devoted this year to the discussion of Supply, it will, in my opinion, be wrong to limit that discussion.

COLONEL NOLAN reminded the House that on some occasions they had sat into Sunday. He remembered an hon. Member observing, with reference to one of those occasions, that many good things had been achieved on a Sunday, including the victory of Waterloo.

SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE (SATURDAY).

Resolved, That this House do meet To-morrow.—(*The Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—COMMITTEE.

SUPPLY—considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS, 1893-4.

CLASS III.

1. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £75,093, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894, for the Salaries, Allowances, Expenses, and Pensions of various County Court Officers, of Divisional Commissioners, and of Magistrates in Ireland, and the Expenses of Revision."

MR. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.) said, he had to move a reduction of the Vote by £1,000 in order to call attention

to the appointment of a certain Revising Barrister. He would have been glad if the circumstances had allowed him to pass over the matter in silence, but he could not do that. At the outset he wished to do the Chief Secretary the justice of stating that he was not personally responsible for the appointment, although it was his duty, as the Representative of the Irish Government, to answer for it in that House, and to defend the Vote. The appointment in question was that of Mr. Wylie, as one of the Assistant Revising Barristers for the City of Londonderry, and he thought that the circumstances under which it had been made would astonish the Committee. The original appointments for these posts of Revising Barristers were two in number, and one was held by a Nationalist, and the other by a gentleman who happened to be a Conservative. He was not raising this question on account of Mr. Wylie's politics—and he wished that to be clearly understood—but what had happened since the original appointments were made. The gentleman who happened to be a Conservative had been removed to another district, and in his place Mr. Wylie had been appointed. But Mr. Wylie's position in connection with the City of Londonderry was so peculiar that if there was one city or borough in Ireland to preside over the Revision Court of which he ought not to have been selected it was this particular city, and it was surprising that he himself had not seen the invidiousness which attached to him on account of his previous political history in Londonderry. He was not only a well-known professor of Nationalist politics and an extreme Gladstonian, but he had been a representative of the Party in two political contests in adjoining counties, having stood first for North Armagh, and later on, in 1886, for North Tyrone. Apart from that, he occupied a position of a confidential character in connection with the Nationalist Party in Londonderry itself; for he was informed, on most reliable authority, that Mr. Wylie was standing junior counsel on that circuit to Mr. O'Doherty, the solicitor to the Nationalist Party, and a former Member of the House of Commons. Apart altogether from his having been an active politician—a fact which alone ought to have been sufficient to prevent the higher Judicial

Authorities in Ireland from making him a Revising Barrister in the Province of Ulster—he had acted as counsel before the Court of Appeal on revision cases from the City of Londonderry Court, in which he had been instructed by Mr. O'Doherty. Without desiring in any way to impute unfairness to Mr. Wylie, he must say it was unfortunate that in the City of Londonderry, where Party feeling ran so high—for it was one of the places in the North of Ireland in which Parties were so evenly balanced that first one side and then the other secured the seat by only a small majority—a gentleman who was so closely identified with one Party should have been selected, and should have been willing, to revise the voters' lists. Again, he wished to say he was not objecting to Mr. Wylie's appointment because he was a Nationalist. The Government were quite entitled to appoint any barrister who was, in their opinion, qualified for the position, no matter how pronounced his political opinions; but it was, he believed, absolutely without precedent in this country to appoint a gentleman as Revising Barrister in a locality in which he had been an active candidate for political life. He was aware that Mr. Wylie was selected for appointment as a Revising Barrister by a previous Government, but on that occasion he was sent to another part of the country where his political opinions were a matter of indifference. But it was totally different in Londonderry. If, in the opinion of those by whom the arrangements were made, it was thought necessary to remove the Conservative barrister originally appointed to another Court, surely they should have exercised a wiser discretion in choosing his successor, for there were many strong Nationalists who were, no doubt, equally qualified, and to whom the same objections would not apply. He was bound to say that he had rarely met, in the course of the whole history of Irish administration, with a more wanton and flagrant violation of the principles of fair play than this appointment was. The right hon. Gentleman could not for one moment expect, if the Irish Government persisted in retaining Mr. Wylie in that Court, that any confidence would be felt in the proceedings of the Court. On

Mr. Macartney

these grounds he moved the reduction of the Vote.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £74,093, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Macartney.*)

MR. J. MORLEY: The hon. Member declares this appointment to be one of the most wanton and flagrant cases of violation of the principles of fair play that he has ever come across in the whole history of Irish administration. He complains, in fact, that the proper authorities have sent to Derry as one of the Revising Barristers a gentleman of whom two things can be said—one true and the other untrue. The first allegation is that the appointment is most improper because Mr. Wylie was a candidate for the County of Armagh in 1885 and for North Tyrone in 1886. The hon. Member assumes that by reason of having been a candidate in a neighbouring constituency seven years ago Mr. Wylie is disqualified from being a Revising Barrister in Derry. Let us see to what that principle leads us. If a barrister had been a candidate in the County of Durham seven years ago, it would, according to the principle laid down by the hon. Member, be improper to now allow him to revise the lists in the City of Newcastle, in the adjoining county, and which is as hotly contested as the City of Derry. Let me carry it even further. Are the hon. Members for North Fermanagh and the City of Derry, who are both barristers, disqualified for being County Court Judges in an adjoining county because the County Court Judge is the superior revising authority in the district?

MR. MACARTNEY said, it would, in his opinion, be unwise and improper to send them as Revising Barristers to adjoining counties. He was not referring to the County Court Judges.

MR. J. MORLEY: But the County Court Judge is a Revising Barrister.

MR. MACARTNEY: Certainly; but, then, he has the right to select his division, and I am certain that neither of my hon. and learned Friends would select one where Party conflict is great.

MR. J. MORLEY: The impracticability of the hon. Member's principle is illustrated by the cases to which I have ventured to refer. If the principle which

the hon. Gentleman has laid down, and which he has enforced with such strong language, were carried to its legitimate issue, no appointment of the kind I have suggested could ever be made, as he says a County Court Judge has functions as a Revising Barrister.

MR. MACARTNEY: But he cannot become a candidate for Parliament.

MR. J. MORLEY: No doubt, when he becomes a County Court Judge, he rightly ceases to have a right to sit in this House. The hon. Member based his case against Mr. Wylie on a second allegation—namely, that the appointment was an improper one because Mr. Wylie had been a standing junior counsel to Mr. O'Doherty, the chief Liberal agent in Derry, and that he had been instructed by him in cases of appeal from Revision Court decisions. I have taken great pains to ascertain the facts in this matter, and I am informed that this allegation is not true. In only one case did Mr. Wylie act as counsel on an appeal, and this was as far back as 1889.

MR. MACARTNEY: He appeared in two cases, which governed hundreds of other cases.

MR. J. MORLEY: It does not matter much whether it is one or two cases. I adhere to my statement; but I will call the attention of the hon. Member to the fact that all these cases that come up for decision on appeal after revision hearings are cases in which points of law only are determined. Is it to be supposed that a barrister who has argued on a point of law before an Appeal Court is precluded for ever afterwards from sitting in the Revision Court from which the appeal emanated? The hon. Member, who really does not know his own ground, said that such an appointment was without precedent. I will give the hon. Member a precedent. A certain Mr. Bates, a strong Conservative, was year after year—and not merely once or twice—a counsel in appeal cases from Northern constituencies, including West Belfast and Derry itself, in 1889; yet in a very important and critical revision in a Northern constituency, before the General Election of 1892, Mr. Bates was appointed Revising Barrister.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): He was appointed to North Tyrone.

MR. J. MORLEY: And, therefore, if what has been said as to Mr. Wylie were true—and that I do not admit—we have the strong precedent set by the late Government, and moreover we are not now anticipating—as the Conservative Government anticipated—that the lists about to be revised will govern a General Election.

MR. MACARTNEY: Mr. Bates was never instructed by a solicitor to one of the parties in the district to which he was subsequently appointed.

MR. J. MORLEY: I say that it is trifling with the time of the Committee and with common sense to argue that because a gentleman has been a candidate in a constituency and argued before an Appeal Court on points of law in 1889, this circumstance is to operate as a permanent disqualification for the performance of his official duties in the constituency in which the question he argued happens to have arisen. That is not all. I am told that the Warrant addressed to the Revising Barrister contains these words—

"In future it must be understood that an Assistant Revising Barrister shall not accept fees to argue in a case reserved for the Court of Appeal by the Revising Barrister during the same Sessions in which he shall have acted as Revising Barrister."

Surely if there is any sense in words, these give an indication that the Revising Barrister is at liberty in other periods to follow his profession. The hon. Member has not said a word against Mr. Wylie's qualifications as a Revising Barrister. He says, indeed, that he is a perfectly proper man to be appointed to such an office, but that he ought not to act in a Northern constituency because of his political partisanship. And that political partisanship consists in the fact that some years ago Mr. Wylie was a candidate for Parliamentary honours in two Northern constituencies. What an extraordinary view of the nature of political partisanship! The test is to be, then, a purely geographical one? A man who would be a violent partisan in a Northern constituency would, if sent out of Ulster, be entirely unprejudiced.

MR. MACARTNEY: My argument was that it was quite impossible for the voters who came before the Court to have confidence in the decisions of one who to their knowledge has, in past

years, advised the agent to the Derry Nationalists. I say it is impossible but that his Court will be open to suspicion; and I further submit, that if the authorities chose to remove the Conservative Revising Barrister, they should have substituted for him some other gentleman against whom no such suspicion could arise.

MR. J. MORLEY: Has the hon. Member made out a case against the appointment of Mr. Wylie? I say that he has not. Now let me add a word or two as to the fairness or otherwise of the appointments of Revising Barristers for the City of Derry. The hon. Member's argument was that this constituency, being a disputed place where the Parties are tolerably equally divided, where any partiality in revision might have a fatal effect, the Authorities are bound to be especially careful that the Revision Court shall not wear a Party colour. How was the Court constituted for the City of Derry in the revision of 1892? As constituted now, the Court contains a Recorder who is a Conservative, and who may send Mr. Wylie where he cannot do any mischief. What did the late Government do in 1892? Did they give the Nationalists one Revising Barrister? Not one. The Revision Court constituted by the late Government in 1892 did not contain a single Liberal or Nationalist either for the City of Derry or for the county.

MR. DANE (Fermanagh, N.): I can assure the right hon. Gentleman, from personal knowledge, that he is misinformed on that point.

MR. J. MORLEY: At any rate, the Court for the City of Londonderry did not include a single Nationalist Revising Barrister. Then what becomes of the hon. Member's proposition that we have been guilty of a wanton and flagrant violation of the principle of fair play? It falls to the ground.

MR. DANE said, he greatly regretted that the good sense of Mr. Wylie did not induce him to decline the proposal to transfer him from the County of Meath to the City of Londonderry. The objections to such a transfer were urgent, and had the Government acted in a spirit of fair play they would have sent him to some other region in which the appointment would not have been looked upon as a gross piece of partisanship.

Mr. Macartney

Of course, no one objected to the exercise and display by Mr. Wylie of his political opinions, and no one took exception to the fact of his holding office as a Revising Barrister, whatever his political opinions were. No person would more gladly testify than he himself to Mr. Wylie's legal abilities. But those were not the grounds on which the Unionists of Derry objected to this appointment. The real objection was due to special circumstances which connected him with the City of Londonderry, and under those circumstances the appointment was little short of a public scandal. Mr. Wylie was fully entitled to his own political opinions. No one disputed that. But what was his history? In 1881 he was appointed a Commissioner under the Irish Land Act, and he discharged the duties of that office for several years. The appointment, however, was only of a temporary character; and when the falling-off in the number of cases rendered his services no longer necessary, he resigned his post. Next, he became a Parliamentary candidate for the County of Armagh. No one objected to that. A year later, in 1886, he was sent to North Tyrone, and his action there threw a strong light upon his views of political rectitude. In North Tyrone he for a considerable time discharged his duties as a Sub-Land Commissioner, and had to fix judicial rents, and that probably was the reason why he was sent to contest that constituency. It was not known whether he came forward as a Nationalist or as a Gladstonian; he never stated what his political position was; he never addressed a single meeting from a single platform, and the only thing he did was to place himself in the hands of the Roman Catholic clergy, and, the day before the election, to issue a placard—"Vote for Wylie and Free Bogs." Bearing in mind that in that particular division the question of free bogs had long been an element of discussion, and that he had sat there as a Sub-Land Commissioner, surely it was very questionable taste not to address a public meeting, but to simply appeal to the self-interests of the electors, and to try and secure votes in his capacity as an ex-Sub-Commissioner by promising "free bogs." But that was not all. In addition to his exploits as a candidate for Parliamentary honours, and as a Sub-

Land Commissioner, he was standing junior counsel on the circuit to Mr. O'Doherty, the solicitor for the Nationalists of Londonderry, and on two occasions he appeared, as he was perfectly entitled to do, in the Appeal Court on revision appeals, on instructions from Mr. O'Doherty, on behalf of the Londonderry Nationalists. And yet this was the gentleman the Government sent down to revise the lists of the City of Londonderry, where the conflict between political Parties was so keen and the balance of strength so even. On these grounds the Unionists certainly had strong cause for complaint. Why was Mr. Wylie, who was so closely connected with Derry, transferred from Meath, to which he was originally appointed? Was the right hon. Gentleman aware that the strongest possible complaints came from County Meath last year, and was not a strong feeling excited in that county when it was made known that Mr. Wylie had again been appointed to revise the lists this year? This was a serious matter. However invidious it might be for one barrister to refer to the conduct of another barrister, he felt he would have failed in his duty to the Loyalists of the North of Ireland if he had not stated his honest opinion on this matter. Knowing that his views were the views of every liberal-minded and honest man, he would urge upon the right hon. Gentleman, whose genial kindness and impartiality he and his friends readily recognised, that it was not too late even now to make a proper appointment, and he would remind him that no injury would be done to Mr. Wylie by sending him to another division with which he had not the same political connection as he had with the City of Derry.

MR. JACKSON (Leeds, N.): I confess I am a little surprised at the line taken by the Chief Secretary as to this question. If anyone had suggested to me that the right hon. Gentleman would have sanctioned a matter of this kind after it was brought before his notice, and after he had been made aware of the strong feeling that existed, I should certainly have declined to believe it. I would have said that the Chief Secretary would remedy it at once.

MR. J. MORLEY: Although I am convinced the appointment is a proper

one, I may just mention at this point that when the matter was brought to my notice there was no opportunity of making any change. If there is a strong feeling against the appointment, that would be an objection, but it was not brought under my notice.

MR. JACKSON: The right hon. Gentleman confirms my opinion that the Chief Secretary would have interfered if the matter had been brought to his notice at an earlier date. The hon. Member who has brought the matter forward casts no reflection on the ability or fairness of Mr. Wylie, but he objects on the ground of Mr. Wylie's connection with local politics. The fact was clear that they had living in the district the solicitor who employed Mr. Wylie as counsel, and Mr. O'Doherty would go before Mr. Wylie as Revising Barrister, with whom he had long been associated. If a similar state of affairs had existed in this country there would have been a great outcry, and very properly so. I should have been glad if the Chief Secretary had treated the matter in a more sympathetic spirit, having regard to the strong feeling in the district. Even the right hon. Gentleman's defence seems to emphasise the complaint, because he practically admits that if the case had been brought to his notice sooner there would have been ground for relegating Mr. Wylie to another district. This discussion and the speech of the right hon. Gentleman has created in my mind a very uneasy feeling. His reference to the action of the late Government with regard to similar appointments does not seem to me to be to the point. There is, I repeat, no reflection upon Mr. Wylie on account of his politics, because we know perfectly well that a man who has twice been a Parliamentary candidate must necessarily have been associated not only with men in the divisions he fought, but also with local politics. I am sure the right hon. Gentleman will not put forward the argument that because we appointed men of particular politics there was any intention that they should exercise an improper influence in the districts to which they were sent as Revising Barristers.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said, he also wished it to be clearly understood that the objection to Mr. Wylie was not because of his Nationalist

politics. That that was so the right hon. Gentleman might judge for himself from the fact that, although of the five Revising Barristers whom he had appointed or the County of Tyrone four were Nationalists and only one a Unionist, they had never uttered a word of complaint. He happened to know all the gentlemen appointed. They were accomplished lawyers, and he was perfectly certain that they would do their duty apart from politics. Even in regard to Derry itself, they did not complain because two Nationalists had been appointed. He was exceedingly sorry Mr. Wylie's name had had to be referred to, especially as he numbered among his personal friends two brothers of that gentleman. But the facts were perfectly clear, and they could not be ignored. The precedent cited by the Chief Secretary was no precedent at all, because Mr. Bates was not, like Mr. Wylie, a strong political partisan, and had never been, and he believed had no intention of becoming, a political candidate. Apart from registering his vote, he doubted if Mr. Bates had anything to do with politics. The right hon. Gentleman had asked what would be said if it were claimed that the hon. Members for North Fermanagh or Derry City could not be appointed County Court Judges because they had been politicians and Members of that House. Well, his reply was that while he would be glad to see such an appointment conferred on them, the Government would do a very wrong thing to appoint them to a district for which they had sat in Parliament. A necessary qualification for a Revising Barrister, apart from legal competency, was that he should command the confidence of those who had business at his Court; and was it not of cardinal interest that the man appointed to revise the lists, especially in Derry, which was so fiercely fought, where the margin was so close, and where the strongest feelings were aroused, should be above suspicion? There was a precedent for the Chief Secretary acting even now. In 1892 the Revising Barrister appointed to North Tyrone was changed to the City of Derry at the last moment, and, if he remembered aright, after the proceedings of the Registration Court had actually commenced. Therefore it was not too late for the Chief Secretary to undo the wrong which had been done, even though the right hon.

Mr. T. W. Russell

Gentleman might not look upon it as a wrong.

MR. SEXTON (Kerry, N.) said, the suggestion made by the hon. Member for South Tyrone to the Chief Secretary was that an eminent legal gentleman, against whose ability and judicial impartiality neither he nor any of his Unionist friends had ventured to utter a word, was to be subject to public disparagement, and to the insult of removal from the office to which he had been appointed.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: It would not be an insult.

MR. SEXTON said, that if after that Debate Mr. Wylie were removed, it would mean that the Chief Secretary had been intimidated into removing him, and the only theory would be that his judicial impartiality was not to be trusted. He should protest against any such gross public insult to Mr. Wylie, whom he did not know personally. The Unionist Party were growing exceedingly fastidious in regard to the matter. He would have thought that it was almost too delicate a question for them to touch.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, the *gravamen* of the case was that the Conservative barrister who was originally appointed had been removed at the last moment. Apparently, what was no insult to him was a deadly insult to Mr. Wylie.

MR. SEXTON confessed that he could not understand all this fuss about the matter. If a Tory had been selected as Revising Barrister, no closeness of connection with the city would, in the opinion of the hon. Gentleman who brought this matter forward, have been inconsistent with his retention of the office. It was said that Mr. Wylie ought not to have been appointed, because seven years ago he was candidate, not for Derry, but for a neighbouring county. He (Mr. Sexton) thought the Unionist Party would not act in accordance with its own interests if it laid down the rule that all men who had been Parliamentary candidates should be debarred seven years afterwards from becoming Revising Barristers. Then it was contended that some years ago Mr. Wylie appeared as counsel in one appeal respecting the revision of the Electors' Lists of the City of Derry. This was a most audacious argument for the Unionist Party to use, in view of the fact that Mr. Bates had been employed from year to year as

standing counsel in the revision business of the City of Derry. Mr. Bates was appointed by the Unionist Government as Revising Barrister for the City of Derry in 1892 before the General Election.

MR. DANE (Fermanagh, N.): Perhaps the hon. Gentleman will give the authority on which he makes that statement. It is without a particle of foundation.

MR. SEXTON said, the statement was perfectly true. The Law Reports had been consulted, and the name of Mr. Bates had been found in connection with Derry appeals. The hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) said that because Mr. Wylie might have before him solicitors who had employed him in his professional capacity he ought not to act as Revising Barrister. Was it contended that the Government, in appointing Revising Barristers, must take care not to appoint them to any Court in which solicitors who had instructed them professionally might appear? In the West Belfast revision of 1892—the revision on which the General Election depended—he and his friends found themselves confronted with four barristers, two of whom were engaged on the Northern Circuit, and, having local relations with Belfast, had, no doubt, been professionally engaged by some of the solicitors who appeared before them. For the whole revision of 1892, 32 Revising Barristers were appointed in Ireland, and of these only four were not Unionists. The four were sent to constituencies where the revision was of no account, because the majority was overwhelming, and, therefore, the peculiar skill of the Revising Barrister could not possibly be applied to any Party purpose. In the Northern constituencies of Ireland, at least six Tories of the North of Ireland acted as Revising Barristers. A scandalous attack had been made upon Mr. Wylie, and he trusted that the Chief Secretary would give no ear to the suggestion that that gentleman should be exposed to a public insult.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary has been unlucky. I have no authentic information on the point, but I have some reason to believe that the right hon. Gentleman is endeavouring to exercise his patronage in such a way that no

complaint should be made by any Party in this House. I am only sorry that in this case the immense trouble and annoyance which these questions of patronage necessarily involve should have brought upon him a considerable amount of difficulty and perplexity. All the information I have with respect to this particular case I have derived from the speeches to which I have just listened; but I think the right hon. Gentleman would do well to consider whether he ought not, even at the eleventh hour, to take the course suggested by my hon. Friend opposite (Mr. T. W. Russell)? What is the objection to that course? The only objection yet stated is that Mr. Wylie, being a gentleman of ability and impartiality, could not be removed from Derry without conspicuous insult, and something amounting to a stain on his character. The right hon. Gentleman says that would be especially and necessarily the case after the Debate in this House. But surely the very course of this Debate proves conclusively that it carries with it no insult to Mr. Wylie. Every gentleman who has spoken against Mr. Wylie's appointment has shown that he is animated with no hostility to Mr. Wylie, but believes him to be gifted with the qualifications which would make him a most admirable Revising Barrister in any district in Ireland which did not have a special connection with the City of Derry. I confess that if it would be an insult to remove him the insult bears a meaning which it has never borne before. The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down brought forward certain statements with regard to what passed in 1892 just before the General Election, and said the Party to which I belong acted in a most improper manner. He went so far as to say that of the very few Nationalists appointed as Revising Barristers not one was appointed in any doubtful constituency. I admit that there are doubts about the facts, and that no reference has been made to documents to verify the facts; but it has been suggested to me that Mr. Cumming, who is a Nationalist, was Revising Barrister at Derry.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I may say it is not the case that all Revising Barristers for Derry were Unionists.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Well, if the case is as I have stated, down drops the

whole fabric of allegation made by the hon. Gentleman.

MR. SEXTON: Mr. Bates, who had been employed in revision business in Derry, revised Derry in 1892.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If my suggestion is correct, the late Government did appoint a Nationalist to carry out the work of revision in one of the most critical constituencies. The hon. Gentleman says Mr. Bates was occupied in appeal business before his appointment as Revising Barrister; but the hon. and learned Member for Fermanagh (Mr. Dane), who is engaged in work in that district, has alleged in the strongest manner that such is not the case.

MR. SEXTON: I should like to hear what the hon. and learned Member does say.

MR. DANE: I asked the hon. Gentleman what authority he had for his statement, because of my own knowledge I do not believe that Mr. Bates is anything of the kind.

MR. SEXTON: My reply is that the Reports have been examined, and Mr. Bates's name is found in them.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I thought that my hon. Friend's statement was more positive; but, even as it stands at present, it appears to be of a more authentic character than the surmise which the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Sexton) indulged in with regard to the Revising Barristers in Belfast, when he said he had no doubt it was their practice to take briefs from the solicitors who were engaged in election matters in that city.

MR. SEXTON: I know that of these four barristers two were on the Northern Circuit, and I should be prepared to say that if they were offered briefs they would not refuse them.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have not the least doubt they would be prepared to take them if they were offered, but the point that requires further investigation is whether they were ever offered. The hon. Gentleman attached very great importance to the alleged misdemeanours of the Conservative Government just before the General Election of 1892, and said that what happened now was of very little importance, as no legislation was to take place during the course of the coming year. We are grateful to the hon. Gentleman for having informed us what the intentions

of his Government are on that point, but these things are not always determined by the Government. Accidents do occur, and unforeseen events transpire. However, the chief *gravamen* of the attack made upon Mr. Wylie is not that he has been retained in the Court of Appeal which deals with some of these election cases; the *gravamen* of the charge is that he has been an active politician in the neighbourhood of Derry all his life; that he has been connected for many years by close professional ties with the gentlemen who appear before him in election cases, and that he has been asked his opinion on the various points that have arisen in Derry in connection with election cases. That is of incomparably greater importance, if it were true, than the fact that he appeared on some question of law in Dublin. I would advise the Chief Secretary that he should even now make some alteration with reference to the gentleman who is appointed to deal with revision in Derry. This advice is based not upon any belief in the incompetence of this gentleman, still less on any belief in his unfairness, but on a principle the value of which everyone will recognise—namely, that the Revising Barrister should not only be fair, but that he should be known by those on whose cases he adjudicates to be fair—possibly an ideal which cannot always be obtained. I do not wish to infuse into this Debate the controversial element which the hon. Member for Kerry (Mr. Sexton) and gentlemen opposite have dragged into it. The hon. Member for Kerry said we desire to have a Tory barrister in Derry for the purpose of increasing the majority which now exists. That amiable suggestion has been backed up by the cheers of other Members. I am glad to think that my hon. Friend who started this Debate showed more judgment, better taste, and more fairness than the hon. Member for Kerry and those who cheered him. We do not bandy such charges across the floor of the House. We have never suggested that the result of appointing Mr. Wylie will be that any Unionist voter will be struck off the list who ought to remain on it. We do not suggest that, because, fortunately, we have not sunk to the controversial depths of the hon. Member for Kerry. What we do say is, that where the majority is so small that it rests in the power of the

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tribunal to decide whether the city should return a Unionist or a Nationalist it is most important to have a tribunal against which no charge can be made. The charge we make is not that there will be any unfairness, but simply that the connection of Mr. Wylie with the district in which his Court is situated, and his relations with one political Party, are such that those who have not the honour of his personal acquaintance, or a knowledge of his ability, which his friends in this House gladly recognise, may, perhaps, put a construction on Mr. Wylie's actions which may be not only injurious to that gentleman, but injurious to the cause of justice.

MR. SEXTON : With reference to the observation of the right hon. Gentleman that part of my case was broken to pieces by the fact that Mr. Cumming, a Nationalist, was appointed by the Tory Government to revise the lists in Derry, I am informed that the Tory Government, before leaving Office, appointed a Unionist to revise in Derry, and that Mr. Cumming was appointed by the Liberals after the Unionists had gone out of Office.

MR. DIAMOND (Monaghan, N.) said, the practice that had always prevailed in Ireland was for the Government that was in power to appoint its own friends to do the work of revision. He believed it was only a pretence to say that the objections to Mr. Wylie's appointment were not based on political grounds, and he thought it came with a bad grace from gentlemen who had administered a Coercion Act in Ireland to speak about getting impartial men to carry out the law.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL inquired on what ground it was resolved at the last moment to remove Mr. Carew from his position as Revising Barrister, and also to move Mr. Wylie from Meath to Derry?

***MR. A. C. MORTON** (Peterborough) said, he agreed with the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Balfour) that there should be fair play all round, but he (Mr. Morton) could say, from recent knowledge, that the Roman Catholics at Londonderry had hardly ever been treated fairly or on an equality with the Protestant population either as regards registration or anything else.

SIR J. GORST (Cambridge University) said, it seemed to him that neither the Leader of the Opposition

(Mr. A. J. Balfour) nor the Chief Secretary (Mr. J. Morley), with the best intentions, had ever been able to appoint gentlemen as Revising Barristers in Ireland who were not objected to by somebody or other. In England, where the impartiality of Revising Barristers he had never heard called in question, they were appointed by the Judges who happened to go to the Assize just before the revision took place. Would it not be possible to introduce into Ireland a similar system, and to place the appointments in the hands either of the Judges, or of somebody in Ireland whose impartiality would never be questioned?

MR. J. MORLEY, who was indistinctly heard, was understood to say that if neither the Leader of the Opposition nor himself had given satisfaction in making these appointments he doubted whether the Irish Judges would be any more successful.

SIR T. LEA (Londonderry, S.) said, that during the time of the revision there would be great lack of confidence in Derry in Mr. Wylie's impartiality. He held in his hand a list of the Revising Barristers appointed in the three touchy counties in Ulster—Fermanagh, Derry, and Tyrone—and it was a remarkable thing that out of 11 Revising Barristers appointed in the three counties where there were touchy Unionist seats only one was a Unionist.

Question put, and negatived.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

2. £732,249, to complete the sum for Constabulary, Ireland.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, this Vote would not require to be debated from the usual standpoint. Those Irish Members who on that (the Ministerial) side of the House were challenging the Votes had not been in collision with the Royal Irish Constabulary. They had not been arrested.

COLONEL NOLAN : None of you live in the country.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, that they had no complaints to make against individual members of that most excellent Force. But there were points to which he wished to call the attention of the Chief Secretary, with a view to having matters explained and cleared up, and not in any way in a bitter or controversial spirit. The first was as to the action of the Constabulary in the town of

Cloughjordan, in County Tipperary. He had asked several questions earlier in the Session regarding some boycotting which he understood had gone on there, and the right hon. Gentleman had said that the Constabulary of the district denied all knowledge of such a thing. He (Mr. Russell) had produced a Memorial signed by a number of residents in the district giving the exact cases of boycotting, and the people who had suffered from it. He remembered that the Prime Minister took part in the Debate, and said it was a legitimate subject for inquiry. The Chief Secretary concurred, and there was reason to believe that he had made inquiry—that he had sent down a special officer for the purpose, whose Report, unless he was mistaken, rather told against the Constabulary view of the thing, and confirmed the view of the townspeople of Cloughjordan. He (Mr. Russell) would be glad if the right hon. Gentleman could give him some information on the matter, and could tell him that the boycotting had now altogether ceased. There was another question of importance on which he should like some information. He had received somewhere about 10 letters from different parts of County Tyrone, some outside his constituency and some within it, pointing out a rather singular thing which had taken place in regard to the movement of the police. He should be glad if the right hon. Gentleman would tell him if there were any Rules regulating the distribution of the Force—any Rules decreeing that the Protestant Constabulary should be in one quarter and the Roman Catholic in another. He was informed that of late Protestant constables had been removed from places where there had never been anything else but Protestants, and where the vast majority of the inhabitants were Protestants, Roman Catholics being put in their places. Was there any rule to be observed in these matters, and how were they to account for the extraordinary movement which had been going on in Tyrone? A third point was as to the removal of Head Constable O'Halloran from County Clare. He had been informed by those who knew County Clare that a more efficient officer never performed duty in that county. He was a man who had been once removed from County Clare, but who had been sent

back on account of the exigencies of the situation. First of all the County Inspector was removed, and then the Head Constable, who had an exceptionally good knowledge of the county. He did not dispute the right of the Government to remove officials of that kind, but he wanted to put this question pointedly to the Chief Secretary—Was the Head Constable removed by Sir Andrew Reid, the Chief Inspector of Police in Dublin, in the ordinary course, or was political pressure brought to bear upon the Irish Office in order to bring about the removal of those men? The fourth and last point he had to mention was one which would, perhaps, have more sympathy from the Chief Secretary than anything he had referred to. He wished to call the right hon. Gentleman's attention to the systematic neglect of the Sunday Closing Act by the Royal Irish Constabulary.

COLONEL NOLAN here interjected a remark.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, the hon. and gallant Gentleman who interrupted him had commenced as a Sunday closer. He had supported the Irish Sunday Closing Act.

COLONEL NOLAN : I have only voted three times on the question, twice for it and once against it.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, the hon. and gallant Member was mistaken. He would be astonished to learn that on one occasion he had sat up all night to vote for the Irish Sunday Closing Bill. His point was that there was something like systematic neglect of the Sunday Closing Act in many districts by the Royal Irish Constabulary. This was a very serious matter. A great many people in Ireland felt the matter very keenly, and attached quite as much importance to it as Members attached to many political matters. It arose out of the *bonâ fide* traveller clause—or what the police and the Magistrates conceived to be the *bonâ fide* traveller provision—of that Act. The general opinion in police circles was that if a man travelled three miles he was then entitled to have a drink as a *bonâ fide* traveller. ["Hear, hear!"] Some hon. Members opposite concurred in that view. All he wished to tell them was that it was not the law which had been laid down by the highest Court. The law said in regard to the jaded traveller that after he had travelled three miles

he should be in a position to obtain refreshment whether he was a *bonâ fide* traveller or not. This question had given a great deal of trouble in Wales, and the same idea was prevalent in the Principality as had got into the brains of a lot of muddle-headed Magistrates in Ireland. Take the village of Rathfarnham, three miles from the City of Dublin. The public-houses were closed there on Sunday. In the forenoon, when public-houses in Dublin were closed, the Dublin thirsty people went out to Rathfarnham and became *bonâ fide* travellers.

AN hon. MEMBER : Where should they go ?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL : Then they came back to Dublin in the afternoon, when the Dublin public-houses were open. [*Laughter.*] This was very amusing, no doubt. He was astonished to find a lot of Sunday closers amused by it. At the same time, it was a question which required the attention of the police, and the attention of the police could only be secured by representations from the authorities to the effect that a man was not a *bonâ fide* traveller who travelled for drink. The law was that a man might drink to enable himself to travel. The evil that was taking place at Rathfarnham was occurring all over Ireland, and the success of the Act was being seriously marred by it. He hoped the Chief Secretary would consider the subject worthy of his attention.

COLONEL NOLAN said, he had had considerable experience of the Sunday Closing Act. He usually spent the whole of his time when the House was not sitting amongst his constituents. He was sometimes on the Bench, and he heard, of course, all the local gossip, and he was in a position to say that the Royal Irish Constabulary not only discharged their duty in regard to the Sunday Closing Act with efficiency, but might almost be said to make themselves a perfect nuisance in the matter. The district he lived in was very quiet. They were very well-behaved people there. The Royal Irish Constabulary in the district were very plentiful, and they had very little to do, and, as a consequence, they were always bothering the unfortunate publicans in every way. He found, as a Magistrate, that the charges brought against the publicans were rarely capable

of proof. It was said, indeed, that in order to have something to do the Constabulary sometimes manufactured cases against the publicans. With regard to his own action, to which the hon. Member had alluded, he had had no experience of the matter when the Sunday Closing Bill was passed. On that Bill there were 43 Divisions, but, so far as he could remember, he had only voted three times on it—twice for the measure and once against it. His experience of the Act was that it created crime. People were constantly getting into trouble through it, and it created law where there would otherwise be no law. He was very much inclined to think that if the same Bill came before them again he should vote always against it ; at any rate, if he voted both ways, it would be twice against it and once for it. If his constituents were to express a very strong opinion on the subject he should be inclined to vote always against the Bill.

MR. J. MORLEY : I must say that it is a good many years since the Constabulary Votes have been discussed in such a genial spirit. I think that the hon. and gallant Member who has just spoken represents the view taken in Ireland of the Sunday Closing Act much more correctly than the hon. Member for South Tyrone, who talks of systematic neglect on the part of the Constabulary. This very morning I received two official Papers, in which it was stated that two constables or sergeants had made themselves unpopular by their activity in respect of this particular class of people. So far from it being the fact, as alleged by the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell), that the Royal Irish Constabulary have been guilty of systematic neglect in regard to the operation of the Sunday Closing Act, they have displayed a vigilant attitude in this matter, and they will be encouraged to persist in that vigilant attitude. The hon. Member cannot expect me to go into the question of *bonâ fide* travellers, which is a very vexed question, both in England and Ireland. The hon. Member referred to the boycotting at Cloughjordan, in County Tipperary, and complained that the Local Police Authorities have denied the existence of the state of facts which he brought forward in this House. I, when I saw the Memorial which the hon. Member for

South Tyrone received, at once directed an officer to proceed to Cloughjordan and report upon the state of facts in that locality. The point which has been made in this House is that the matter arose out of an eviction, and afterwards assumed a religious complexion. The Report of the police is that that is not so, but that it was much more a case of trade dispute and trade jealousy. Cloughjordan is rather a miserable place, with an excessive number of traders, and the intense competition amongst these traders fastened itself on a dispute about a farm, and gave rise to a good deal of disturbance and trouble. I am glad to say, however, that though there is still some feeling about the evicted farm, so far as active disturbance is concerned, it has certainly to a great extent subsided. The Report of the special officer, whom I sent to Cloughjordan, does not contradict in any way the Reports of the Local Police Authorities, but it brings new facts to light, which the Local Police Authorities had not already noticed. The hon. Member next asked me whether there is any rule regulating the removal of members of the Royal Irish Constabulary from a theological or ecclesiastical point of view, and he referred to what he described as a recent movement in Tyrone—namely, the substitution of Catholic sergeants for Protestant sergeants in places where Protestant sergeants had been stationed. All I can say is that whatever movements have taken place have been by direction of the Inspector General without any directions from me, or from any authority outside the Constabulary Force itself, and I have no doubt that the Inspector General is incapable of setting on foot the sinister movement which has been described by the hon. Member. There is no rule with respect to the distribution of members of the Royal Irish Constabulary on religious grounds. The hon. Member next questioned me with regard to the removal of County Inspector Fleming and Head Constable O'Halloran from County Clare, and he wished to know whether their removal was due to pressure brought to bear upon the Irish Office from political Parties. The change was not made in deference to any representation whatever from politicians. The hon. Member will easily understand that when we found

the state of the County Clare not growing better, but growing worse, it was natural that it should be thought worth while to try whether a change of officers occupying important and responsible posts would not effect some good. County Inspector Fleming is a very efficient officer, but everybody will agree that the six months' police administration preceding this change was not so strikingly successful that it was not worth while trying a change in the personal elements of police administration at headquarters. Without throwing the slightest slur on either of the officers mentioned—who have been removed to posts quite as good as the old ones—I considered that the experiment was worth trying.

SIR T. LEA said, he was very glad to hear that the movements of police officers in Ulster possessed no political significance. The hon. Member for South Tyrone had not expressed himself very clearly in regard to the administration of the Sunday Closing Act. They found that in most of the districts where the Sunday Closing Act existed the Act was well administered. The only difficulty was the question of the *bonâ fide* traveller, and a Select Committee had recommended as a means of removing that difficulty the raising of the limit from three miles to six miles. That change was embodied in the Bill which he and his friends were trying to pass through the House. He had next to advert to the action of the police in ordering the Derry publicans to take down the Union Jacks which they were flying in honour of the visit of the Marquess of Salisbury. The Chief Secretary had said, when the matter was first brought before the House, that the Head Constable had acted in an excess of zeal; but he thought that neither the law on the subject nor its administration was satisfactory. He found that the police in other parts of Ireland raised no difficulties about other flags than the Union Jack flying over public-houses. During the recent tour of the Lord Lieutenant the Member for the County of Sligo, who was a publican in Sligo, did his Excellency the honour to fly, not the Union Jack, but a flag with the words "God save Ireland" over his public-house. He did not object to the action of the hon. Member for Sligo; but he thought it was certainly a slur on our national

honour that a Derry publican should be ordered to take down the Union Jack, while a Sligo publican was allowed without remonstrance to fly a flag bearing the words "God save Ireland." The law which prohibited the flying of political flags over public-houses was directed against the machinations of secret societies, and he did not in the least condemn it; but he thought it should be made clear that the police should not order the taking down of the Union Jack when it floated over any house. When the matter was last before the House the hon. Member for North Louth wanted to know whether one flag was not as good as another, and the Chief Secretary signified assent. Did the right hon. Gentleman really consider that the Union Jack was on the same level as any other flag? All patriotic men objected to such a statement, and it was objected to in particular in the North of Ireland, where a great jealousy of the status of the Union Jack existed.

MR. SEXTON: I cannot wonder that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, who has very arduous and responsible duties to perform, should look very well pleased to-night. I confirm the testimony of the hon. Baronet opposite that, during the late Government and other Governments in my time, the Vote for the Irish Constabulary has been the occasion of one or two, even three, evenings of a contentious, violent, and animated Debate. But how wonderful is the change! I think it is one of the most remarkable and one of the most magical results of the administration of the right hon. Gentleman opposite that this Vote is this evening even the occasion for such good-humoured, and what I may call comic, debate, because the Debate has certainly been one of the most humorous and farcical during the course of my period in the House. The hon. Baronet has nothing better to do than to press upon the Chief Secretary for Ireland the great Constitutional question of pulling down the Union Jack from some public-houses in Derry. He seemed to think that a slur had been cast on the national honour; but I think the national honour and the national flag will survive the slur. I fail to understand what he means when he says that he has discovered some sort of connection between

the floating of flags over public-houses and the spread of secret societies. The hon. Member must think that Irishmen are very stupid; because, surely, if they were to set about establishing secret societies they would not commence by putting up flags over public-houses. Now, I wish to direct particular attention to one item in the Vote—the Appropriations in Aid. Although the amount for Appropriations in Aid has fallen off £10,000 since last year, still it remains at £46,000. It is gratifying, so far, that the right hon. Gentleman in one year should have been able to make such a reduction. But if I remember rightly, in the height of coercion, when the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition was in power, the charge for extra police never went beyond £60,000 a year; and though it has now fallen to £46,000, yet I say that is a very disappointing figure. There has been a substantial decrease of serious crime all over Ireland. Then there have been congratulatory Charges by all the Judges at the late Assizes in respect of all the counties except two or three—indeed, I think I might say in respect of all Ireland, because except in one district on the borders of Cork and Limerick there has been no serious crime; and, therefore, I am surprised that this charge has not undergone a greater diminution. £46,000 a year is too high a figure to be levied on a people perfectly orderly and peaceable for extra police in addition to the ordinary force. I think at present I can do no more than to direct the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to this matter, because I am sure he is as anxious as I am that the charge should be reduced as far as is compatible with efficient administration, and I will express the hope that we shall find the figure considerably reduced in the Estimate for next year which the right hon. Gentleman will have to draw up. I am glad to see the Leader of the Opposition in his place, for I think he will probably agree with me that the cost of this Force might be greatly reduced if we were to revive Clause 13 of the Land Purchase Act of 1891, about which there was some conversation last night. I think the right hon. Gentleman will agree that the fact of tenants being evicted, of the existence of vacant farms, and the fact that the evicted tenants frequently

live in the neighbourhood of those vacant farms, is connected with the keeping of some of those extra police. Since the discussion that took place last evening I read a report of a meeting held in Cork, at which a resolution was passed strongly urging the Government to renew Clause 13. One gentleman at that meeting said he was aware from positive knowledge that Clause 13 of the Act would have been much more extensively utilised if the period allowed—six months—had been longer, and this gentleman admitted that in his own case he had actually entered into negotiations with his landlord, and the documents were drawn up; that owing to some informality in the forms they had to be prepared again; but before they were ready the period had expired. I have no doubt that other cases of that kind exist in Ireland, and I have no doubt there are a large number in which landlords and tenants would be willing to come to terms. I would suggest to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary that he should inquire from the heads of the Police Departments in Ireland whether, in their judgment, good order would not be further promoted by the revival of this clause, which, I think, would lead to a considerable number of negotiations being entered upon; and, in conclusion, I would express the hope that the Leader of the Opposition would make some such declaration as would lead the Chief Secretary for Ireland to introduce a Bill for the revival of this clause, and enable it to be proceeded with as a non-contentious measure.

MR. BARTON thought that it should be borne in mind that the decrease in the cost of extra police was, in some degree, due to the fact that the political opponents of the present Government did not use their influence to have the administration of the law obstructed in Ireland. The late Government had to deal with the resolute, determined, and declared determination of their political opponents to render the task of governing Ireland not only difficult, but impossible. There were still more police in Ireland than there ought to be, and that was because there still remained that open sore of the evicted tenants which no one could deny was the direct consequence of the organised action of hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway in

Mr. Sexton

opposition to the late Government. The present Chief Secretary had no action of this kind to meet from his political opponents. He assured the Chief Secretary that, unlike the treatment given to the Leader of the Opposition, the political opponents of the Government, whether in Ulster or elsewhere in Ireland, would do nothing to make his task more difficult. But he rose more especially to suggest that there was some irregularity in the Police Returns of Outrages which required correction. He quite accepted the Chief Secretary's statement that he had made no alteration in the classification of offences, but undoubtedly there was a difference in the recent Returns presented at the Clonmel and Kilkenny Assizes. In one case the destruction of property, which the police believed was done by the owners for purposes of fraud, was not included in the list, while in the other case an offence of a similar character was included in the Return of Outrages. Undoubtedly there was a mistake there, and he was strongly of opinion that even when property was destroyed for fraudulent purposes it should still be returned as an outrage, as undoubtedly it was, and certainly it was as serious as when committed from malicious motives. Again, he did not think that it should depend on the opinion formed by the police as to the motive of an outrage to have it included in the Return. A case occurred at the last Assizes in which the police did not return a particular outrage because they believed it was fraudulent and not malicious; but when the matter was investigated by the Grand Jury they came to the conclusion that it was malicious and not fraudulent, and they awarded compensation. The result was that the outrage never appeared on the Official Returns, for it was too late for the Return of that Assize, and it could not be included in the Return for the following Assize. He hoped the Chief Secretary would give this matter his consideration.

MR. DANE agreed that outrages, whether committed for fraudulent or malicious motives, should be included in the Police Returns. In relation to the question of hoisting flags over licensed houses, he suggested that the Chief Secretary should consult with the Inspector General of Constabulary with a

view to framing a rule which would guide the police in their action. Of course, the old Statute prohibited the flags, under a penalty, but it could not, and should not, be the intention to discourage the use of the national flag. The law, such as it was, was not evenly and fairly administered. Last month, at Wexford, on the occasion of a Sunday Roman Catholic procession, a publican exhibited the Stars and Stripes, and was not ordered to remove it. Some rule was required which would be a guide to the police in the matter. He was sure that if the Chief Secretary and the Inspector General of Constabulary put their heads together they would be able to devise such a rule.

MR. J. MORLEY: With regard to the exhibition of Party flags over public-houses, the police have their instructions laid down for them by law, which they are bound to follow, and I cannot entertain the idea of myself and the Inspector General putting our heads together to prepare rules by which the police may evade the law.

MR. DANE: The right hon. Gentleman himself said that, so far as the exhibition of the Union Jack was concerned, he would be no party to allowing the police to interfere.

MR. J. MORLEY: I do not think I used language of that kind. With regard to the Union Jack, I think each individual case should be left to the discretion and tact of the police; but it is quite another matter to counsel them to break the law; and it certainly is not within the cognisance of my Office. With regard to the classification of outrages, the hon. Member for Armagh referred to a discrepancy in the practice which came out at Clonmel and Kilkenny Assizes. But it appeared afterwards that the action of the County Inspector in the Clonmel case was according to custom in classifying outrages for the purpose of presentation to Judges of Assize. I have said several times—and the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition has expressed the same view—that the principles upon which classification is carried out are not all that could be wished. But although I am not quite satisfied with the present system, there are great difficulties in the way of a change, the principal one being that the change might destroy the

value of these statistics for the purposes of comparison in future years. If all parties can agree on a satisfactory plan I will not object, but then we would not have the power to institute those comparisons in which some of us revel or do not revel, as the case may be. My hon. Friend the Member for North Kerry has expressed his regret that there has not been a still further reduction in the figure respecting the contributions from localities for the Constabulary Force. Well, I fully share my hon. Friend's regret; but I think my hon. Friend will see that when the present Government came into Office and undertook the task of governing Ireland without exceptional laws, but governing Ireland solely by the existing law, it was their duty to be not less careful, but much more careful and vigilant in preventing and, if possible, in detecting crime. My hon. Friend will easily see that that was an indispensable element in our policy, and that accounts for the reduction in the extra police force not having been more rapid than it has. But, as the condition of things is not getting worse, but better, we shall be still more in earnest, and shall feel that we are walking on still surer ground in endeavouring to reduce the figure to which my hon. Friend has drawn attention. My hon. Friend was perfectly right in saying that the greatest cause for the slow rate at which the extra police are being reduced was the question of the evicted tenants. That is the sore which every Government has to deal with, and we entirely agree that its existence is the greatest of the administrative difficulties that now confront the Irish Government, and will possibly confront them for some time to come. But as the right hon. Gentleman opposite has not seen his way to communicate to us his final views of this difficult question I do not propose to add anything to what I have said.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I should not like this Vote, with which, in other days, I was extremely familiar, to pass without one word, at all events, of congratulation to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland. I began the few remarks I made on the last Vote by saying he was unlucky. I have to begin my remarks now by saying that he has been extremely lucky; and if, as has been suggested, he has been given a very

small amount of trouble over the Constabulary Vote, then he has enjoyed a fate which does not often come to us in this world. He has received a very rapid and good reward for his good works. I have nothing to urge against the general government of Ireland by the right hon. Gentleman. I gather, however, that subjects which occupied so much attention in former years still exist—that evictions take place; that resistance to evictions is not unknown; that public meetings have to be dispersed, and that a great many other things which occurred in the past still occur, and may still be made the texts of prolonged and envenomed criticism. I concur with the right hon. Gentleman that without legislation he is absolutely powerless to lay down any regulations which should modify the existing law with regard to the display of flags, and believe that the right hon. Gentleman and the police have at present no choice but to act in the matter as they have done. My hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Barton) has pointed out an obvious leak in the present method of collecting information for the list of offences placed before the Judges of Assize, and I think some plan might be adopted to stop that leakage. I was astonished to hear what the hon. and gallant Member for Galway said with regard to Sunday closing, because the evidence given before the Select Committee showed that every class in Ireland were in favour of that measure. I think the Chief Secretary has acted wisely in not hastily and rashly diminishing the number of police. The position of things has greatly improved. He has told us—and I am quite willing to accept that statement—that the reason why a certain class, obnoxious to the community in which they live, are permitted to carry out their industry in safety is that there is such a body of police, and their lives are so carefully watched that it would be a matter of considerable difficulty and danger to exercise upon them any of those lawless forms of revenge which have played such a prominent part in Irish history in the past. The moral that the hon. Member for North Kerry drew was that if the evicted tenants were removed agrarian crime would be diminished to such an extent that the extra police might be very much reduced, or wholly removed. I think

there is great force in that observation; but I am afraid that so long as the relation of landlord and tenant exists there will be evictions, and so long as there are evictions there will be vacant farms, and the tenants who take them will not always be popular in the districts in which they live. Therefore, do not let us be so sanguine as to suppose that even if the evicted tenants are reinstated to-morrow the agrarian difficulty in Ireland will be settled. A very considerable step, however, would be taken to remove one of the gravest diseases from which Ireland suffers if the existing class of evicted tenants could in whole or in part be restored to their holdings. With that object in view a clause was inserted in the Land Act of 1891, under which it was possible for landlords and tenants to come to arrangements with regard to their holdings under favourable circumstances. The operation of that clause was limited to six months, and it has been alleged by the hon. Member for North Kerry that that period is too short. I have a very high opinion of the amount of delay which lawyers can introduce into transactions in which they are concerned; but I still think that if the evicted tenants had set themselves seriously to work as soon as the six months began there would have been no difficulty whatever in arrangements being come to over the whole of Ireland. The question now is, shall we or shall we not bring in a new Bill to renew for a limited period the same arrangements that were embodied in the clause of the Act of 1891? I certainly do not wish to speak in an unsympathetic or hostile manner of that proposal. I think it is quite possible that circumstances might arise under which that might be the best course to pursue. But when I am asked to give my opinion upon the subject, I must point out to the Committee that I am not a Member of the Government responsible for the Government legislation; it is only fair for the Government to tell me, first, what their scheme for dealing with the whole question is. I will be perfectly frank with the House, and will say what I think ought to be done. But to ask me, when I do not and cannot know the facts, to give blindfolded some estimate of the position is to ask me to do what no Leader of the Opposition has ever been asked to do before. We have had sug-

Mr. A. J. Balfour

gestions and hints that the Government have in contemplation a scheme for dealing with this difficulty. Far be it from me to pronounce upon that scheme before I see it; but to ask me to run a policy of my own parallel to that scheme is to ask me to take up a position which I might find embarrassing and which nobody else would find useful. I do not suppose the Government contemplate in the present Session telling us their views upon this important subject, and I do not press them to do so. But when they do tell us, I shall be very glad indeed to lay before the House or the Committee my view upon the question. In the meanwhile, I can only say that I think still, as I thought in 1891, that the clause we then introduced was fair to all parties, was liberal to all parties, could cause no complaint, and would not be even a just cause of objection to the British taxpayer, who is the principal and perhaps the only person whose interests could be in any way involved.

Vote agreed to.

CLASS IV.

3. £539,969, to complete the sum for Public Education, Ireland.

MR. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.) said, that some time ago he put a question to the Chief Secretary in regard to the introduction into the National Education of Ireland of the revised edition of the Fifth Reading Book, and the right hon. Gentleman was good enough to give some information, which, however, was not of a very extensive character. He supposed that that was not so much the right hon. Gentleman's own fault as the fault of the Commissioners of National Education, who, he had no doubt, were not too ready to illumine the dark corners in which they had produced this extraordinary book. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to think that he had entirely defended the National Board, and entirely established the reputation and character of the book, by stating that the draft of it had been submitted to the mixed Committee of the Commissioners, which consisted of four Protestants and two Roman Catholics. The right hon. Gentleman might have been literally correct in saying that the mixed Committee were

unanimous in their approval of the revised publication. No doubt, the question of recommending the revised edition was carried unanimously; but it was entirely erroneous to say that the changes made in the revised edition met with the unanimous approval of all the Commissioners. As a matter of fact, he was aware that several most important changes were made against the strong protest of more than one of the Commissioners. But he desired to state that his objections to the changes which had been made were not at all based upon religious grounds. He objected to the book, not because he believed that the old book was a perfect book, or even reasonably good, but on the ground that it was not only no improvement on the old book, but exaggerated most of the defects which that Fifth Book contained, and it was the most recent example of the utter incapacity of the Commissioners to carry out their duties. He was quite aware that the Commissioners of Education did not lie upon a bed of roses; but he had no great respect for the methods that were adopted by them in country districts in Ireland. There were three classes into which the Commissioners could be divided: First, the pure officials of the Board; with them he always found it absolutely hopeless to do anything. Then there were the *ex officio*s of the Board, who were in an equally hopeless condition; and then there was a body of gentlemen only one or two of whom he could say had any distinctive right to be on the Board, and the rest knew very little about education. This book had been trumpeted about as being a remarkable example of the capacity of the Commissioners of National Education. First, he should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman if he could give him any further information as to who was the person who actually compiled this Reading Book, because the Committee of whom the right hon. Gentleman spoke had nothing to do with the compilation of it; a revised draft was submitted to them, and they apparently pronounced a valuable judgment on the whole of it. He asked who was the gentleman who compiled it, because one of the papers connected with education in Ireland, *The Education Gazette*, a paper of rather a remarkable character, spoke of the one gentleman who

compiled it, whilst one of the other papers spoke of a great number of persons; and he should like the right hon. Gentleman to tell him, if he could, who was the person, or who were the persons; how long they were engaged on this very important duty, and whether these people, when compiling the new Fifth Reading Book, had before them reading books for similar classes of children in England and Scotland? Now, the great complaint which had been urged by those who were interested in education against the old Fifth Reading Book was that it was not suitable for the children for whom it was intended; that most of the extracts in it were stilted; that they were beyond the comprehension of the children, or some of them; that they were not the best examples of English prose which could have been selected; and, besides that, many of the subjects which they dealt with were perfectly useless to the great majority of the children who were obliged to peruse them in school. This book was supposed to be an improvement on the old Fifth Reading Book; and, in the first place, he wanted to say a word or two upon its purely literary character. What was the index like? The old Fifth Reading Book had an index which was of some use; it was alphabetical, and, on turning to it, they could find the extracts they wanted to call attention to; and, in fact, it was a fairly good teacher. The new Fifth Reading Book had no index at all; it had simply a table of contents, which was of no assistance in finding any particular passage, and the only object that he could see for its introduction was to make it more difficult for teachers to find what they wanted. Then, what was the character of the passages omitted, and what were the new passages that were inserted? One of the new passages that had been inserted in place of those thrown out seemed to him to be an eloquent passage from a distinguished ecclesiastic; but the grammar seemed to be somewhat involved, and would require a good deal of explanation. It was an extract from a sermon of Cardinal Wiseman, and was to be found on page 275. He wished to go on to the question of the omissions. The first remarkable omission in the new book was the article on the British Constitution.

Mr. Macartney

MR. SEXTON: Hear, hear!

MR. MACARTNEY said, he did not expect the hon. Member for North Kerry (Mr. Sexton) would have much sympathy with it.

MR. SEXTON: Not with such an article as that.

MR. MACARTNEY said, he would like to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary if he had taken the trouble to read the three articles on the British Constitution in the Old Fifth Book? He (Mr. Macartney) had read them, and they seemed to him to be very simple, and not to contain any controversial matter whatever; and the only part in which they were not up to date was as to the right of Peers to vote by proxy. He should like to ask what were the passages containing any controversial matter which were in the slightest degree objectionable? He supposed the hon. Member for North Kerry was one of those people who would agree with *The Education Gazette* in Ireland, which spoke of this as "the dim memory of Archbishop Whately."

MR. SEXTON: My view is that, in many respects, they were inaccurate, and in others quite out of date.

MR. MACARTNEY said, he did not see any special case in which they were out of date, except in regard to Peers voting by proxy. Archbishop Whately had always been the *bête noir* of a particular class of Commissioners on the National Board of Education; he was the one person connected with the national education of Ireland whose work and influence it had been the constant endeavour of one class of ecclesiastics in Ireland to undermine; and he had no doubt they were glad to take an early opportunity of getting rid of the most obnoxious article, to them, which appeared in the reading books of the Board of National Education. But supposing there were in these articles passages of a highly objectionable character that presented a wrong view of the British Constitution, he would ask the right hon. Gentleman why the National Board did not employ some competent person—his hon. Friend near him (Mr. Gibson Bowles) suggested the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Bryce)—to write an article to take its place? The Chancellor of the Duchy was a great authority on Constitutional Law, and he would

probably be able to draw up for the National school system in Ireland a very admirable article on the British Constitution. But he must remind the right hon. Gentleman the answer he gave in regard to this particular article was not that there was anything objectionable in it, not that it was out of date, or that it conveyed a wrong impression of the British Constitution, but that it was considered too difficult for the readers. He (Mr. Macartney) happened to be connected with a good many schools, not in one county only, and he was bound to say he never heard a statement which from his experience appeared more absolutely devoid of any foundation, or more absurd than that they were outside the limit of the comprehension of those pupils of the class for whom they were intended. But what made it more extraordinary was that these pupils who were not supposed to be able to understand the articles on the British Constitution in the old Fifth Reading Book were supposed to be capable of understanding an article by the Right Rev. Monsignor Molloy upon "The Philosophy of the Candle." The Irish pupil who used that book, and who was supposed to be densely stupid that he could not understand Archbishop Whately's article on the Constitution, was supposed to be able to grasp that on "The Philosophy of the Candle." He would give one example. In the beginning of the article there was a head-note to explain to this child, who could not understand Archbishop Whately, what capillary attraction was. The writer said—

"Capillary attraction is the name given to the property which lodes possess of rising their level in cubes."

If the right hon. Gentleman could find a person in any of the classes, who used that Reading Book in the rural districts, who would read that through, and then tell him what capillary attraction was, and, at the same time, was incompetent to understand the article on the British Constitution, the right hon. Gentleman would have made out a considerable case for the new Reading Book. But, apart from that article on "The Philosophy of the Candle," there were two or three other articles on electric lighting by the same right rev. writer. He did not deny that Monsignor Molloy was

well up in his subject; he was not attacking the article on that ground; he attacked it because it was absurd to suppose that these children should understand elaborate articles upon electric lighting. He did not believe that, in the rural districts in Ireland, there was a single master in the first or second class—and certainly not in the third class—who would understand these articles on electric lighting.

MR. KNOX : Trained masters ?

MR. MACARTNEY said, trained masters; and perhaps he knew more of the schools and the masters than the hon. Member. And, besides, what good would it do the children in the rural districts of Ireland to cram their heads with learning about batteries and other things that they would not see and could not have before them for explanation? It was perfectly preposterous to suppose these children would have any idea of what electric lighting was. He was bound to say he thought the right hon. Gentleman, or rather the Commissioners, would have very great difficulty in supporting their contention that they had a right to exclude the article on the British Constitution because it was too difficult for the children, and, at the same time, include the very highly scientific articles on electric lighting, and the one on "The Philosophy of the Candle." That was the first of the omissions, and on that he would only say it took place coincident with the introduction of a Bill that was to do away with the British Constitution. He supposed the majority of the National Board of Education thought it was useless to instruct the children of Ireland as to the Constitution under which their forefathers had been brought up. He now took the second class of omissions—the articles on Political Economy by the same author, Archbishop Whately. He was willing to admit there were some themes of political economy on which there were some conflicting views, and that some of the articles in the old Fifth Book were too far advanced for the children for whom that reading book was intended. He was also perfectly ready to admit they contained matters of a highly controversial character; at all events, they contained propositions of political economy that

were not recognised either by the Leaders of one political Party in Ireland, or by the heads of one particular Church; and, therefore, he did not object to their doing what they could to strike these articles out. But he would remind the right hon. Gentleman that not many years ago Archbishop Whately was regarded as a high authority at the University of Oxford; but what he objected to was that the whole of the articles should have been excluded. He could not conceive there would have been the slightest objection to the articles of Archbishop Whately explaining what money was, what exchanges were, what coinage was, and what values were. He did not believe they contained a single statement of a controversial character. If Archbishop Whately's name stank so horribly in the nostrils of so many of the Commissioners in Ireland, if they objected to his name remaining longer in the Fifth Reading Book, they ought to have considered the interest of Ireland, and have engaged some other person who would have replaced these most excellent articles with others of a similar character dealing with matters which he thought it highly important that children should be made acquainted with. The articles dealing with wages and rich and poor he had no doubt were highly objectionable to certain persons in Ireland; and, therefore, he quite admitted there might be some reason for excluding them. For instance, in the article on wages there was a passage that came directly in conflict with the political views of one large class. Archbishop Whately, had condemned in plain terms any industrious farmer being prevented from taking a farm from which another had been put out for mismanagement or non-payment of rent. He quite admitted that was not a passage which a large proportion of the political Leaders of a certain class in Ireland would like to see in one of the reading books in the National schools. There was another passage in which this writer said—

"Every man has a right, no doubt, to demand whatever wages he thinks fit, and to refuse to work for less; but it is most unjust and oppressive that he should prevent others from working for whatever wages they choose to accept."

And further on, in a chapter on letting and hiring, appeared this, which applied in a most objectionable manner to views prevalent in Ireland—

Mr. Macartney

"Every man ought to be at liberty to sell, let, or use in the manner he thinks best his house or land, or anything that is his property."

He frankly admitted that throughout these articles on the higher themes of political economy there were matters that he and others might find unobjectionable, but which would meet with a certain amount of natural objection on the part of a great number of people in Ireland. He did not object to their being excluded; but he objected to the articles dealing with and explaining what money was, and what value was, being excluded; but still more he objected to the Commissioners not thinking it necessary to replace them by articles of a similar character by some other writer, as these were matters in which the children were certainly capable of being instructed, and which ought to form part of the curriculum of every National school. The right hon. Gentleman, in an answer given to him (Mr. Macartney), attacked the articles on political economy, because, amongst other things, they contained the following:—

"The effect of fixing a judicial rent would be to leave the farm idle on the landlord's hands."

He admitted the objection would have been a good one if Archbishop Whately ever wrote those words, or if they were to be found in any portion of these articles on political economy. So far as the old Fifth Reading Book was concerned, Archbishop Whately never wrote or said anything of the sort. What he wrote was quite different—namely—

"If you were to make a law for lowering rents so that the landlord should not be allowed to receive more than so much an acre for it, the only effect of that would be that the landlord would no longer let his land to the farmer, but take it into his own hands, and employ a bailiff to look after it for him."

["Hear, hear!"] He supposed the hon. Member for North Kerry (Mr. Sexton), who cheered that, would not deny that if that took place and a rent was thus fixed by law, that in nine cases out of ten, if the landlord thought he could make more out of it, he would naturally farm it himself, and that was all that Archbishop Whately said. That passage was written long before there was any idea of the land legislation that had taken place; but, at all events, there should not be imputed to him any doctrine of political economy that he himself did not hold, and

for which no fragment of evidence could be found in his writings. There was one other point in connection with these omissions on which he wished to comment. There were originally in the old Fifth Book eight articles on Scripture history ; but, for some reason he was not able to understand, only three had been retained, and five had been omitted. They seemed all very much on the same score, and of the same character—

“The journeying of the Israelites ; Settlement in the Holy Land ; The Hebrew Commonwealth ; Government by Judges ; History of the Israelites from the Establishment of the Monarchy until the Revolt of the Ten Tribes ; From the Revolt of the Ten Tribes until the Captivity ; From the Restoration of the Jews until the Birth of Christ ; and Jewish Festivals and Ordinances.”

The journeying of the Israelites and the settlement in the Holy Land appeared to the gentleman who compiled the book to be unobjectionable ; but, for some reason or other, he had found the articles on

“the Hebrew Commonwealth ; Government by Judges ; the History of the Israelites, from the Establishment of the Monarchy until the Revolt of the Ten Tribes ; From the Revolt of the Ten Tribes until the Captivity ; and From the Restoration of the Jews until the Birth of Christ,”

had been excluded ; and he should like to know if there was anything contentious in that from a religious point of view ? He was trying to find out on what basis the new book was produced by the National Commissioners, and he would like to ask for what reason—whether it was to instruct the children in fishery or to improve their knowledge of English—long extracts from the Report of the Inspectors of the Irish Sea Fisheries had been included ? They were very valuable Reports ; but he did not think anyone would be prepared to contend that the Report of an Inspector of Fisheries, or, for that matter, of any other Inspector, was the sort of thing to choose as a high standard of English, yet these extracts were copied into the book—full of facts and the names of fish which the children in Ireland never heard of. What he objected to about the book also was that it did not justify the expense which had been incurred in producing it, and that every objection that could be urged against the old book could be urged with ten times greater force against the present reading book. He could only believe

that the book was brought out for the express purpose of excluding the articles on the British Constitution, the articles on political economy, and getting rid of the name of Archbishop Whately altogether. There had been several articles by distinguished Prelates of the Catholic Church ; he had not one word to say against the particular extracts from their writings, except that the extract from Cardinal Wiseman seemed to be involved, and not a good example of English grammar, and he expected that the articles on electric lighting and “Philosophy of the Candle” were beyond the class of children for whom the book was intended. The new book did not show any of that elasticity which ought to be a great feature of educational effort in Ireland. For instance, as to the lessons on electric lighting, his opinion was that it might be possible for these lessons to be of use in Dublin and Belfast ; but it was perfectly absurd to think that such subjects were likely to be useful, or that the lessons were likely to be taken to heart in the rural districts of Ireland, and equally absurd was it to imagine that extracts from the Sea Fisheries Reports would convey to the children of those districts any information of a useful character. He would content himself with these general observations to show that there was no reason for the production of this new reading book. He did not think it was produced on legitimate grounds, and he thought the Chief Secretary would be disposed to admit that on many grounds it was objectionable.

MR. J. MORLEY : I do not think the hon. Gentleman quite understands the position of this question. He speaks of what he calls the objectionable features of the book, and deals with the alterations that have been made as objectionable. He asks me to explain the revision of the book. Well, Sir, I have only to remind him of what I said in answer to a question put to me some time ago. It is not the case that the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland have introduced alterations into the reading book mainly with the object of displacing from it the name of Archbishop Whately. I would remind the hon. Member that the book was revised and re-arranged by a Committee consisting

of four Protestants and two Catholics—all Commissioners.

MR. MACARTNEY said, he could not accept that statement, because he had the highest authority for saying that the book was compiled before it came before the Committee at all.

MR. J. MORLEY: I can quote the Minutes of the Proceedings of the Committee, which are before me, in support of my statement. I do not want to detain hon. Members, and, referring to the Minutes, I find that considerable discussion and criticism took place on the subject, and that the Committee agreed to the revision without any dissentient. When I stated, in answer to the question put to me, that the Committee were unanimous about the revised book I was technically quite correct—I spoke in accordance with the information supplied to me; but I may say that Dr. Fitzgerald wrote to me to say that, though he did not divide the Committee, and, therefore, in that sense the decision was unanimous, at the same time, as I understood, Dr. Fitzgerald did not entirely approve of the book. Well, Sir, I think it is clear that the book was revised and re-arranged by this Committee of the Commissioners without any idea of disparaging Archbishop Whately, or of pooh-poohing the British Constitution.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Who were they?

MR. J. MORLEY: They were Sir Patrick Keenan, Dr. Newell, Mr. Morell, Dr. Fitzgerald, and others—a Committee of four Protestants, and, as I have said, two Roman Catholics. It is absurd to say that these changes have been made to pacify the Roman Catholics.

MR. MACARTNEY: I never said so.

MR. J. MORLEY: What are the objections to the book? I am not particularly concerned to defend it. I am bound to say that of all the school reading books for children which I have ever seen everyone of them is absurdly overdone—that is to say, they assume a nicety of understanding in the words which we know young people do not possess. But the old book, I must say, seems to me to be undoubtedly less simple than the new one. The hon. Member speaks of the question of electric lighting. He says, I think, that few, either masters or children, in rural districts

would understand this question. And so also with regard to the Sea Fisheries Report, and the extract from it given in the book. Well, Sir, for my part, I would far rather give a child some passages from Fishery Reports to read than the precious article on the British Constitution which appears in the book I hold in my hand. I will just read one or two passages from it, and I would ask the Committee to consider whether they are suitable to children in the rural districts of the West of Ireland. This is what is expected to be of use to those children—I quote from Part Second of the article on “The British Constitution,” and the references to the proceedings of the House of Commons—

“Every Member is now supplied with a printed copy of the Bill, which he can study at leisure, and the Bill is understood to have been ‘read’ when the vote for reading it has passed. It is not usual for those who may be opposed to any measure to vote against the First Reading. . . .”

The Report of a Fishery Committee should surely be of more interest than this. It would be more solid, at any rate. Then the passage goes on to say that the matter may be discussed on the Second Reading. It says—

“Each clause of the Bill is discussed at the Second Reading and put to the vote separately.”

Then, again—

“If any Member has reason to believe that the Business of the House is being improperly hurried on, or brought forward, when the majority of its opponents are absent, he has the privilege of moving an Adjournment; and when a Division has taken place on that question, if there is a majority against adjourning, he or any other Member may soon after move ‘That the House do now adjourn,’ for, though the same Motion cannot be made twice, it is decided that since the word ‘now’ denotes a different time, that this is not the same Motion as the other. By persevering in such Motions any one Member may stop the proceedings of the House; but, of course, no one would resort to this extreme step unless strongly impressed with the necessity for it.”

Does the hon. Member think that it is not better to introduce the Fisheries Report rather than such stuff as that? Why, Sir, any Report of the Fisheries Inspectors would be better. I do not regard this book as at all ideal, and I agree with what I understand to be the view of Dr. Fitzgerald, that it would be better, on the whole, if we had in Ireland the same system which prevailed in England, by which the Board does not itself provide

Mr. J. Morley

books, but allow competition, subject to their control and judgment, in the provision of reading books. The argument of the Commissioners is not a bad one as far as it goes—that is, that they are better able to provide the books at a cheaper rate than would otherwise be the case; but my own opinion is in favour of competition as in England. The hon. Member took this opportunity to attack the Commissioners of Education. It appears he has a very poor opinion of that Body.

MR. MACARTNEY: Hear, hear!

MR. J. MORLEY: Well, Sir, all I can say is that there is probably no body of gentlemen connected with Ireland who have had so enormously difficult a task to perform as these gentlemen. There is no question so burning, so abounding at every step with passionate controversy, as the education question, and they have done their work with an amount of success and absence of friction, on the whole, which reflects the greatest credit on their tact and prudence. I regret that the hon. Member has taken this opportunity of saying anything adverse to a Body which does such useful work. Well, Sir, I am not going into the question whether it would not be better if there were an index to the book, nor am I going to defend Cardinal Wiseman's grammar. I think that some of the elementary principles of political economy, such as a definition of money, might be very useful, but I think it is clear that the lessons on political economy introduced by Archbishop Whately in the book are not suited for children. No one has a greater respect than I have for the services of Archbishop Whately to logic and political economy, but I hold that he did not say the last word on either. If Archbishop Whately were alive now he would be the last man to say that he desired that no further light should be thrown on these subjects. Mr. Mellor, I do not think the hon. Member has made out a case—he certainly has not made a serious case—on this question, and I do not think it is necessary for me to say more in reply to his remarks.

SIR T. LEA said, he wished to draw attention to the question of the Marlborough Street Training College, to which education in Ireland owed so much.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; Committee counted, and 40 Members being found present,

SIR T. LEA said, that the Commissioners, in their Report, stated that from 1883 to 1892 no fewer than 12,089 Queen's scholars had undergone courses of training varying from three months to two years at this College. That represented a great deal of work, and he regretted to see that the Government pandered to other Training Colleges in Ireland, which received grants at the expense of this Undenominational Training College. Here was a comparative statement of the grants made 10 years ago and those made now. In 1883 the amount granted to Marlborough Street College was £7,833. This year it was £9,421. The grant to St. Patrick's College 10 years ago was £1,614, but was now £8,097; the grant to another College, which in 1883 was £1,520, was now £5,900; the grant to the College of the Church of Ireland, which in 1883 was £1,104, was now £4,653, and another Catholic Training College had been established which received a grant last year for the first time of £1,536. Thus they saw that by far the largest proportion of the increased grants went to the Denominational Training Colleges instead of to the Undenominational Training College in Marlborough Street. Was there any wonder that necessary repairs could not be effected at Marlborough Street, and that the sanitary arrangements there were not up to date? He believed that if ever the youth of the country was to be trained to respect other people's opinions it could only be done by a mixed system of education, such as was given in the Marlborough Street College. There was a tendency for the mixed schools in Ireland to decrease. In 1883 the percentage of schools where there was a mixed attendance of Catholics and Protestants was 52·8. It had then fallen to 52·4; in 1887 it was 49·4, and now it had fallen to the lowest figure—namely, 45·1. Therefore, they saw a regular attack going on not only on the Undenominational Training College in Marlborough Street, but on the mixed school system in Ireland. Only 2·8 of the children were compelled to go into the mixed schools, and the tendency of the prevailing state of things was to drive

the farmer and the farm labourer from districts where the mixed schools at present existed. He knew of a case in which a Presbyterian farmer had sent his two children to a mixed school. They were the only Protestant children there, and the Roman Catholic minister wrote to the agent of the landlord asking that they should be taken away.

An hon. MEMBER: Name!

SIR T. LEA said, he had not got the name with him, but the case was well known at the time, and was an example of what was going on in the South and West of Ireland. He would like to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary whether there had been established of late any new system with regard to religious examinations in schools? He was informed by teachers that religious examinations were conducted during the time allotted to secular education by persons sent round by the Roman Catholic Bishops. In one case that he had been told of, time was not allowed for the Protestant children to leave the school. It was a sort of surprise visit on the part of the Inspector. Manifestly, this was against the intention of the Education Act. He trusted that this sort of thing was a very rare occurrence, and that if it were done it was done without the knowledge of the Department. With regard to the method of selecting gentlemen for the Board of Education, he thought it could be greatly improved. When there was a vacancy it would be well to leave the Board to suggest names for the Government to choose from. He wished to know whether the teachers were satisfied at the increase of salaries they had obtained through the scheme of last year, and he also wished to learn why nothing had been done by the Treasury to provide pensions for the orphans and widows of teachers? A scheme had been proposed, and it was evidently a workable one, or it would not have been proposed by the Irish Office. But year after year went by, and the Treasury did not make a single step towards the settling of the question. Was there any chance of its being settled? The last question he wished to ask was as to school banks. Those who admired thrift were glad that steps had been taken to encourage children to save their coppers. Circulars

Sir T. Lea

had been sent out by the Education Department to the schools suggesting the establishment of this system of school banks. They did not gather from the Report whether any replies had been received, or whether any schools had already started this system. Perhaps the Chief Secretary would tell the Committee how the matter stood.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Belfast, W.) said that, with regard to the subject of books, he agreed with the Chief Secretary, and only wished the right hon. Gentleman could see his way to carry his own idea a bit further. He (Mr. Arnold-Forster) could not quite take the view of the hon. Member for South Antrim, who desired that the old form of National Board readers should be re-introduced. He would go further, and say that what he thought the Department required was that there should be opportunity given to dispense altogether with National Board readers, not on account of their being National Board readers, but because it was impossible to get the best kind of educational book constructed on the system on which the National Board readers were constructed. He had a personal interest in the production of school books; but he did not think that that disqualified him from saying a word on the matter. It was a mistake to suppose that the reason why books other than those prescribed by the National Board were not used in Ireland was that there was any prejudice against them on the part of the National Board, or any unwillingness on the part of the managers of schools to use them. He thought the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had absolutely laughed out of court the first edition of the National Board's Fifth Reading Book. What made the National Board's books a monopoly was the fact that they were practically subsidised. Apart altogether from the contents, they were produced in such an inferior style that no publisher in the United Kingdom would offer them as things to be bought on their merits. They were, however, supplied at cost price, with the result that a premium of something like 30 or 40 per cent. was given to them. If the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. J. Morley) was sincere, as he was sure he was, in believing that a larger range of books was needed to choose from, he

must make up his mind that the only way of meeting the need was to withdraw the privilege which Irish schools now possessed, of receiving books at cost price, and to allow the matter to be settled by the competition of the market. At present nearly the whole of the Irish schools were absolutely shut out from any participation in the advantages which were felt in every school in England and Scotland from the efforts that were being made by publishers to produce good school books.

MR. SEXTON (Kerry, N.) said, the hon. Baronet the Member for South Londonderry (Sir T. Lea) was certainly a very diligent sentinel in the cause of compulsory education. The hon. Baronet had inquired as to the results so far obtained. As the Act only came into force on the 1st January next year, he thought the hon. Baronet might have waited till next Session before putting his question. So far as he (Mr. Sexton) had heard, satisfactory results could hardly be anticipated. He congratulated the hon. Member on his remarks respecting the constitution of the National Board of Education. That Board, such as it was, was the result of the combined wisdom of successive English Administrations in Ireland. It was comprised of 20 gentlemen, of whom 10 were Catholics and 10 Protestants, and when a vacancy occurred the Lord Lieutenant filled it up. It was strange that so devoted an adherent of the Imperial Government as the hon. Baronet should have failed to approve of the constitution of a Board which had been the outcome of the working of the present system of Government in Ireland. As to the suggestion that Members of Parliament brought their influence to bear upon the Government in reference to appointments to the Board, it was to be supposed that the Members of the hon. Baronet's Party had used their influence with the Government in the past on the subject, and it was no compliment to them if their efforts had produced so bad a result. He (Mr. Sexton) could only say that no pressure had ever been brought to bear on the Government on the subject by the Members of the Nationalist Party, and no advice had ever been asked by any Government from the Members of that Party. He himself was of opinion that it

would be well if the Representatives of Ireland were consulted on a matter which, like this, concerned so nearly the welfare of the country. The hon. Baronet had made a charge with regard to examinations in Catholic schools. He said he had heard from someone or other whom he did not name that in some schools an official, who he thought was an Inspector, came into school during the hours of secular instruction, and examined, or attempted to examine, the children in religious matters.

SIR T. LEA said, his statement was that he had been informed by the teachers that Inspectors had been going round within the last three or four years with the object of examining children in religious knowledge.

MR. SEXTON submitted that a charge of that kind should not be made in such a form. Nobody was entitled to enter a school during the hours of secular instruction for the purpose of interfering with such instruction, and it was impossible that such a thing could happen, because there was hung up on the walls of the national schools a time table which separated the secular from the religious instruction. A teacher who allowed the time table to be violated would submit himself to immediate dismissal. As to the mixed schools, there was not the slightest doubt that they had been continually decreasing in numbers for a quarter of a century or more without a break. The decrease was not due to Catholic action only. The unbroken course of experience in Ireland was that as soon as the children of one faith who were in a minority in any school became sufficiently numerous to enable their parents to establish a denominational school they did so, the mixed school being adverse to the genius and sentiment of the people of Ireland, Catholic as well as Protestant. This process had gone on especially in the Province, and even in the county, which the hon. Baronet represented. He did not know whether the hon. Baronet had intended to make an attack on the system of the Training Colleges in Ireland. It ought to be borne in mind by English Members that the whole system of Training Colleges in England was denominational. The hon. Baronet seemed to think that Training Colleges were getting more than fair

play, because, while the official Colleges got £10,000 a year, the other four Colleges divided £27,000 between them. Had the hon. Baronet observed, however, that the official Colleges had an attendance last year of 200 students, while the other Colleges had an attendance of nearly 500 students? When the hon. Baronet attacked the system of Training Colleges, he attacked the policy of his own Party. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Leeds (Mr. Jackson) must be aware that the lack of trained teachers had been one of the main defects, if not the chief defect, of the primary system of education in Ireland. Of 11,000 teachers, only 4,000 were trained, and the inefficiency of the system, so far as it was inefficient, was mainly due to this fact. The former Chief Secretary (Mr. A. J. Balfour), when he wrote the letter in 1890 in which he declared that the Denominational Colleges should be placed on a level of all-round equality of treatment with the other Colleges, took a step as apt and wise as any that had been taken on the subject of education in our time. Anyone who reflected on the subject would see that, where 11,000 teachers were engaged in a laborious occupation, the waste must be at least £600 a year, so that it was necessary not to contract the system of Training Colleges, but rather to expand it, and to be more liberal rather than less liberal with public money. There was one point on which all-round equality of treatment had not been secured. In a letter to which he had just referred, the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. A. J. Balfour) said that one of the points of inequality was that the Marlborough Street College had been not only built, but furnished and equipped, at the expense of the State; and the right hon. Gentleman urged that a grant should be made for the Church of Ireland to cover not only the cost of the building, but the cost of the furniture as well. Marlborough Street College was not only built, but furnished and equipped at the expense of the State; but in the instructions given by the valuation department there was no instruction to take account of the furnishing or equipment of the Denominational College. He would commend that point to the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, because he was sure no Member of the

Mr. Sexton

Unionist Party would take exception to the fulfilment of the promise given in 1890. He desired to say a word about books. He seldom had the pleasure of agreeing with the hon. Member for West Belfast (Mr. Arnold-Forster). Not only did he agree with him that evening, but he thought, from the hon. Member's position elsewhere, he was entitled to speak with authority on the question. He (Mr. Sexton) did not think he ever opened duller books than the class books of the National Board in Ireland, or books less suited to the peculiar genius of the people of Ireland. A good deal of time was occupied upon that question; but he thought they could very well spare the time occupied by the hon. Member for South Antrim (Mr. Macartney) in criticising Cardinal Wiseman's grammar, and suggesting that the Committee of the Board of Education—two Presbyterians, two Protestants, and two Roman Catholics—entered into a conspiracy to expunge the wisdom of Archbishop Whately from the new Fifth Reading Book. He thought they were well rewarded by the observations of the Chief Secretary. He put his finger on the truth of the matter when he said the inadequacy and inappropriateness of the class books lay in the fact that they were compiled by officials who had no literary taste, and possibly no great educational skill. In England the supply of class books was thrown open to public competition. He thoroughly agreed with the Chief Secretary that the way to remedy the matter was to bring this monopoly to an end. Although the National Board was independent of the Government, yet he would suggest to the Chief Secretary that he should avail himself of the custom which had prevailed, and communicate with the Board, expressing the view that educational interests only would be benefited if they substituted a public supply of books for the monopoly, and invited the Commissioners to consider the question of placing the system upon a parity with the excellent system which prevailed in England.

MR. JACKSON: There are one or two questions I desire to refer to; but before I do so I should like to say I agree with the hon. Member for North Kerry that it would be a great advantage to the Board of Education in Ireland, if it were

possible, to secure a larger supply of trained teachers. I am not sure that his figures are quite right. I think he took rather a sanguine view, unless I read his figures wrongly. He says that, whereas the Training Colleges turned out 100 teachers a year, they now turn out 400—

MR. SEXTON: I said the official College turned out 100.

MR. JACKSON: I notice, by the Report of the Commissioners of Education, that of 472 teachers appointed last year only 170 of them were trained.

MR. SEXTON: The right hon. Gentleman must bear in mind that a good many of those who are trained in the Colleges are already teachers who go up for a short course, and they would not be included among the new teachers.

MR. JACKSON: Quite so; but the number bears out the proportion. There are 11,000 teachers, and about 4,000 are trained—that is, about one-third; and the number of 170 trained out of 470 is somewhat in the same proportion. There is no doubt it is a very considerable difficulty; and certainly I, for one, should be very sorry to see any other step taken that would tend in any degree to diminish the number of trained teachers available for appointments in the schools in Ireland. I want to ask the Chief Secretary two or three questions. One is a question which, although it may seem to some of minor importance, is one in which I take a special interest, and which I conscientiously believe to be of great importance to Ireland in its material prosperity. It is as to the question of dairy instruction. When I was in Ireland I had the opportunity of visiting a good many of the so-called creameries or butter factories that were being established in Ireland. I had also the opportunity of visiting the agricultural school and farm at Glasnevin, and I took some interest in what was being done in the Munster Dairy School at Youghal. Everyone who has watched the statistics, and has seen the enormous growth of the import of Danish butter into this country, and subsequently the business that is growing up in the importing of butter from New Zealand and Australia, and I believe also from Canada, must recognise that, at all events, there is an enormous demand which has to be supplied. Now, I

believe that there is no country in the world, as far as I am able to judge, which by reason of its grass and the class of its stock is more capable of producing good butter than Ireland; and I think, if I may venture to say so, that it is little short of a disgrace to Ireland that the enormous business which is within their power to carry on successfully has been so long neglected—and neglected, I think, for very insufficient reasons. I was so much impressed by my visit to these creameries that I was really very keen to do everything I could in order to provide the necessary instruction and training to enable these people to compete with other countries. I came to this conclusion—that, both from the economic point of view and the question of improving the standard quality of the butter, these creameries and butter factories are extremely valuable. I am sorry the hon. Member for South Dublin (Mr. H. Plunkett) is not here, because he has taken not only a great personal and intelligent interest in this question, but has backed it both by his brains and money. I see by the Report of the National Education Commissioners that the Government have authorised—and arrangements have been made for—the employment of, I presume, a competent instructor who shall go about the country, and shall endeavour by practical lessons to teach the people what it is that is required, and to enable them to improve the quality of their supply and the method of their manufacture; and I shall be glad if the Chief Secretary can give us a little information beyond that contained in the Report of the National Education Commissioners. I should like the right hon. Gentleman to tell us exactly how the matter stands—whether such an instructor has been appointed, what work he has done, and what view the Chief Secretary takes generally of the possibilities of the future of this great industry? Another question I wanted to ask was with reference to the Education Act that was passed last year. The remarks of the hon. Member for North Kerry rather emphasised what was in my mind, and I confess to a feeling of extreme regret on hearing him give utterance to the expression of his opinion that, as regards the Compulsory Clauses of the Education Act, he looks forward with no great

hope to their having any satisfactory result. [Mr. SEXTON : As matters now stand.] I do not, of course, know what the matters are to which the hon. Member refers ; but the question, in my opinion, is one of such consequence to the people of Ireland that I confess I am amazed at an hon. Member who takes so much interest in everything that relates to Ireland speaking in this strain. I do not know what the difficulties are ; but I venture to say the question is one which ought to be entirely apart from both religion and Party politics. The question of the education of the children of Ireland is one which certainly ought to be removed from the sphere of either Party politics or religious differences. The Committee are aware that what are called the Compulsory Clauses—but what I call the powers which provide that School Attendance Committees shall be provided in Ireland—are intended to come into operation on the 1st January, 1894. I do not think anyone who knows anything of Ireland, who has travelled in Ireland, or who has watched the course of the Reports published by the National Education Commissioners, can have the smallest hesitation or doubt in his mind that there is a very large proportion of the population of children of school age who at present will not attend or give average attendance in schools in Ireland. I venture to say that the last Report of the National Commissioners of Education, which shows that the average attendance had fallen from the previous year, is one which gives reason to many people for great anxiety as regards the future of the education of the children of Ireland. For the year 1891 there had been a slight increase in the number of children who attended school, and a slight increase in the percentage of the average attendance. In the year 1892, notwithstanding that during that year additional facilities and inducements were provided not only to the teachers, but to the parents of the children in Ireland to send their children to school, we see that the average attendance has fallen off. It has not fallen off very much ; but, still, I confess I had been sanguine enough to hope that the result of that Act and of what was done by the late Government in the cause of education in Ireland in providing the additional sums of money which enabled the schools practically to

be made free would have resulted in a large increase in the average attendance. That has not been so, and I venture to say to the Committee that anybody who walks through the streets of Dublin or Cork, or any other large towns or cities in Ireland, and notices the very large number of children that are to be seen the whole day long, must feel that these children would be very much better if they were brought into attendance at school. I would say that if Clause 3 of the Education Act of 1891 is to come into operation on January 1, 1894, it is now time that the Chief Secretary was in a position to give information as to how that power is going to be exercised, and in what spirit it is going to be received by those who are responsible for education in Ireland. The School Attendance Committees will have to be appointed. If the Local Authority, to whom is entrusted the duty in the first instance, fails in its duty, provision is made that the Board of Education are to take the matter in hand. I confess I attach enormous importance to the question of extending education to all the children in Ireland. I am convinced that the average attendance can be, and ought to be, raised by at least 10 per cent., and anyone who places an obstacle in the way of that desirable result, I think, can hardly pose as a friend of Ireland in any respect. I hope, therefore, the Chief Secretary will be able to give the Committee some information as to what he has done and what he proposes to do, and, if he can, that he will give us any information as to his anticipation of the spirit in which this Act is intended to be worked, and in which it will be received by those who are responsible for education in Ireland. I have only one other question to ask, but it is of some importance, and I hope the Chief Secretary may be able to give us some information upon it. Last year a very important question was raised as to the position of the Teachers' Pension Fund in Ireland. At that time the Treasury thought it right to recommend and Parliament to adopt the suggestion that a considerable sum should be applied in aid of teachers' pensions. It was then expected there had been some mistake made which had resulted during the past years in placing the position of the Teachers' Pension Fund in a position of

some difficulty, and giving cause for anxiety. The Treasury made a promise that they would consider the question, and I think the Government are under the same obligation to the House to give information on this subject as soon as they are in a position to make up their mind as to what the exact position of the fund is according to their re-examination and very careful consideration of the question. I shall be glad if the right hon. Gentleman is now in a position to give the Committee some information as regards the real position of the Fund, and whether the Government propose to take any steps in order to place the Fund upon a satisfactory basis? More than 12 months have elapsed since this question was first raised in the House, and I think it would be a satisfaction to the very large number of persons who are interested in this Fund, and satisfactory to Members of the Committee, who are also interested in the financial position of the Fund, if the Chief Secretary is able to give us any additional information.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Leeds (Mr. Jackson) had raised two of the questions that he had intended to ask some information about. He had intended to ask for information as to the formation of the School Attendance Committees, and also concerning the Teachers' Pension Fund. Both of these questions having been dealt with, it was not necessary to refer to them at any length. He was not now going to discuss the principle of Denominational Training Colleges. He did not believe in the wisdom of doing that. He and his friends fought that battle at the proper time, and they were badly beaten. The Leader of the Opposition and the hon. Member for North Kerry coalesced, and he (Mr. Russell) and his friends were utterly routed and defeated; and he was not going back to fight that question of principle. But they had a right to ask what the victory had cost? Denominational Training Colleges had been opened, handsomely endowed by the State, and he should like the Chief Secretary to tell them what denominationalism was costing the country. There was another matter referred to by the hon. Member for North Kerry. That hon. Member had made another claim to-night, which, however, he was bound to say he made

at the time this question was before the House on the previous occasion, and that was as to furnishing the College. All he had got to say was that they need not make two bites at a cherry, and there was no use in their building a College, unless they were going to furnish it. So far as he was concerned, he had to say that the principle having been conceded, and the hon. Member for North Kerry having won all along the line, they ought not to stick at furnishing. But he did want to know—and he thought the country ought to know—what this step in denominationalism had actually cost in hard cash? He thought it would have run up to £80,000, and he hoped the Secretary to the Treasury would be able to give them some information on the point. The Denominational Colleges had been so well done for that he wanted the Chief Secretary to do a little for a College for which, after all, the National Board of Education was responsible. He meant the College attached to the National Board itself in Marlborough Street. They had built these Colleges for the denominationalists, and in what kind of a condition was the Undenominational College in Marlborough Street? He lately walked through that College, spending a couple of hours in it, and all he could say was that it was not creditable to the National Board of Education, and not creditable to the Government which allowed it. The Government had done a great deal for the denominationalists, and they ought to give some little attention to the oldest College, and the one which had done most for training teachers for the national system. The sanitary condition of the College was dangerous to health.

MR. SEXTON: Then what are the Board of Works doing to let it go like that?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: What they were always doing. In the presence of one of the Commissioners, the smoke test was applied to the drains, and it proved to demonstration that the place was in such an insanitary condition as to be dangerous to life and health. Yet here, in Talbot Street, were 100 young women brought up from the country parts of Ireland to breathe this atmosphere. Whilst they were endowing and building Denominational Colleges at a cost of £80,000, their own College was

not in a fit state for human beings to live in. That was an abominable state of affairs, and one which ought to be rectified. The building was very unsuitable for its purpose. What was called the Ladies' College was an old house in Talbot Street, and what was called the Men's College was a still older house in North Great George Street. What was the arrangement? This was a mixed College, attended by Roman Catholics, Protestants, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and Methodists. He was happy to say the denominationists had not been able to break it up entirely. [Mr. SEXTON: We do not want to.] In the house where the men lived there would be a room where probably 20 young men slept. At very slight cost cubicles might be put up, and the bed space fairly enlarged. The beds would then be separated, and there would be some kind of privacy for those inhabiting the place. There was now nothing of the kind—the place was in an insanitary condition. The Commissioners did nothing for it, and did not seem to care whether the College was broken up or not. He knew that, so far as Training Colleges were concerned, it must come to denominationalism in the end; but so long as the College was maintained and the Commissioners were responsible for it they should keep it in a sanitary state. He hoped the Chief Secretary would see that attention was paid to this matter. He would like to know whether the Commissioners were in communication with the Local Authorities in the various towns with a view to the formation of the School Attendance Committees under the Compulsory Education Act, which would come into operation at the beginning of next year. They had not heard anything about the Christian Brothers. That was the first time the Irish Education Vote had been allowed to pass without some reference to the Christian Brothers.

MR. SEXTON: I referred to them. I think I indicated plainly enough the probable result on compulsion of excluding them from the benefits of these grants.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, he took in the remarks of the hon. Member for Kerry completely; but he was not quite sure that all the Committee understood

them as fully as he did. [*Laughter.*] That was not a reflection on the Committee. It could not be expected that other Members would understand everything about the affairs of Ireland as well as the Irish Members did. He wished to ask the Chief Secretary how the question of the Christian Brothers stood? Had any advances been made to the Christian Brothers by the Board of Education since the Debate on the subject at the commencement of the Session, or did the Government intend to make any proposal? The matter was serious so far as compulsion was concerned, and he desired a rational settlement of the question. With regard to the question of appointing Commissioners, he thought the hon. Member for North Kerry was too severe on his hon. Friend the Member for South Derry. It was quite possible that the system of appointing members of the National Board of Education might have been very good in the past, and yet be capable of improvement. He thought the system of appointing members of the Board might be improved, at any rate, so far as the Episcopalians in the North of Ireland were concerned, for their representatives were all Dublin men. Therefore they did not get in those gentlemen, however able and impartial they might be, a reflection of the opinions of the Episcopalians of Ulster on these questions. As to the mixed schools, the percentage of those schools in Ulster was 60 per cent. The hon. Member for North Kerry had stated that the unmixed schools had increased five-fold within the last 30 years. One reason of the retrogression towards unmixed schools—for he considered it a retrograde movement—was that at the time of the Disestablishment of the Irish Church a large number of Church schools, which were naturally denominational, passed under the Board. But the real reason why the unmixed schools had increased so greatly in recent years was because the Board of Education had been prevailed upon by Episcopalian and Roman Catholic clerics to make grants to schools with the minimum attendance of 15, although those schools could not possibly give the same education that the larger schools gave. He thought that, on the whole, the Board had done their work—and it had been difficult work—fairly well. He did not desire to impede

Mr. T. W. Russell

the Commissioners. He simply wanted information.

MR. J. MORLEY: The discussion has ranged over a very wide space, and I do not propose to follow it in detail. The hon. Member for South Tyrone made a remark of a rather disparaging character on the deliberations of the Committee. It was a very significant remark in view of larger issues. He said that not a half-a-dozen Members of the Committee understood this question.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: What I said was that in a mere matter of local concern like education, Members of the Committee could not be expected to know as much as the Irish Members.

MR. J. MORLEY: The hon. Member for South Tyrone now refers to the question of education as a local concern. If there is one subject that goes deeper down into the roots of Irish national life it is the question of education; and the hon. Member, who is a strenuous Unionist, says that this Committee is not competent to deal with the question, or to give the necessary attention to the matter. Of course, we knew that all the time; but it is rather interesting to have a strong Unionist like the hon. Member admit it. I will endeavour first to answer the question put to me by the right hon. Gentleman who preceded me in the Office of Chief Secretary with regard to the question of dairy instruction. An experienced Dairy Instructor is now employed. He began his work in April, and from that time has engaged in the inspection and organisation of creameries and dairy classes, and in giving practical instructions in all the arts connected with the manufacture of butter. Thirty-five creameries have been visited in different parts of Ireland, and a course of lectures has been delivered on butter and cheese-making, as well as on other branches of the industry. The Instructor works under the guidance of Mr. Carroll, the head of the Glasnevin School, and everything is being done in the manner the right hon. Gentleman himself would desire. The right hon. Gentleman raised a more important question when he asked what has been done in the matter of compulsory education. The Commissioners, in compliance with the Act of 1892, have communicated with the clerks of 118 Municipal towns and townships, asking

what steps are being taken to comply with the Act. The great experiment of compulsory education is also to be tried in Ireland, and it was well to know how it was going to be received. The Corporate Bodies were a little tardy in making reply. To most of the bodies the Commissioners had to send two reminders, and even now 17 out of 118 have maintained a rather awkward silence, including Waterford, Kilkenny, Drogheda, Ballinasloe, and other places. Of the 101 who have replied, 81 might be regarded as prepared to comply with the requirements of the Act. I do not say that that is perfectly satisfactory, but it is hopeful in such a novel experiment. In 12 cases the authorities declare hostility to the Act because of the non-participation of the Christian Brothers' Schools in the pecuniary advantages of the Act. The Committee, however, are aware that in case the Local Authority declines to exercise the powers conferred by the Act, the Commissioners exercise that power themselves. There is, however, one hitch likely to occur in the matter of the Attendance Committees. Some very important Prelates of the Catholic Church have decided against the nomination of priests, even though they are managers of schools, as members of Attendance Committees. They probably object to the spiritual influence of the clergy being exercised in antagonism to parents and heads of families in the matter of compulsory attendance of children at school. That, of course, is a matter for them to decide. I desire to answer fully the right hon. Gentleman's question on this important matter, and to point out that there may be difficulties in this question of the Attendance Committees. I do not think I can now enter into the history of the Teachers' Pension Fund. An inquiry has been held by experts at the Treasury into the position of this fund. The report as far as it has gone is apparently rather obscure and not too satisfactory; and the position of the fund is such that the Treasury desire a further opportunity of considering how the matter stands. Then the hon. Member for South Tyrone asked what has been the cost to the Government of providing funds for the Training Colleges. I have not the figures as to funds for Training Colleges, but I will take care that they are provided for the informa-

tion of the hon. Member. The report from the medical officer as to the sanitary condition of Marlborough Street Training College is far from confirming the alarmist apprehensions of the hon. Member. The medical officer states that last winter and spring were the healthiest recorded during his long service. There had not been a single case of typhoid fever, and on the 9th of June the institution was in a very satisfactory condition in the matter of sanitation.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL : The smoke test applied to the drains showed otherwise, and there were Commissioners present on the occasion.

MR. J. MORLEY : I have no information on the subject of the smoke test. I can only give the Report of the medical officer of the College ; but I may say that I will be in Dublin very soon, and I will see with my own eyes the smoke test applied. I next turn to that most difficult question—the participation of the Christian Brothers in the public grants. I am asked how that matter stands. I was glad to hear the hon. Member for South Tyrone saying—speaking, I presume, for the Presbyterians—that he will not object to a rational and reasonable proposal in this matter. That will shed a good deal of light on our path. Since the repulse of the proposal made by the Commissioners to the Christian Brothers last winter there has been a pause, and the anticipations of those concerned in the matter are not very sanguine as to any proposal which will reconcile the conflicting interests which come into play in this difficult and thorny matter. The hon. Member for South Tyrone who raised this question knows the position I have taken up on this question ; but, at the same time, I am of opinion that any Government will be landed in considerable difficulties when compulsion comes into force next January, unless arrangements can be made by which the excellent Christian Brothers' Schools—for it is admitted on all sides that they are excellent—can be brought into line with the national system. I can say nothing positive at the present moment, but the subject is one which must engage my attention during the Vacation, and I shall be glad at some later period in the Session or next Session to give a more definite answer upon the subject.

Mr. J. Morley

Another important question is the position and composition of the Board of National Education. I agree that the position of the Board is anomalous. Like other Boards in Ireland, it is semi-independent, though it owes a certain responsibility to, and is in certain connection and relation with, the Central Executive Government. These relations are unsatisfactory, but I will stand by what I have said as to the value of the Board, and what Ireland and the Government owes to them. The present, however, is not the moment to raise a question of this kind. It has been absorbed in a large question. But if the Commission is to go on and the system remain as it is, there must be greater regard paid than has been hitherto to the wishes of the different religious denominations in Ireland. The only other question, I think, is the question of the Teachers Widows' and Orphans' Fund. There is a scheme now under the consideration of the Treasury ; negotiations are still going on between the Government and the Treasury, and I hope some satisfactory way out of the difficulty will be obtained.

MR. SEXTON : There is the question of the book monopoly ?

MR. J. MORLEY : I have expressed my views on that matter in my reply to the Member for South Antrim. As my hon. Friend is aware, the power of the Government and the Chief Secretary over the Commission is obscure, ambiguous, and doubtful ; but I will do all I can to make my views prevail.

MR. WOLFF (Belfast, E.) said, he did not intend to enter on the merits of the suggested compromise with the Christian Brothers ; but he asked that the House should have the opportunity of discussing any scheme which the Commissioners might formulate in the matter. He understood that the Commissioners, in order to end the difficulty, were inclined to alter the whole system of secular and undenominational education in Ireland which had been founded by Act of Parliament. He would not say whether it would be right or wrong to put the schools of the Christian Brothers on the same footing as the National Schools ; but he thought the House should be allowed to express its opinion on any such proposal before it was carried into effect. If the right hon. Gentleman

contemplated such change would he give the House an opportunity of discussing it?

MR. J. MORLEY could assure the hon. Member that he was fully alive to the point raised.

*SIR F. S. POWELL (Wigan) asked whether the representatives of the authorities of the cities of Dublin, Belfast, and Cork were favourable to the system of compulsory education, and would assist in carrying it out?

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.) said, the National Board of Education had been secular and undenominational, but what it was at present he could not say. As far as he could judge it was fairly denominational, thoroughly protected by the Conscience Clause, and that was the character of the national system in Ireland at the present moment. He voted for the Presbyterians having every possible facility for their education, and the Catholics ought to be in the same position. The Chief Secretary, in answer to the Member for North Kerry, seemed to be very guarded in his declarations about the Christian Brothers. In February, or March, or April, the right hon. Gentleman gave a much less guarded answer. There had been a painful split in the Irish Party, but that did not extend to the Christian Brothers, and they were all anxious that this deserving body should be placed on a proper footing. No one had benefited education more than they. They had established a system of primary education which was so good that some people called the Christian Brothers' schools secondary schools. The Christian Brothers had no endowments, and very little private means, and they were supported by the subscriptions of the people of Ireland, among whom there was a general desire that the Christian Brothers should be included in the Government grants. Because they put up certain emblems in their schools they were precluded from coming under the Rules of the National Board and from any participation in the grants of education. He understood that in February or March, or perhaps it was April, the Chief Secre-

tary gave a decided pledge that a sum for the Christian Brothers would be put on the Estimates for the present year. [Mr. J. MORLEY: No, no!] He was very sorry to hear that was to be softened down, and he hoped the Government would adhere to their clear and distinct promise. There was no question that the Christian Brothers gave an excellent education to the children, and if their claim was satisfied the Protestants would be in no worse position. The Christian Brothers did all they could not to tamper with the faith of Protestant children, and in any case where Protestant children attended their schools they would give a pledge that their faith would not be tampered with in any way. It was very hard upon the Catholic people that they should not only have to pay taxes for the National schools, but should also then have to pay for the Christian Brothers' schools, because the latter got no State assistance. He contended that the Christian Brothers were fully entitled to participate in the advantages of the Government grants, and they were willing to submit to any educational test. The hon. and gallant Gentleman repeated that, so far as his recollection served him, the Chief Secretary, on a previous occasion, clearly and distinctly promised that on the Estimates for 1894 he would put down a grant for the Christian Brothers.

MR. J. MORLEY: The hon. Baronet. (Sir F. S. Powell) asks me whether the answers from the Local Authorities are from rural or urban districts. The hon. Baronet has forgotten the fact that the compulsion in the Act of 1892 only applies in areas under the control of Town Commissioners.

*SIR F. S. POWELL said, his question was especially directed to the three important cities of Dublin, Belfast, and Cork.

MR. J. MORLEY: I have not got the figures here, but I will communicate with the hon. Baronet. In answer to my hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Nolan), I can only say that he certainly hardens and stiffens very much the answer I gave in February, or March, or April. I certainly never said that I in-

tended in the Estimates for 1894 to put a Vote upon those Estimates for the Christian Brothers' schools. What I said was that I should be glad, and I felt it almost a stringent necessity, if some effort should be devised to bring the Christian Brothers' schools into the conditions in which they could participate in the grants made to schools. That was all I said, and by that I stand.

COLONEL NOLAN said, if the Chief Secretary thought he had hardened and stiffened his answer, the right hon. Gentleman had certainly softened it, and left out that most important part, the date, which was a very serious point indeed.

MR. SEXTON: I think after the grave declarations which the Chief Secretary has made in reference to the Municipal Authorities I cannot remain silent. He has told us that 17 of the Municipal Authorities have declined to send any reply, and that as many as 12 have made hostile declarations, and amongst these are some of the most important in the country. I do not think I ought to conceal from the Committee my conviction that unless the right hon. Gentleman is able to arrange with the National Board some mode of introducing the Christian Brothers into the primary system of education the Act will break down. Of course, in those towns where the Municipal Authorities refuse to act, although the Educational Commissioners can appoint a School Attendance Committee, and although the School Attendance Committee can appoint officers, and the Educational Commissioners can approve of the appointment and fix the salaries in default of the Local Authority, yet it is only the Local Authority who can pay the officers. The Educational Commissioners cannot levy a rate, nor collect it, nor apply a rate in payment of the officers, and, even where the Municipal Authority acts, if there be Catholic boys on the one side with only the Christian Brothers' school, and on the other side a school managed by Protestants, and if in a case where the Catholic boy is absent from school the father declines to send him to the Protestant School, and declines to send him to the Christian Brothers'

school because he cannot pay for him, you having established free education, I say it is impossible for the Magistrates in any part of Ireland to punish the father or compel the child to go to school. I shall await with the keenest interest the result of the declaration of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary as to the advisability of devising some means of introducing these excellent primary schools into the system of the State, and if some mode is not devised we shall be obliged to take such action as we think necessary during the Winter Sitzings of the House.

Vote agreed to.

4. £3,048, to complete the sum for Queen's College, Ireland.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, he had intended to raise a question upon this Vote. He recognised, however, that the last Vote had occupied a great deal of time, and he should have some other opportunity of raising the question.

MR. SEXTON: We also shall have something to say later on. All I will say now is that our silence is not to be taken for consent.

Vote agreed to.

CLASS III.

5. £23,282, to complete the sum for Miscellaneous Legal Expenses.

*SIR A. ROLLIT (Islington, S.) desired to call the attention of the Committee to one or two subjects under this head, and more particularly to the Railway Commission. That Commission consisted of three Commissioners—one a Judge and two other members—and a Registrar, and it was proposed to make a grant in respect of it of £7,000. The duties of such a body were very important and ought to be extremely useful to the community, because they dealt with such questions as undue preference as between Railway Companies and traders. It was a Court of Appeal in respect of questions of terminals and the like, and it was generally, or might be, a tribunal for the better regulation of questions of transport and travel. Such a tribunal was eminently needed for the purpose of dealing

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with all these important questions and others. He should ask the Committee whether they thought the Railway Commission fulfilled the demands made upon it? One test he should apply to its usefulness would be the extent to which it was resorted to. The sittings last year were 15 in number, so that the cost of the Railway Commission for each sitting was practically very nearly £500, in addition to which a Judge gave his time as a member of the Court. He thought that was not an adequate use of what might be a very useful tribunal. When they came to consider what the objections to it were, and why it was so little resorted to, he thought they should come to the conclusion it was because its procedure, as a sort of High Court, was extremely technical; inevitably, almost, great delays took place in dealing with questions which were brought under its consideration, and the tribunal itself was essentially far too costly a one. One objection to the Railway Commission was that according to the rule of the Common Law Courts the costs generally abided the event. These costs were readily incurred and paid by the rich Railway Companies with all their resources. These Companies had also at their command experts for preparing evidence and the like, which was utterly impossible to individual traders. On the other hand, he quite recognised that individual and small traders could not compete on equal terms, and naturally shrank from resorting to a tribunal which might involve them in having to bear an expenditure of possibly some hundreds and even some thousands of pounds. There was, indeed, one case brought before the Railway Rates Committee in which one trader did appear and conducted his case personally at small expense; but that was an exceptional case, and it was not to be expected for a moment that this was a course which traders generally could take. The Commission had very considerable work which it might do. For his own part he should be disposed to say its jurisdiction might well be enlarged if, and when, reformed. He thought it would be desirable it should then have power not only over questions of undue preference, but also with regard to reasonable or unreasonable rates, and certainly it would seem to be desirable

that when a solution had been attempted and failed, between a Railway Company on the one hand and a trader on the other—when that took place under Section 31 of the Act of 1888, it ought to be open to the Board of Trade itself to refer any proper case to the Railway Commission for the purpose of determining and bringing it to a proper conclusion. Under the Conciliation Clause of the Act, valuable as it had been in many respects, and admirably worked by the Railway Department, there was no power to enforce any decision at all, therefore power should be given either to the conciliatory body itself or to some other tribunal—say the reformed Railway Commission—of enforcing a decision. In other words, in a proper case sanction should be given to the law which at present existed. He would mention that this tribunal did not follow what had become the ordinary rule with reference to sittings. The whole Court consisted of three members. The present system in the Common Law and Chancery Divisions was for single Judges to sit, and he would suggest that the members of this Court might sit singly, and that the Registrar of the Court, who was necessarily unoccupied a great deal of the year, might also give attention to minor cases and decide them, subject to the supervision, if necessary, of the Commission itself. He thought a new rule altogether might be introduced as to costs—say the Parliamentary rule which prevailed in their own Committee-rooms, under which, save in exceptional cases, each party bore his own costs. There was a power, in the last resort, where a case was frivolously brought forward or misconducted, in which costs could be enforced. He suggested that this rule should be adopted, and each party bear his own costs in the absence of a contrary decision by the Commission, and he believed even the Railway Companies themselves would not be averse to some alteration of the rule in that direction. He hoped at no distant date, whatever might be done with regard to railway rates themselves, that this tribunal would be reformed and made what it ought to be—a Court readily accessible, cheap, and adapted to the purpose in view. In other words, that it should become

exactly what it was not, and should serve the wants of the traders and trade as well as the Railway Companies, and should be a Court to which access could be readily had at no great expense, and in which decisions on the points he had mentioned could be readily obtained. The next point to which he desired to direct attention was the Vote for the expenses of Extradition. He ventured to say the power of extradition—which at one time was viewed from a political standpoint and viewed adversely—was one which should be greatly extended, and so far from obstacles being placed in the way of the extradition of criminals, facilities should be given for that purpose. It was to the interest of any State to get rid of those who had committed offences against the laws of other countries, and certainly it was highly objectionable that people who had committed offences in this country should be able to escape to other places and there defy the law and create a sense of injustice and feeling against the administration of justice in this country. He did not wish to take a personal instance, but there was one most notable case in which most grievous wrong and injury had been inflicted on large bodies of the poorest people of this country, where homes had been desolated and where there had been most manifest plunder on the part of someone who had simply gone to another country, and was now practically defying the laws of our own State. He ventured to think that was a most undesirable state of affairs, and he should be glad if the Minister in charge would tell them exactly how it was—when the Argentine Republic offered to surrender that person why some reciprocal concessions were not made, and why every facility we could offer was not proffered, and proffered very strongly, in return for the extradition of one who had done so much harm in this country. He thought every possible facility in both directions should be given for the extradition of criminals. With regard to another element of this Vote—that with reference to the Wreck Commission—he wished to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether any decision had been come to, and, if so, carried out, as to the presence of owners at the examination of witnesses for the purpose of making their depositions at the Custom House in

cases of wreck casualties? A strong point had been made for many years at Hull, that whereas many witnesses were examined at the Custom House with a view to the use of their testimony upon the Board of Trade Inquiry, that the owners of the vessels who under the present law might be made civilly liable to a very large amount, and even criminally, were excluded from the opportunity of putting questions to check such testimony when being given. His experience was that if a nautical witness had once made a statement, and that statement had been taken down in writing, it was a most difficult thing to displace that testimony in any possible way. It became crystallised whether it were accurate or not, and it was almost impossible to get any variation of that testimony afterwards. He thought opportunity should be given to those incriminated to take, at the earliest stages, all possible means of testing the reliability, truth and veracity of such statements. He hoped he should receive answers to the points he had raised.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) agreed with the hon. Member in his remarks as to these Commissions. With regard to the question of extradition, he was surprised to hear the hon. Member say that he wished to see extradition extended. To his mind nothing was more sacred than the right of asylum afforded in this country; it was a right which should be most jealously and sacredly guarded, and a person only given up under stress of the direst necessity. He observed that expenses had been incurred in arresting and delivering up foreign criminals here, whilst we had to pay expenses in regard to our criminals arrested in foreign countries. If we paid our expenses for the arrest of our criminals in foreign countries, foreign countries ought to pay their expenses in this country with regard to the arrest of their criminals. He found in the Votes that we paid an auditor of the Welsh Sheriffs' Accounts £180 a year. He did not find any other Sheriffs' Accounts were audited except Welsh Sheriffs. Did the Welsh Sheriffs alone require

Sir A. Rollit

their accounts to be audited? This auditor was a pluralist of the worst kind. He not only had £180 a year as auditor of the Welsh Sheriffs' Accounts, but he held the position of Receiver of Crown Rents under the Office of Forests and Woods, his salary for which was £900 a year, and in addition he received £100 a year from the Vote for superannuation for compensation for the Office of Assistant Receiver of Hereditary Revenues. After spending a long and useful life in collecting these hereditary revenues, he was superannuated, and got £100 a year to keep him for the rest of his declining years, and then he was immediately appointed Receiver of Crown Rents at £900 a year, and then sent down to Wales to audit the Sheriffs' accounts, for which he received another £180 a year. He thus got £180 a year for one office, £900 for another, and then £100 a year because he was incapable of doing any work at all.

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT: That £900 a year has ceased.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: It is on the Votes.

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT: It has ceased since the Estimates were printed.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Then conscience was at last awakened. He next came to the Wreck Commission, which entailed an expenditure of £1,000 a year. This Commission was first appointed in 1876 to investigate wrecks and their causes. These wrecks had gone on for many hundred years without wanting any Commissioner or Commission for that purpose. This Commission was then appointed to inquire and issue a Report. It began to inquire in the year 1876, and went on inquiring; but the extraordinary thing about the Commission was that it had no effect at all on the wrecks. On the contrary, they rather increased with this Wreck Commission; and at last, in 1888, the Commissioner resigned, and since then the Commission had not acted at all.

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT: There is no Commissioner now.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Precisely. That was what he said. The Commissioner resigned, but the Commission, or rather the salary, remained. This Commission now was a mere wreck, a mere shell from which the kernel had departed. In the last year in which the Commissioner sat and exercised his function as a Commissioner there were 1,013 wrecks. The Commissioner ceased inquiring, and the wrecks began to fall. The following year they came down to 906, and in the last year they were only 771. It showed that whatever else the Commissioner did, he did not stop the wrecks; but, on the contrary, they had a tendency to be much larger under the *régime* of the Commission than they were now. The Commissioner, as he had said, had gone; but the rudimentary tail remained, and it consisted of one senior clerk at £600 a year, and a junior at £400 a year—a total of £1,000, with a large sum for travelling and other expenses. What were the duties of the chief clerk? He had duties when there was a Commissioner; but now there were no Commissioners he could not conceive what the duty of this gentleman could be, unless it was to transmit some claims or some remarks made by those who actually conducted inquiries into wrecks. These inquiries were still carried on—and much better than they were before—by Magistrates. These Magistrates got in fees £500 a year, Magistrates' Clerks and local Court keepers £600 a year; hire of Courts £135 a year—a total of £1,235. So that the two clerks who did nothing got £1,000, and the Magistrates who conducted all the inquiries got £1,235. If that was not abuse he did not know an abuse when he saw one. The Magistrates did the real work. In the year 1891-2 some 229 formal inquiries were held. He was very glad these inquiries were held, as they should be, before properly-constituted Magistrates, acting in a proper judicial manner. But what he wanted to know was why this rudimentary tail of the Commission remained at £1,000 a year when there had been no

Commissioner since 1888? When there was no Commissioner, why should they retain such remnants of the Commission as a senior and junior clerk? He contended that they had no work to perform, and their offices should be abolished.

*SIR C. RUSSELL said, with reference to the remarks of the hon. Member for South Islington (Sir A. Rollit) as to the Railway Inquiry Commission that the constitution of that Commission and its powers were discussed and determined so recently as some few years ago. With reference to the question of expenses, no doubt it was necessary there should be a permanent staff in connection with such an important body. As regarded the question of costs, he differed with the hon. and learned Member in saying that each of the parties should pay their costs. He was of opinion that the party found to be in error should, as heretofore, pay the costs. As regarded the question of extradition, he need not remind the hon. and learned Member or the Committee that extradition depended entirely on Treaties with foreign countries. He was informed by those who knew the circumstances that every step had been taken that it was possible to take to secure the extradition of the particular person to whom the hon. and learned Gentleman referred. The difficulty had arisen because of the fact that the Argentine Republic declined to ratify a Treaty which, if ratified, would have given this country the right to insist on the extradition of this particular person. That Treaty was entered into as far back as 1889, and the Government had pressed for its ratification by the Argentine Republic; but they had not been able to succeed. He was unable to satisfy the inquiry of the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Gibson Bowles) as to the auditor of the accounts of the Welsh Sheriffs, and he must refer him to someone else for information on that head. As regarded the Wreck Commission, he really thought the criticism of the hon. Member was

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hardly just. When they remembered the services rendered to the shipping trade and the interests of commerce generally by the inquiries which had to be made into casualties at sea, he thought no one in that House who understood the necessities of that important branch of commerce in this country would for a moment object to the expenditure on this head. What had happened was this: The Wreck Commissioner had ceased to be a permanent establishment in this country, and what had been done under the powers of the Act of 1876 was that the Lord Chancellor had, under Section 29 of that Act, from time to time requisitioned the services of Stipendiary Magistrates to inquire into the circumstances under which casualties arose. When the hon. Member referred to the expenses of the establishment and of these inquiries, he hardly thought, looking to the number and character of these inquiries, that a total expenditure of £7,000 was a very extravagant item. With regard to the two clerks, these officers had to make all arrangements for the inquiries, to arrange the appointment of assessors, to notify all the parties concerned, and, in short, to keep the machine of inquiry going. He submitted, therefore, that there was little just ground for the criticism of the hon. Member.

MR. TOMLINSON said, he would like to know whether any arrangement had been made for the Railway Commission carrying out the duties that devolved upon them in consequence of the passing of the Hours of Railway Servants Act? He asked what was the amount received in stamps or fees for business transacted before the Railway Commission?

*MR. T. H. BOLTON said, he did not think that any distinct comparison could be made between a suitor in an ordinary Court of Law and a person who, in his own interest to a certain extent, but to a larger extent in the interest of the public, raised the question of the propriety of certain rates charged to the public, and took the matter before the Commissioners. Such a man had a great deal to encounter, because he had to fight a great and powerful Corporation, and very frequently

had to meet the very highest legal talent and fight at very considerable expense. It was hardly fair, therefore, to say that he should be punished by the payment of costs, which would fall upon the unsuccessful litigant in the ordinary course of things. He cordially agreed with all that had been said by the hon. Member for South Islington. There was a strong feeling on the part of the public that the Railway Commission should have increased powers conferred upon it, and its procedure altered and revised, so that it could deal not only with cases of preferential rates, but in many other cases of hardship and grievance which the general public suffered in railway matters. If the Commission were strengthened in this way it would be a very popular reform.

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, the fees received from the Railway Commission for work done were estimated at £250 for the year. He might say that under the Conveyance of Mails Act, which had been passed by the Post Office, it was proposed to give the Railway Commission considerable work in arbitrating on the points of difference between the Railway Companies and the Post Office Authorities.

MR. HANBURY said, he noticed in the Estimates an item for the repayment of Sheriffs' expenses incurred in providing lodgings for Judges on Circuit. In a good many counties—including his own County of Stafford—they provided lodgings for the Judges in the County Hall, and he was not aware they got anything back for it out of the Imperial Purse. It was rather hard on those counties which provided for the expenses of the Judges to have to contribute to those other counties where lodgings were found for the Judges at the public expense.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, wherever an old Assize was held a certain amount was allowed by the Treasury; but wherever a new Assize was established, such as in Manchester or Birmingham, no money was given for that purpose. Even in Stafford they had probably been in receipt of a certain amount of money.

MR. HANBURY said, he did not think so. He saw that expenses had been incurred in arresting criminals in the United States. So far as he could see, they had also to pay expenses supposing American criminals were arrested in the United Kingdom. Was there no reciprocal arrangement?

SIR J. T. HIBBERT replied, that there was a reciprocal arrangement. If the American Government caught a criminal for this country in the United States we had to pay the expenses, and, in the same way, they had to pay us the expenses incurred in the capture of an American criminal in this country.

Vote agreed to.

6. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £177,902, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894, for such of the Salaries and Expenses of the Supreme Court of Judicature as are not charged on the Consolidated Fund."

*MR. T. H. BOLTON inquired whether the Government were quite satisfied with the work done by the Official Referees? So far as he had any information, the Office was more or less a practical failure. The work would be better done by arbitrators selected by the parties; and he therefore wished to know whether, when a vacancy occurred, the Government would abolish the office altogether? He suggested that there might be a transfer of the present occupants to some other offices which it would not be *infra dig.* for them to accept, and by this means they could get rid of the appointments altogether. So much for the Referees. He now came to the case of the Clerk of the Crown Office in Chancery. In this case he would point out that the duties of the Office were nominal, and that it was absurd to supply this official with four Clerks at salaries ranging from £300 to £600 a year. He would suggest that an early opportunity should be taken to transfer the duties of the office to some other Department. He wished also to mention a matter connected with the Chief Clerks and the

other Clerks of the Chancery Division, the Registrars and their Clerks, and the Taxing Masters and their Clerks. He believed that a proposal had been made that these offices should be amalgamated; but, speaking from experience, he thought the duties of each Department were separate and distinct, and under these circumstances it would be unwise to throw all the duties of these offices together merely with the result of again separating them and afterwards appointing other officers to discharge the duties. Generally, he might say that he doubted the wisdom of the suggested amalgamation, and he hoped the matter would be reconsidered.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby) said, there was no foundation for the suggestion that an amalgamation of these offices was proposed.

MR. T. H. BOLTON said, he was glad to have an assurance on the point, and to learn that the proposal had been abandoned. The next question to which he would refer was that of the Clerks of Assizes. The salaries of these gentlemen ranged from £300 to £1,000 a year. He would like to point out that their duties, for these large salaries, were of a very nominal character. In his opinion they were greatly overpaid. They were only employed for a few hours or so per day for about three months in the year. They were permanent officials, and drew the salaries he referred to. It was, no doubt, necessary that the Judges should have sufficient officials, but he did not see why they should have an unnecessary number. He did not think there was any waste of time in referring to such a matter, which, he hoped, would be looked into. Another item to which he would call attention on this Vote was the payment of District Probate Registrars. The sums paid to these officials were considerable, although their work was of a merely formal kind. The registries were badly distributed, many of them being in small towns which were not easily accessible, and their number might be reduced with advantage, the distribution to be made in a manner which

Mr. T. H. Bolton

would be more convenient. He hoped that, when possible, a rearrangement of the offices to which he had called attention would be effected. It was in the interests of efficiency and economy that this should be done. There were other items to which he would have wished to call attention, but he would not detain the Committee at that late hour.

*SIR R. TEMPLE (Surrey, Kingston) said, he would only interpose for a moment in order to refer to the appointment of a gentleman, who was not previously a member of the Civil Service, to the post of Deputy Assistant to the Paymaster General of the Supreme Court. This appointment was viewed with jealousy—very natural jealousy, he thought—by Civil servants who had entered the service of the State after passing a severe competitive examination, and who considered that they had a moral claim to positions which they regarded as the prizes of the profession. He would like it to be clearly understood that there was no personal question in this. He did not raise it on personal grounds. He understood the gentleman who had obtained the position was a capable, accomplished, and efficient officer. But that was not the question: the question was one of principle, and he really thought the Civil Service had a right to an explanation of such an appointment. He had no desire to recall the decision in this particular question; but he wanted to have it understood that, in all cases of the kind in future, the patronage would be kept within the Service itself. He hoped the Financial Secretary would be able to give him an assurance on that point.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: It was a fact that the gentleman to whom the hon. Baronet referred was brought into the office from outside. If there was any blame in the matter it must fall upon the shoulders of the late Government, because the appointment was made before they went out of Office. He had not been able to ascertain why they had

passed over persons in the office, but, no doubt, they had good reasons for doing so. He had himself a strong sympathy with Civil servants in regard to the right of promotion, and he would always be glad to recognise their claims; but in this case he could only repeat that there were very likely good reasons on the part of the late Government for making this appointment.

MR. S. T. EVANS (Glamorgan, Mid) said, he would just for a moment direct attention to the appointment of Clerks of Assize and of the salaries paid to these gentlemen. His principal objection was on the score of patronage—the manner in which the patronage in the matter, which lay in the hands of the Judges, was distributed. He thought it was very unsatisfactory. The gentlemen appointed might be very admirable officials, but it was difficult to help noticing that there was something not entirely right in allowing Judges to appoint their own Registrars. It was remarkable, at all events, that on the North and South Wales Circuits the gentlemen who filled those posts bore the honoured names of Judges of the Supreme Court. The Clerk of Assize on the one circuit was Mr. Crompton, and on the other Mr. Coleridge, a son of the present Lord Chief Justice. It seemed to him that it was entirely wrong to allow Judges to appoint their sons Clerks of Assize—more especially when they were not members of the circuit at all. He would ask the Attorney General whether the time had not come for a change in the method of appointing these gentlemen, and whether, at least, a member of the Circuit ought not always to be appointed?

MR. HANBURY said, he entirely agreed with the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down with regard to these appointments. He would remind the Committee that out of five cases of extra remuneration mentioned by the Auditor General last year two were the sons of Judges. Mr. S. W. B. Coleridge, to whom the hon. Member had referred, got

two guineas a day extra as an Acting Associate in the Royal Courts of Justice; his brother, Mr. G. J. D. Coleridge, who was Private Secretary to the Lord Chief Justice, also got two guineas a day as Acting Associate in the same Courts, and had since got an appointment of £1,400 a year. It was really time to protest against these appointments by Judges of their own relations. The hon. Member for North St. Pancras (Mr. Boltou) had referred to Official Referees. He thought the hon. Gentleman had attacked these officials somewhat unjustly. He found the advantage of the Official Referee in a case in which he was concerned, and he could testify to the remarkably able manner in which the duty imposed upon the official was discharged. It was agreed that each side should pay his own costs, and for that reason, and because he knew his case better than any solicitor or barrister could have known it, he fought it himself. Some thousands of pounds were at stake. Mr. Ridley did his work admirably, and only charged them 10s. an hour for Court fees. He (Mr. Hanbury) won his case for £10 on a hearing extending over some days. He, therefore, felt bound to defend the Official Referees; but they were the only people connected with the Courts that he could defend in any way. The cost of these Courts was enormous, and it was impossible from these Estimates to see whom they were paying. He ventured to say that there were no Votes in which there were so many stars and crosses and double crosses against the names as there were in this. There were no Estimates in which there were so many pecuniary allowances, and that meant that they were paying too much for the work done. These officials claimed to be under a certain status, and they were fighting their case very hard. The Lord Chancellor was trying to introduce something like order and regularity in his Supreme Court of Judicature Bill, but in his efforts he was resisted and fought by every one of the Judges. In the House of Lords the Bill was fought by the Master of the Rolls and every one who had patronage to lose. He (Mr. Hanbury) thought these things should be under one head, and he could not

see why they should not be under the jurisdiction of the Lord Chancellor. He did not think the Bill to which he referred had yet passed the Second Reading in the House of Lords, but when it reached the House of Commons, he hoped that a great deal that had been put in in the Lords would be struck out. There were a great many pluralists in the Vote, and every one of the salaries was in excess of the ordinary maximum. On the first page there was this remark on several items, "to be reconsidered," "to be reduced," or "to be abolished," but those things did not happen. Looking at page 214 he found there was an "extra" Registrar appointed at £1,200 a year. There were only three last year, but this year there were four, yet it was stated in the Estimates that the next vacancy would not be filled up. Why was this fourth Registrar appointed if the next vacancy was not to be filled up? This gentleman, he was afraid, had very little legal knowledge, for prior to his appointment he was engaged in administering oaths at £350 a year. His present salary was £1,200 a year. There were "extra" charges also for "Associates." With regard to the Chancery Division Registrar's Office—which was an Office especially attacked by the late Mr. Jennings in 1888—reforms had been promised, but since 1888 the cost of the Office, instead of being reduced, had considerably increased. The cost was some £200 or £300 a year more than it was five years ago. In regard to the Taxing Master's Office, they were told that consolidation was under consideration, with a view to a reduction in the appointments; but the number of first class clerks in the Office was the same this year as last, and in the meantime one of the clerks had been transferred from the Taxing Master's Office to the Lunacy Department. Here, again, the Government had an opportunity of carrying out their pledges, but they had neglected to avail themselves of it. In three cases offices had become vacant, and they had been filled up, in spite of promises. Then, he objected to the allowances of £7 10s. a day to the Judges as "Circuit Expenses." He objected on principle. The Judges were paid out of the Consolidated Fund, so that they should be removed from

criticism, and their action should not be subject to review on the Estimates. But this privilege the Judges themselves deliberately sacrificed. Drawing the large salaries they did, they came to the House of Commons and claimed this paltry sum of £7 10s. a day for expenses while on circuit. The sum was too much, and, moreover, it ought not to be charged on the Estimates. The Judges, by making the claim, put both themselves and the House of Commons in a false position. He trusted they would see a discontinuance of these allowances. With reference to the District Probate Registry, he believed there was a battle going on between the Lord Chancellor and the Judge responsible for the Registry—namely, the President of the Probate and Divorce Court. He had been told that if the Judge of the Probate Court would give up the patronage which he clung to very persistently it would be possible to save a good deal of heavy cost of this Registry. The work could be done by the County Court Judges or the District Registrars of the High Court. It was only right that attention should be called to these matters.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I must begin by saying that I very much agree and sympathise with the spirit and the details of what the hon. Member has said. We are engaged at the Treasury in a contest against these judicial charges; but, unfortunately, a great number of them are secured by Act of Parliament. Large as these salaries and expenses were, they practically cost nothing to the Exchequer. The hon. Member very properly referred to an attempt we made this year to put these charges on a better footing. That attempt was defeated. Unfortunately, it is not in the power of the Treasury in many cases to deal with these matters. But I would point out that, large as their expenses are, they practically cost nothing to the Exchequer. The salaries of the Judges are on the Consolidated Fund, and the whole of the rest of the charges are more than covered by the fees received. There is no reason why we should not endeavour to diminish these charges. I can assure the hon. Member that everything is

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being done to keep these judicial charges down. In that matter I have had some success, and I hope I shall have more. I trust we may now be allowed to take the Vote.

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston) said, these Estimates as they were framed afforded no means of ascertaining whether the charges to suitors were fair and reasonable or not. No doubt, in civil cases, charges should be made, but in criminal cases the parties should not be called upon to pay such large sums. There was nothing in the Estimates to show that the litigants did not really pay more than the cost of the law.

MR. A. C. MORTON said, he was sorry the exigencies of time would not allow him to criticise these Votes as they ought to be criticised. The extravagance which took place in connection with these Votes was scandalous, and yet they saw that the increase this year was £2,200. This increase occurred, notwithstanding that they were every year promised, in marginal notes, that there would be no increase. He was not sure that the time was not coming when it would be necessary to discuss the Judges' salaries, and consider the allegations made as to their putting relatives in office. They could not do it on the Estimates, but there was another method which could be adopted. With regard to the Circuit allowances, he considered them altogether illegal. The Judges had no right to put these charges on the Estimates, their salaries being intended to cover everything. He could only conclude that the practice had been adopted for the purpose of favouring some individual. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, he knew, had courage enough to look into these matters—and it required a Minister of courage to deal with them. He would, therefore, ask the right hon. Gentleman to give an undertaking that the matter would not be lost sight of, and that, if necessary, he would propose legislation. There would be no difficulty in getting legislation passed. The right hon. Gentleman wanted money, and if he was not careful he would have to put another 1d. or 2d. on the Income Tax, and hon. Gentlemen opposite would not like that.

MR. S. T. EVANS (Glamorgan, Mid) wished to know if it was not the practice on all Circuits, except the two Welsh Circuits, for Clerks of Assize to be appointed from amongst the members of the Circuit?

*SIR C. RUSSELL said, that these appointments were by Statute vested in the Judges. His impression was that it was not the practice to appoint members of the Circuit. With regard to the appointment of relatives, was it to be inferred from the questions asked that the persons who had been selected were not competent?

MR. S. T. EVANS: As a matter of fact, one of them has never had a brief.

Question put, and agreed to.

7. £3,830, to complete the sum for Land Registry.

8. £24,200, to complete the sum for County Courts.

MR. S. T. EVANS said, that this was an important Vote, and he had one or two points to raise on it. In the first place, he thought the time had come when there ought to be a revision of the scale of costs and fees in County Courts paid by suitors. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had taken great interest in the matter, and would admit that the fees were too high. He (Mr. S. T. Evans) would be glad to have an assurance from the Government that the matter was receiving their attention. He had made suggestions on various occasions, one of which he would now repeat—namely, that when the scale of costs came to be revised there ought to be two scales laid down; one in respect of contentious business which was tried by the Judge, and another to apply to cases in which the County Court was used as a debt-collecting agency. At present, when the County Court was used as a debt-collecting agency, the defendant very often had to pay 30s. in the £1 instead of 20s., owing to the unreasonable piling up of costs, and it was this system that he wished to see done away with. In referring to Sub-head B, he was speaking

for all Members from the Principality. There was in the Estimates an item of £20 for "Prosecutions for assaults on bailiffs, and other law expenses." He wished to know how much had been paid in respect of these "assaults" arising out of the Tithe Act of 1891. He had to complain that the costs of these prosecutions were paid for out of the public funds, the offences very often consisting merely of nudging a man as he was getting over a fence. It was too bad that these bailiffs should, of their free will, without check, be permitted to make complaint to the County Court, and to get their expenses and costs paid out of the public purse. He should like to hear that these prosecutions would not be paid for in this manner in future. There might be some cases where it was desirable, but in nine cases out of ten it was not. And the fact that it might be said that the tithe bailiffs were in "the execution of their duty" was no justification, for the same could very often be said of policemen who were assaulted, and yet the Treasury did not always consider it necessary to bear the cost of prosecuting. The fact was, the public money was being used in this way for the collection of tithes to sustain the parsons of the Established Church in Wales.

MR. BRUNNER (Cheshire, North-wich) wished to call public attention to the scandalously large proportion of commitments to prison from the County Court of Middlesbrough. A friend of his was in Court a short time ago, and heard a specimen of the sort of evidence upon which the gentleman who sat there was induced to commit a prisoner. The Judge asked, "Have you any proof that this man is able to pay the debt?" The answer was, "I saw him at work last week"; whereupon the defendant was committed for 28 days.

*MR. H. H. FOWLER: With reference to the point raised by my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Glamorgan (Mr. S. T. Evans), of course the County Courts are practically self-supporting as far as these Estimates are concerned. I quite agree that the fees are enormous, and that the cost of the County Courts is enormous. I have maintained for years

that the establishment needs very large reductions, as there are many County Court Judges who might do double or treble the work they do. I can, however, give the Committee the assurance that the Lord Chancellor is looking into the question. As to the sum for prosecutions for assaults on bailiffs, the amount seems to be fixed. I understand that the Director of Public Prosecutions is never allowed to interfere in these cases except where the County Court Judge takes the initiative.

MR. S. T. EVANS: Did the County Court Judge in the case to which I refer take the initiative?

MR. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough) pointed out that there was a loss on the County Courts of £200,000 per annum, and said that in the City of London, where the Corporation managed its own Court and paid high salaries to everybody connected with it, they made a large profit. His opinion was that the County Courts generally would be much better managed if they were placed under the control of the County Councils and Municipal Authorities.

Vote agreed to.

9. £3,498, to complete the sum for Police Courts, London and Sheerness.

MR. HAYES FISHER (Fulham) said, that very great inconvenience was caused to tradesmen and others in West London owing to the undermanning of the Police Courts. He wished to know whether the consideration which he understood the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir W. Harcourt) had given to the question of appointing two new Police Magistrates in London had had any practical result.

SIR W. HARCOURT: Whenever London does whatever every other large town does, and pays its own Magistrates, I have no doubt more will be appointed. Though we have great difficulty in getting rid of the abuse which already exists, we are certainly not going to extend that abuse. I gave an undertaking early in the Session that we would communicate with the London County

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Council on this subject. The Treasury has addressed a letter to the County Council, and I hope that no long time will expire before this matter is put upon the footing upon which it ought to be placed. It has been discussed over and over again in this House, and I have always taken the line that London, the richest town in the United Kingdom, should not have paid out of the pockets of the taxpayers that which every other town pays for itself.

MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS (Birmingham, S.) said, he had intended to raise the point with regard to which the right hon. Gentleman had just made such a satisfactory statement. He thought it was desirable to point out on another subject that the imposition by Magistrates of fines rather than of imprisonment was not only a wholesome thing in itself, but had this desirable effect—that when the account came to be made up, instead of there being an additional charge for the cost of imprisonment, there was an additional sum in relief of the expenses.

Vote agreed to.

10. £35,385, to complete the sum for Police, England and Wales.

*MR. E. H. BAYLEY (Camberwell, N.) said, there was a strong feeling in the Metropolitan Police Force on the subject of a supply of summer clothing for the Police. Some time ago the Home Secretary told him that he had consulted the Chief Commissioner and the Surgeon General on the subject, and they had informed him they did not think any change was necessary. The right hon. Gentleman said the climate was variable, and the obvious answer was that the clothing ought to vary. The truth was that the high officials who thought summer clothing was unnecessary for the men went about themselves in the middle of the summer dressed in the most light and airy garments. If they had, like their men, to stand for hours at a stretch in a broiling sun, with heavy tunics buttoned up to the chin and wearing heavy helmets, a change would be brought about at once. The climate of

London was not more variable than that of the Provincial towns, where light tunics were supplied to the Police during the summer months.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. ASQUITH, Fife, E.): I am sure that nobody is more solicitous for the welfare of the Police than the present Commissioner, and I was rather sorry to hear my hon. Friend suggest that he showed any want of care for his men. I will undertake to recall the matter to his notice again, and to see whether it is desirable that anything should be done.

Vote agreed to.

11. £352,637, to complete the sum for Prisons, England and the Colonies.

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE (Rochester) said he must refer for a moment or two to a matter in which the interests of his constituents were concerned. It related to the grievances of the warders of convict prisons. In the first place, their hours were very long. While the members of the Metropolitan Police Force were on duty only eight hours a day, or, including the time occupied in reaching their beats, not more than nine hours, the warders of convict prisons were on duty from 10 to 10½ hours, deducting the time allowed for rest and meals, while they had 8½ hours of night duty. This was the state of things with regard to all prison warders. The case of Borstal was very exceptional. The Borstal Prison was very badly constructed, and this largely affected the number of men who had to be on duty at one time. Ten men had to be employed at Borstal for patrol duty for every three employed in other convict prisons, and patrol duty had to be performed in addition to the long hours of ordinary work. An additional hardship at Borstal was that the men were not accommodated in the prison, or in every case near the prison, and in some instances they had to go as much as a mile to reach their own homes. An enormous number of hours had to be worked at the time when they changed night duty for day duty or day duty for

night duty. Deducting the periods of rest allowed, he estimated that they worked $13\frac{1}{2}$ hours on these occasions, during which time they had to keep close supervision over the prisoners. The only request he had to make to the Home Secretary was that, in view of these very long hours, the men should have a little more relief in the matter of holidays. When a man was on night duty he had no half-holiday at all on a Saturday. The night watchman at Borstal seemed to be a very much overworked individual, and he was off duty only every other Sunday. He worked as many as 11 hours every night, with perhaps an hour off a night. When a warder was on night duty it was too hard that he should be deprived of his usual weekly half-holiday. He thought there was a case for inquiry. These men were not properly treated; and he hoped the Home Secretary would be prepared to state that the case was one that he would not overlook.

MR. LUTTRELL (Devon, Tavistock) said, he had had special opportunities of knowing the grievances that existed amongst these men, and he thought it incumbent upon him to make their views known to the Committee and to the Home Secretary before the passing of this Vote. They might be right or they might be wrong with reference to their attitude; but he had examined carefully into these grievances, and he had come to the conclusion that these men had a just and equitable claim for the amelioration of their condition. In his criticism on these matters he wished to say that he did so in no hostile spirit. It was only fair, in his opinion, that if grievances existed they should be brought to light; it was fair to both the Government and to those who suffered that the matter should be brought to the notice of the House. Whether rightly or wrongly, grievances did exist, and on a careful consideration, as he had said, he was of opinion there was, at least, claim for consideration. He would first deal with the case of the storekeepers and clerks. Their case was

that there was unfair classification, and that the prospects held out to them had not been fulfilled. They entered a special examination on nomination and by payment of a fee of £3. But it was understood and authoritatively stated by the Circular which gave them notice of the examination that those who paid a fee of £3 would be entitled to a salary of £400; and, though they entered on these conditions, they were now in an inferior position to those who entered at the ordinary examinations. It was impossible for any of them to have more than £326 a year, and the great bulk of them could never obtain more than £200 a year. This he considered to be very unfair to these men. Then as to the question of classification. When these men entered there were three grades, which had been increased to six in 1880, and reduced to five at a later period. It now stood at five. There were first-class storekeepers, second-class storekeepers; first-class clerks, acting as storekeepers; first-class clerks, second-class clerks. But, although there were five different classes, there were only two sorts of works; and his contention was that similar work, entailing similar responsibilities, should have a similar treatment, and that there should be an amalgamation of those classes. He wished to press upon the Home Secretary the desirability of having a Parliamentary Committee to inquire into these grievances—a Committee before which the men would be enabled to give their views, and the report of which could be made public, so that they might have a chance of enforcing a remedy for the grievances that were complained of. He next wished to say a few words regarding the question of the school-matrons. These officials had become redundant on account of the diminution of the number of prisoners at which he was sure they all rejoiced, the school-masters were, in his opinion, in a very unsatisfactory position. They were attached as clerks, and were ignorant of their classification from day to day, and did not know their prospects. Before becoming schoolmasters they passed two years at a training college, and received certificates. Surely these men could not

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be said to be justly treated under the system that prevailed? It had been suggested that it should be transferred to some other Department. Well, if this were done it would be well to transfer them to some other Department where there were not the difficulties that existed in the present state of affairs. For his own part, he would suggest the Education Department. In this Department there was no likelihood of stagnation, and it was the Education Department which was in the proud position of being mainly responsible for the decrease of prisoners, and in these circumstances he thought it would be well that it should compensate its victims. Now he came to the subject which came under the technical head of "inconvenience money." It was a question that affected Princetown solely. This was paid on account of the remote situation, and it was to all intents and purposes part of Wales, in these cases. The men asked that this amount should be added to their salary when calculating the retiring allowance. As the retiring allowance was based upon salary, the whole salary should be included. They had a precedent for this, and, therefore, they were not asking anything new. In London such money was paid in connection with the convict prison—it was on account of inconvenience, high rents; and in their case he was bound to say that the salary had this money added to it in the calculation of the retiring allowances. It appeared to him to be only right that what was granted in London should be granted at Princetown, and that the inconvenience pay should be added to the salary when calculating the retiring allowance. There were two subjects affecting prison officials generally which he wished to bring before the Committee. Those were the hours of work and the retaining allowance of warders. The warders were not receiving the same advantages as the London police in this matter. The noble Lord had spoken of the hours of labour. On that question he (Mr. Luttrell) could hardly expect that his views would meet with agreement on both sides of the House, but he was sure there were a great many who would agree with him when he said that as far as possible the Government should not employ these men for more than eight

hours. The Government, in fact, should set a good example to private employers. What are the hours now at the convict prisons? How did they compare with the London police? The police work for eight hours a day for six-and-a-half days per week; the warders for 10½ hours for six-and-a-quarter days per week. And yet the work at the prisons was fully as arduous, as anxious, and responsible as that of the police; and everything, to his mind, pointed to the necessity of regarding these men as entitled to be on a footing with the police. He did not wish to make any invidious comparison, but he thought, from what he said, there was an example which should be followed. But it was clear that though the hours of labour were more the conditions of pay as relating to retiring allowances were less favourable to the officials than to the London police. The police joined at 21, and after 26 years they might voluntarily leave with a pension of two-thirds of their pay—that was to say at the age of 47 he might leave, and enjoy two-thirds of his salary as a pension. But the warder might not have that until he was 60 years of age, and then the retirement was on only 36-60ths of the pay. A warder did not get two-thirds until he was 64. He said that they should have treated these warders in another manner. They should, in his opinion, be allowed to leave after 26 years' service, with a pension of two-thirds of their pay. Then there was, in case of the death, the question of the widow or next-of-kin. In his opinion the treatment in these cases should be equal to that given to a policeman's widow or next-of-kin in the event of death. It might be said that all these grievances were owing to the diminution of what might be called prisoners; but that ought to be an additional reason why this should be remedied. For what did the diminution mean. It meant a great saving to the expenditure of the Treasury. This very Vote showed a saving of £2,000 over last year; not long ago there was a decrease of over £40,000. Therefore, they could afford to be generous in this matter. He thought it would be conceded that they were in a position to deal generously with those who were the victims of general improvement. On these grounds

he commended the case for favourable consideration.

MR. HAYES FISHER said, he wished to draw attention to the treatment to which prisoners on remand were subjected in Holloway Gaol. He hoped that in future these prisoners, who might for all he knew to the contrary be quite innocent, would be given the benefit of as humane regulations as could be sanctioned. He was anxious, however, to dissociate himself from the attacks which had recently been made in certain portions of the Press on the Governor and officials of the prison.

*SIR A. ROLLIT said, some of his constituents were interested in the question raised by the hon. Member, and he would strongly suggest that the subject should be investigated by a Committee.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (MR. H. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.) said, the Home Secretary would investigate the statements made by the hon. Member for Fulham, and would consult the Prison Commissioners, and take any steps that might be thought necessary in the matter. He could assure the noble Lord the Member for Rochester that, with regard to the grievances of the Borstal Prison warders, there was every disposition to meet the convenience of the men where it was possible. Several changes had already been made with that object. First of all, night duty was to be taken after the Sunday off, so as to remove the complaint that when on Sunday night duty the warders were entitled to a day off, clashing with the Sunday off to which they were ordinarily entitled. In the second place, one of the three halls which constitute Borstal Prison was closed, and that would have the effect of lightening the patrol duty. Thirdly, arrangements had been made with the nurses to relieve the necessity of patrol duty so far as the infirmary was concerned. Fourthly, with regard to the question of wages, the weekly payments to the men had been increased, and practically they would receive almost the full

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amount of their wages each week; but if any inconvenience to the men on this score continued to be felt, the matter would be further inquired into. Then, with regard to the time table, and the question of a longer period of night duty to avoid the long transitional hours, any representations of the officers to the Department would be carefully considered with a view to the convenience of the officers. But the noble Lord must be aware that in changes of this kind it was necessary to know exactly the feeling of the men themselves, as it was clearly impossible to know from his statement whether he was representing the views of a portion of the officers or of all. With regard to the various points brought forward by his hon. Friend the Member for the Tavistock Division, clearly, if his views were adopted, they would involve the alteration of the pay and pensions of the Civil servants — certainly of all classes of prison officers. It must be remembered that the positions and claims of prison officers were fully considered in 1890 by Lord de Ramsey's Committee, and it was not possible, after so brief an interval, to re-open the inquiry. With regard to the prison clerks, his right hon. Friend had fully considered the question, and had received several weeks ago a deputation of the clerks, who had stated in full detail their views and their claims. In view of the improvement in the pay and pensions of second-class clerks in 1891, it was not found possible to make any further improvement in their position. Undoubtedly, there was a prospect of a serious block in promotion; but, as a matter of fact, only one second-class clerk at the present time had reached the maximum of his scale, and it was not a principle of the Public Service that when an officer reached the maximum of his class he should expect to obtain immediate promotion as a matter of course. With regard to second-class schoolmasters of convict prisons, he admitted that there was a serious block, and the matter had for some time been receiving close attention. His right hon. Friend was now in communication with the Treasury, with the object of lessening the block and improving the position of the schoolmasters. He could not admit the contention of his hon. Friend with regard to Princetown warders. It was quite true

that an increased allowance had been granted at one time to the warders of some of the London Convict Prisons in consideration of the greater cost of living in London, and that increased allowance was reckoned in calculating the pensions. There were no such prisons now; and, although that might be said to be a precedent, it was not a desirable one, and it was well to take the opportunity of putting it aside. It was quite true that a special allowance had been made to the Princetown warders, because of the remote and desolate position of the prison at the time. Since then a railway had been made, and the conditions were different; but, in any case, that special allowance ought not to reckon towards pension. It had not been given to increase the profits of the post, but as a *solatium* to equalise the conditions of service. If it were to reckon to pension, an inequality would be set up, as the conditions in respect to which extra payment was allowed would cease with the termination of the service. He was afraid that he could hold out no expectation that the views of his hon. Friend in that particular could be met.

Vote agreed to.

12. £130,000, to complete the sum for Reformatory and Industrial Schools, Great Britain.

VISCOUNT WOLMER said, he would like to know whether the time had not come for the proper transfer of the Scotch Industrial Schools?

ADMIRAL FIELD was understood to ask a question with regard to Training Ships Industrial Schools.

MR. ASQUITH said, so far as the noble Lord's question was concerned, it was desirable to have uniformity of administration.

Vote agreed to.

13. £22,604, to complete the sum for Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum.

Agreed to.

14. £59,891, to complete the sum for Law Charges and Courts of Law, Scotland.

MR. PAUL (Edinburgh, S.) called attention to the claims of the clerks of the Commissary Office, Edinburgh, to be placed on the permanent establishment of the Civil Service, just as the clerks in the Commissary Offices in Dublin and London.

In Edinburgh, quite lately, the clerks of three other offices had been put on the footing of Civil servants, and their hours increased from six to seven in consequence of the Report of the Ridley Commission. The number of cases the Commissary clerks had to deal with last year exceeded 1,200; the value of the property affected, £4,000,000; and the fees paid, £3,500. Their salaries had not been increased since 1877, and whereas in Dublin 14 clerks, who did practically the same work, received £6,000 in salary; in Edinburgh 11 clerks received only £2,000, although the fees brought to the Treasury exceeded £1,500. He hoped his right hon. Friend the Secretary for Scotland would be able to promise that some inquiry would be held into the condition of the clerks with a view to its improvement.

VISCOUNT WOLMER (Edinburgh, W.) said, he desired to support his hon. Friend and colleague in pressing the case of these clerks upon the favourable attention of the Government. The corresponding clerks in Dublin and London were in the Civil Service, and there was no reason why the Edinburgh clerks should not be placed on the same footing. The objection raised by the Treasury was that the work of those men was of a purely clerical kind, which could be supplied as occasion demanded from the outside market. But that was not the view of the men. They contended that to carry on the tradition of the work required skill and experience. The men were treated by the Treasury as Civil servants, in the matter of fixing their salaries and regulating their hours of work, but they did not get the privilege of Civil servants. The men had made out a clear case for a Departmental inquiry, and he hoped the Secretary for Scotland would order such an inquiry.

MR. BURNS (Battersea) said, he had been informed that the subordinate clerks and messengers in this Department were in the habit of leaving work before their proper time and acting as waiters in Edinburgh to the disadvantage both of the Service and of the waiters of the town. He thought the Government should give to these men the alternative of becoming professional waiters or remaining in the Service.

SIR G. TREVELYAN: I entirely agree with my hon. Friend that men in the Public Service should not be allowed

to take other work outside except during hours on which the Public Service have no claim. Strict Rules have been laid down by the Treasury, and I shall see that in this case the Regulations on the subject are strictly enforced. With regard to the Commissary clerks, the Treasury has laid down the rule that in Offices of a legal or semi-legal character the staff is to be recruited from the outside market, in order that claims to pension should not be needlessly set up. I shall, however, communicate with the Treasury as to the relative positions of the clerks in London and Dublin.

Vote agreed to.

15. £21,655, to complete the sum for Register House, Edinburgh.

*VISCOUNT WOLMER said, he desired to call attention to the case of the engrossing clerks of the Sasine Office, who claimed to be included in the Civil Service, a course which they believed had been recommended by a Committee which sat to consider the case. The position of these clerks was likely to be more perilous in the future than in the past, because by the Land Register (Scotland) Bill which had been introduced this Session, but withdrawn, provision was made to extinguish the clerks altogether; and as many of them had served the Department for years, and were led to believe that they would be included in the Civil Service, the case was an exceptionally hard one. He hoped, therefore, that their claim would be favourably considered by the Government.

SIR G. TREVELYAN said, the claim had been met by giving them a gratuity on their retirement, which they had not before, and they had likewise an advantage in this respect: that from time to time promotions were made on the list of the Established clerks where they had served either for two years as engrossing clerks or two years in the Conveyancing Office. The engrossing clerks were entitled to deduct any time they had served in the Office.

Vote agreed to.

16. £4,955, to complete the sum for the Crofters' Commission.

MR. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough) asked whether the First Commissioner received his salary as Sheriff as well as the salary of £1,200 mentioned in this Vote; and also, whether he received a

salary for being on another Commission on Deer Forests? He further wanted to know how the work of the Crofters' Commission had progressed.

SIR G. TREVELYAN said, the Sheriff received a salary as Chairman of the Crofters' Commission in addition to his Sheriff's work. But when they added up these two salaries and compared them with the larger salaries paid on the Irish Land Commission, and when they considered the work was very severe, they would agree, he thought, that that gentleman was certainly not overpaid. He had taken the extra work of the Highland Commission without insisting upon any increase of pay. When the business was over, the circumstances would be considered. The work of the Crofters' Commission had gone on very steadily. About 18,000 or 19,000 cases had been settled and disposed of since it began. At the beginning of this year there were 1,451 to be disposed of, and of those 664 had been completed, so that only 787 cases now remained to be dealt with.

Vote agreed to.

17. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £56,800, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894, for the Expenses of the Prison Commissioners for Scotland, and of the Prisons under their control, including the Maintenance of Criminal Lunatics and the Preparation of Judicial Statistics."

MR. W. WHITE LAW (Perth) asked the right hon. Gentleman to grant him a Committee to inquire into important matters connected with this Vote. A Departmental Committee would be absolutely useless. It would be no answer for the right hon. Gentleman to tell him that these grievances were inquired into by a Departmental Committee for Scotland years ago. What he asked for was a Select Committee in the next Session of Parliament. The case, which he did not think the right hon. Gentleman would be able to resist, was with regard to the extraordinary extravagance and maladministration of prison affairs in Scotland. He had called the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to the way in which prisons in Scotland were overcrowded in defiance of the Act of Parliament, and the right hon. Gentleman had received information from the Prison Commis-

Sir G. Trevelyan

sioners, which was, to say the least, most extraordinary. The result had been to show that the prisons were not overcrowded, generally speaking, and only upon rare occasions, but his information was that the prisons were continually overcrowded. But his figures were only from the 31st March, 1891, to the 31st March, 1892. The Report gave the number of prisoners in prisons upon the first Tuesday in every month during the year. In Aberdeen Prison during this year there was overcrowding during six of the months. The average number of prisoners during those months was 88, and there was only accommodation for 79; on one day there were 105 prisoners for only 79 cells. A similar state of matters existed with regard to Ayr, but the worst case of all was that of Dundee. In Dundee Prison during 12 months, from April, 1891, to March, 1892, he found that there was considerable overcrowding. The average number of prisoners, taking them upon the first Tuesdays of the month, was 116, and there were only 107 cells, and there were 146 prisoners on one day, which was the largest number at any one time. He could give other instances of persistent overcrowding in Scotch prisons, which was owing to want of administration. With regard to the question of extravagance of the Scotch Prisons Commissioners, it was something extraordinary. The average number of prisoners in England and Wales during the year was 13,196, and he found the prison staff in England cost £584,837, which would amount to about £44 per prisoner. In Scotland the average number of prisoners was 2,552, and the prison staff cost £91,800, or only £36 per prisoner. But when he came to the administration—the head office work—he found the exact opposite state of affairs. The results in England, of administration only, proved that each prison cost about two guineas a year; but in Scotland the administration cost very nearly three guineas per head, so that it was a guinea a head dearer than the administration in England. With regard to the staff of Scotch prisons, the English prison staff was 3,000 for the 13,000 odd prisoners, and the corresponding staff in Scotland was only 338. These figures proved that whilst the staff in Scotch prisons were simply starved in numbers and wages, the administration was grossly extravagant in numbers and salaries.

There was, he believed, a considerable unanimity amongst the Scotch Members in the demand he was making. With regard to prison clerks in Scotland, their position had been slightly improved lately, but he could not see why they should not receive as high a salary as the English clerks. It might be said that the English prison clerks passed a higher examination, but the Scotch clerks were willing to undergo the same examination and to be put on all-fours in every respect with the English clerks; and if they could not pass the examination, they would not put forward a claim for higher salary. With regard to the warders, two who joined the service in 1861 had converted their gas allowance into a sum of £3 a year, which they received until promotion in 1882, when, without the slightest prior intimation to them, their gas allowance was stopped. In the year 1885 another warder, who joined the prison service somewhat later than the other two, but under precisely the same conditions, was also promoted, but he still retained his gas allowance. Why was there this difference of treatment? ["Divide!"] Three other warders who entered the prison service were put on a different scale in 1874, which gave them a higher salary. They were, as they understood, entitled to a gas allowance, but the Scotch Office maintained that they were told that on coming under the new arrangement this allowance was to cease. ["Divide!"] He begged to move that the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again.

The Chairman being of opinion that the Motion was an abuse of the Rules of the House, declined to propose the Question thereupon to the Committee.

MR. WHITELOW (resuming) said, these warders were not told they were to receive the gas allowance until 1880. With regard to two other cases, a number of warders, according to the terms of their engagement, received free quarters in the prison at Perth till the year 1886. For some reason they had never been able to discover why these free quarters were taken away from the men. But after an agitation, extending over six years, the free quarters were again conceded, and the rents were repaid to those men who had paid them for six years, with two exceptions. Two of these men had never received repay-

ment of the rents they had paid, and he wanted to know why they had not been treated in precisely the same way as the others? He begged to move a reduction of the Vote by £2,200.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £54,600, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. W. Whitelaw.*)

*MR. HOZIER (Lanarkshire, S.) drew attention to the fact that medical officers and chaplains in Scotch prisons were remunerated at a much lower rate than doctors and chaplains in English prisons.

*SIR G. TREVELYAN said, a Departmental Committee was granted by the late Government, which recommended a substantial increase to the warders of prisons and to most of the clerks. That increase had been given. He could not dream of granting a Committee on such absurd and trivial grounds as had been mentioned by the hon. Member for Perth. With regard to prison chaplains, several English prisons contained a much larger number of inmates than the Scotch prisons did.

Question put, and negatived.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported To-morrow; Committee to sit again To-morrow.

SUPPLY—REPORT.

X Resolutions [14th September] reported, and agreed to.—[See page 1156.]

SAVINGS BANKS BILL.—(No. 292.)

Considered in Committee, and reported; as amended, to be considered To-morrow.

PUBLIC AUTHORITIES PROTECTION

BILL [*Lords*].—(No. 270.)

As amended, considered; read the third time, and passed, with Amendments.

SALE OF GOODS BILL [*Lords*].—(No. 441.)

Order for Third Reading read, and discharged.

Bill re-committed in respect of a new Clause in lieu of Clause 22, of Clause 63, and Schedule; considered in Committee, and reported, with Amendments; as amended considered; read the third time, and passed, with Amendments.

Mr. Whitelaw

PISTOLS BILL.—(No. 425.)

Order for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed on Consideration, as amended, read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

POLICE (METROPOLIS).

Copy presented,—of Report of the Commissioners for 1892 [by Command] to lie upon the Table.

NAVY AND ARMY EXPENDITURE, 1891-2.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

1. That it appears by the Navy Appropriation Account for the year ended the 31st day of March 1892, and the statement appended thereto, as follows, namely:—

(a.) That the gross expenditure for certain Navy Services exceeded the estimate of such expenditure by a total sum of £286,904 18s. 2d., as shown in Column No. 1 of the Schedule hereto appended; while the gross expenditure for other Navy Services fell short of the estimate of such expenditure by a total sum of £324,957 19s. 6d., as shown in Column No. 2 of the said appended Schedule; so that the gross actual expenditure for the whole of the Navy Services fell short of the gross estimated expenditure by the net sum of £38,053 1s. 4d.;

(b.) That the receipts in aid of certain Navy Services fell short of the estimate of such receipts by a total sum of £165,583 19s. 11d., as shown in Column No. 3 of the said appended Schedule; while the receipts in aid of other Navy Services exceeded the estimate of such receipts by a total sum of £64,581 15s. 7d., as shown in Column No. 4 of the said appended Schedule; so that the total actual receipts in aid of the Grants for Navy Services fell short of the total estimated receipts by the net sum of £101,002 4s. 4d.;

(c.) That the resulting differences between the Exchequer Grants for Navy Services and the net expenditure are as follows, namely:—

	£	s.	d.
Total Surpluses	304,235	18	3
Total Deficits	367,185	1	3

2. That the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury have temporarily authorised the application, in reduction of the net charge on Exchequer Grants for certain Navy Services of the whole of the sums received in excess of the estimated Appropriations in Aid, in respect of the same Services; and have also temporarily authorised the application of so much of the said total surpluses on certain Grants for Navy Services as is necessary to cover the said total deficit on other Grants for Navy Services.

3. Resolved, That the application of such sums be sanctioned.

[For Tabulated Statement See next page.]

SCHEDULE.

Number of Vote.	Navy Services, 1891-92. Votes.	Gross Expenditure.			Appropriations in Aid.											
		Excesses of Actual over Estimated Gross Expenditure.		Surpluses of Estimated over Actual Gross Expenditure.	Deficiencies of Actual as compared with Estimated Receipts.		Surpluses of Actual as compared with Estimated Receipts.									
		1.		2.	3.		4.									
		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.						
1	...	Wages, &c. of Offi- cers, Seamen, and Boys, Coastguard and Royal Ma- rines ... ..			...	38,938	4	8	63,963	6	3		
2	...	Victualling and Clothing for the Navy... ..			8,043	2	1	...	42,904	6	6					
3	...	Medical Estab- lishments and Services			6,875	0	1	...	728	3	11					
4	...	Martial Law	1,871	9	0	...	15	10	11				
5	...	Educational Ser- vices	4,385	4	3	...	798	4	3				
6	...	Scientific Services			...	3,051	8	1	470	19	7					
7	...	Royal Naval Re- serves			7,656	18	9	33	6	5				
8	...	Shipbuilding, Re- pairs, Mainte- nance, &c.:			...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Sec. 1	...	Personnel ...			16,339	16	7	...	5,040	18	5					
Sec. 2	...	Matériel ...			196,966	9	3	18,873	4	11				
Sec. 3	...	Contract Work			...	186,616	11	7	20,237	9	0					
9	...	Naval Armaments			...	41,159	13	3	...	38,365	19	6				
10	...	Works, Buildings, and Repairs at Home and Abroad	39,137	6	6	...	6,456	12	1				
11	...	Miscellaneous Effective Ser- vices			38,268	16	9	...	1,462	18	0					
12	...	Admiralty Office			...	2,421	13	9	...	38	17	6				
13	...	Half-Pay, Re- served and Re- tired Pay ... ..			...	6,657	12	2	7,389	18	6		
14	...	Naval and Marine Pensions, Gratui- ties, and Com- passionate Al- lowances			9,030	12	5	...	12,954	19	8					
15	...	Civil Pensions and Gratuities... ..			...	718	16	3	93	0	1		
16	...	Additional Naval Force for Ser- vice in Austra- lasian Waters ...			22	0	0	...	10,338	0	0					
		Amount written off as irrecover- able			3,702	2	3	...	...	...	...	
					286,904	18	2	324,957	19	6	165,583	19	11	64,581	15	7
					Net Surplus, £38,053			1	4	Net Deficit, £101,002			4	4		

Net Deficit, £62,949 3 0

£860 12 4, net sum recovered from
the Naval Defence Ac-
count, under 52 Vic.,
c. 8, s. 3 (2).
£62,088 10 8, Voted in 1892-93, Seas.
Paper, No. 114, of 1893.

4. That it appears by the Army Appropriation Account for the year ended the 31st day of March 1892, and the statement appended thereto, as follows, namely :—

- (a.) That the gross expenditure for certain Army Services exceeded the estimate of such expenditure by a total sum of £71,758 12s. 1d., as shown in Column No. 1 of the Schedule hereto appended; while the gross expenditure for other Army Services fell short of the Estimate of such expenditure by a total sum of £81,979 9s. 10d., as shown in Column No. 2 of the said appended Schedule; so that the gross actual expenditure for the whole of the Army Services fell short of the gross estimated expenditure by the net sum of £10,220 17s. 9d.;
- (b.) That the receipts in aid of certain Army Services fell short of the estimate of such receipts by a total sum of £5,434 4s. 7d., as shown in Column No. 3 of the said appended Schedule; while the receipts in aid of other Army Services exceeded the estimate of such receipts by a total sum of £99,220 1s. 1d.,

as shown in Column No. 4 of the said appended Schedule; so that the total actual receipts in aid of the Grants for Army Services exceeded the total estimated receipts by the net sum of £93,785 16s. 6d.;

- (c.) That the resulting differences between the Exchequer Grants for Army Services and the net expenditure are as follows, namely :—

	£	s.	d.
Total Surpluses...	152,025	12	10
Total Deficits ...	48,018	18	7

5. That the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury have temporarily authorised the application, in reduction of the net charge on Exchequer Grants for certain Army Services, of the whole of the sums received in excess of the estimated appropriations in aid, in respect of the same Services, and have also temporarily authorised the application of so much of the said total surpluses on certain Grants for Army Services as is necessary to cover the said total deficits on other Grants for Army Services.

6. Resolved, That the application of such sums be sanctioned.

SCHEDULE.

No. of Vote.	Army Services, 1891-92. Votes.	Gross Expenditure.		Appropriations in Aid.	
		Excesses of Actual over Estimated Gross Expenditure.	Surpluses of Estimated over Actual Gross Expenditure.	Deficiencies of Actual as compared with Estimated Receipts.	Surpluses of Actual as compared with Estimated Receipts.
		1.	2.	3.	4.
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
1	Pay, &c., of Army (General Staff, Regiments, Reserve, and Departments)	19,336 11 0	...	...	13,270 13 2
2	Medical Establishments : Pay, &c. ...	...	9,835 13 11	392 8 6	...
3	Militia : Pay and Allowances...	...	1,661 9 1	...	2,161 9 8
4	Yeomanry Cavalry : Pay and Allowances ...	...	1,380 18 1	1 3 4	...
5	Volunteer Corps : Pay and Allowances	...	4,984 15 2	20 17 4	...
6	Transport and Remounts ...	32,779 12 10	...	...	4,233 12 5
7	Provisions, Forage, and other Supplies	9,702 19 6	...	...	4,214 3 8
8	Clothing Establishments, and Services	...	162 18 5	...	20,857 1 5
9	Warlike and other Stores : Supply and Repair ...	3,295 2 2	...	...	50,767 12 3
10	Works, Buildings, and Repairs : Cost, including Superintending Establishment ...	...	28,884 4 10	...	3,461 19 4
11	Military Educational Establishments : Pay and Miscellaneous Charges...	...	3,270 1 3	2,585 9 8	...
12	Miscellaneous Effective Services ...	...	29,977 14 4	270 1 2	...
13	War Office : Salaries and Miscellaneous Charges ...	...	400 0 6	36 10 8	...
14	Non-effective Charges for Officers, &c. ...	...	1,029 0 2	853 16 0	...
15	Non-effective Charges for Men, &c. ...	5,863 18 10	...	1,273 17 11	...
16	Superannuation, Compensation, and Compassionate Allowances...	...	392 14 1	...	253 9 2
	Balances irrecoverable and Claims abandoned ...	780 7 9	...	...	...
		71,758 12 1	81,979 9 10	5,434 4 7	99,220 1 1

Net Surplus, £10,220 17 9 Net Surplus, £93,785 16 6

Sum to be surrendered to the Exchequer, £104,006 14 3

Resolutions to be reported To-morrow.

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Three o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Saturday, 16th September 1893.

The House met at Twelve of the clock.

THE ROUTE TO MASHONALAND.

MR. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether Mr. Cecil Rhodes is at the present time proceeding to Fort Beira to take that route to Fort Salisbury, in Mashonaland; if, at the present time, a large section of that railway is completed and ready for formal opening; and if the route to Mashonaland, *viâ* the Matabele country, is or is not in any way interrupted?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. S. BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): We understand that Mr. Rhodes' primary object in going to Beira is to open the completed portion of the railway, which we are informed is about 74 miles. I informed the hon. Gentleman yesterday that, as far as we are aware, the various land routes into Mashonaland are open.

THE MERCHANT SHIPPING CONSOLIDATION BILL.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he has directed copies of the Merchant Shipping Consolidation Bill to be sent to the various Pilots' Associations in the United Kingdom; and, if not, whether he will do so, either to all or to a selected number of these Associations?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. MUNDELLA, Sheffield, Brightside): A copy of the Bill was sent to the various Pilotage Authorities, and also to the United Kingdom Pilotage Association at Swansea. I shall be happy to send a few more copies to the central office of the United Kingdom Pilotage Association for distribution if the hon. Member recommends that course.

VOL. XVII. [FOURTH SERIES.]

TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION.

MR. LODER (Brighton): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he can state what proportions of the sums allocated to the London County Council in the last three years under "The Local Taxation (Customs and Excise) Act, 1890," have been made use of for the furtherance of technical instruction?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. H. H. FOWLER, Wolverhampton, E.): According to the Return to which I referred yesterday, the London County Council in 1892-3 appropriated £30,000 for technical education, and in the present year the sum so appropriated by them is £57,000. The residue paid to the County Council under the Local Taxation (Customs and Excise) Act, 1890, in the year 1892-3 was £172,000, and the sum payable in respect of the present year will probably be about the same amount.

WAGES IN THE DUBLIN ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick's): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether anything has been done to raise the rate of wages in the Ordnance Department of Dublin proportionately to that paid in other places?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. WOODALL, Hanley): It is intended to make some improvement in the position of the labourers employed in the Ordnance Stores, Dublin. I shall be glad if my hon. Friend repeats the question next Thursday.

THE GENERAL POST OFFICE.

MR. SAUNDERS (Newington, Walworth): I beg to ask the Postmaster General if his attention has been called to an article in *The Pall Mall Gazette*, of 6th September, with plans of the General Post Office showing inadequate working space for *employés* and insufficient means of escape in the event of accident or panic, with consequent danger to the large number of servants employed both by day and by night; and will he take steps to insure sufficient space for *employés* and suitable means of exit, equal to what would be required by Sanitary Authorities in respect of other buildings used for industrial purposes?

3 H

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. A. MORLEY, Nottingham, E.): My attention was called to the article mentioned, and I have made inquiry on the subject. Every precaution is taken against fire, and the means of exit are judged to be sufficient. I am, however, making further inquiries.

CROFTER COLONISATION IN CANADA.

MR. LODER: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland when the Fourth Report of the Commissioners on Crofter Colonisation in Canada will be presented; and whether it is intended to ask Parliament to vote a further sum to carry on the experiments tried in 1888 and 1889?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Sir G. TREVELYAN, Glasgow, Bridgeton): The Fourth Report of the Colonisation Board is now ready; but I regret to say that, as some of the members of the Board to whom it has been sent for approval and signature are out of the country, I shall not be able to lay it on the Table of the House until November. The Government do not intend to ask for a further Vote if for no other reason than that the former Vote is not yet exhausted. But hon. Members, before they press the Government for more money for State colonisation, will do well to read the Report.

THE PAYING OFF OF THE "TRAFALGAR."

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he can inform the House why it was that H.M.S. *Trafalgar*, commissioned on the 2nd April, 1890, was paid off before H.M.S. *Colossus*, which was commissioned on the 19th March, 1890?

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Sir U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH, Lancashire, Clitheroe): The reason is that, considering all the circumstances of the two ships and the requirements of the Public Service, it was the most convenient course to adopt.

THE GUNS OF H.M.S. "COLOSSUS."

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether it is the fact that three out of the four turret guns on H.M.S. *Colossus* were recently found to be unserviceable; that in order to replace them the whole reserve of guns at Malta, not only for the

Colossus, but also for the *Edinburgh* and the *Collingwood*, had to be shipped on the *Colossus*, and that one gun of this reserve was found, when cleaned, to be more unserviceable than the gun it had replaced, and was consequently condemned as unfit for service; and whether any, and, if so, what, measures are now or will in future be taken to secure that guns in reserve are in serviceable condition?

SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: Three out of the four guns on Her Majesty's ship *Colossus* were recently reported to be unserviceable. It was previously known by the number of rounds fired that they were becoming worn, and these three guns were replaced from the reserve at Malta. One of the reserve guns, which had fired no rounds since leaving Woolwich, has been reported on as unserviceable, but whether this is the fact has yet to be decided by the experts at home. A new gun will be shipped next week for the reserve at Malta. All necessary measures have been, and will in future be, taken to secure that guns in the reserve are in a serviceable condition. There is no reason to doubt the efficiency of the remaining three guns.

THE INDIAN POLICE.

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE (Rochester): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether, under the Rules recently made by the Secretary of State, the recruitment of the commissioned ranks of the Indian Police has been thrown open to Natives as well as Europeans; and, if so, whether, in view of the recent religious outbreaks between Mahomedans and Hindus, stretching across British India from Burmah to Bombay, the Secretary of State will consider the advisability of appointing Superintendents of Police who do not belong to either of these religious communities?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. G. RUSSELL, North Beds.): The Rules make no distinction between Natives of India and other natural-born subjects of the Queen. No other consideration is entertained, in selecting officers for the appointment of Police Superintendent, save that of personal fitness for the post. The mere fact that a Native professes a

certain religious faith is not a disqualification ; but it would be a disqualification if in his practice of that faith he made himself offensive to his neighbours of another religion.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—COMMITTEE.

SUPPLY—considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS, 1893-4.

CLASS IV.

1. £405,015, to complete the sum for Science and Art Department.

*SIR R. TEMPLE (Surrey, Kingston) submitted to the Minister in charge of the Vote that it would be very convenient to the Committee if he made a statement about it. When the Education Vote was before the Committee they had had a most interesting statement from his right hon. Friend, and the Vote for Science and Art was not less in importance than the Vote for Education.

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Mr. ACLAND, York, W.R., Rotherham) : It has not been the custom to make any statement on this Vote.

*SIR R. TEMPLE said, he noticed that various items in the Vote were increased. The House would never grudge the Department the resources which it required; but it would be better, when they were asked to vote an increase of money, that a statement of the reasons for the change should be made. He asked for some explanation of the fact that there had been increases in the Vote under the heads of salaries of staff from £13,000 to £16,000, Science schools from £120,000 to £129,000, Art schools and classes from £50,000 to £58,000, Scholarships, local examinations, and prizes from £8,000 to £9,500, and building grants from £6,000 to £9,000. Turning to the sub-heads in the Museum division, in respect of South Kensington, Bethnal Green, and others, there was positively a decrease in salaries from £10,000 odd to £9,000 odd, and, in fact, the whole amount for the South Kensington Museum appeared to have fallen from £12,000 odd to £11,000. That, at first sight, would appear rather strange,

as South Kensington was known to be one of the most important Museums in the world, for which the public would not grudge any assistance. Probably there were reasons for this decrease in expenditure, and it would be instructive to them if they could learn in a few words from the Minister what was the true position in that regard. In the item dealing with purchases for the Museums under the sub-head Works of Art there was an increase from £7,000 odd to £10,000 odd. There were, no doubt, very valuable reasons for this, but it would have been desirable that a few words should have been added stating what were the works of art which had been purchased in such increasing quantity. He should also like to hear some explanation for the increase of the charges for copying from £12,000 to £13,000, and the rise from £12,000 to £14,000 for artisans, cleaners, and labourers.

MR. ACLAND said, he would answer the questions which had been put to him by the hon. Baronet. First of all, the increase of salaries was partly due to changes made in the reorganisation of the staff. A certain number of copyists became abstractors, and thus rose to a higher class. The increase affecting Art schools and classes was due to a large development of technical schools growing up under the County Councils and to the increased demand for instruction in Science and Art. A large portion of the money was usefully used in many towns of the country in setting up important Technical Institutions. The next question of the hon. Member was as to Scholarships and local Exhibitions and prizes. The grant under this head in 1891-2 amounted to £20,000. The prizes in Art had been almost entirely converted into Scholarships, which were tenable for three years. In the first year the minimum amount was payable, the maximum being obtainable in the third year. That accounted for the increase involved during the present year. The building grants were necessary to meet the grants which had been made by localities for buildings which had been completed in the financial year. The same stimulus which had been given to Science and Art by the Local Taxation Act had led to the opening of a number of new local technical schools, and the Department made a certain grant towards

the erection of those schools. The decrease of salaries referred to was due to retirements from posts which were not going to be filled up, though this did not mean less efficiency in the staff. Then, as to the increase in the purchase of Science and Art Collections for the Museums and for circulation, the hon. Baronet noticed there had been an increase of £2,700. That was the exact amount previously knocked off this Vote for the purchase of objects for the Museums and for their circulation throughout the country. The Treasury consented to put back the amount which the late Chancellor of the Exchequer knocked off at a time when he was somewhat hard up. The £2,700 had been restored, which simply meant that things were put back as they were about three years ago, in order that the Department should have an adequate Vote for purchases and for the circulation of works of Art in all the towns of the country where Museums existed. The increase in copying was one which must necessarily arise with an increase of work. As to artisans and labourers, he found that at South Kensington there were a few men working very long hours, some of them 16 hours a day. The matter was laid before the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and steps were taken to have that condition of affairs altered by not only lessening the number of hours worked by the artisans and labourers so as to bring them down four or five hours a week, but also to increase the wages, and to bring them up to the proper Trade Union scale.

*SIR F. S. POWELL (Wigan) said, that two or three years ago he called attention to the scandalous provision made for the exhibition of students' work sent from schools in the Provinces. He had now heartily to acknowledge his indebtedness to the Department for the steps they had taken to remedy that defect, and for the excellent arrangements they had now made for the exhibition of these works.

Vote agreed to.

2. £87,500, to complete the sum for British Museum.

*SIR R. TEMPLE desired to call attention to the fact that the Vote showed a decrease as compared with last year, though the general impression of the public would be that more funds would

be required towards the expenditure on material for this magnificent National Institution. The amount had fallen from £116,000 to £115,000 and though that was but a slight decrease, still even the slightest decrease was disappointing when one might have expected the very opposite.

*THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Sir J. T. HIBBERT, Oldham) said, the decrease was in salaries and wages, and not in purchases.

*SIR R. TEMPLE did not agree, because he found that purchases and acquisitions showed a falling off from £22,000 to £20,000. The general idea was that, instead of less, they required larger grants for acquiring material for this magnificent Institution. The Vote for the Natural History Museum at South Kensington, which was the next in importance to the British Museum, also showed a slight decrease. South Kensington Museum was really one of the bright ornaments of our nation, and one would have thought that an increasing Vote would have been allowed year after year. He was sure the British taxpayer would not grudge the amount for such an Institution. South Kensington was in the hands of some of the best scientists of the day, and one would hope that due appreciation would be shown for this work in the shape of an increased money grant. Taking the two Museums together, the grants on the aggregate showed a falling off of from £161,000 to £160,000. He hoped they should hear some explanation on the point.

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, there was, he admitted, a slight decrease in the amount allowed for purchases for the British Museum proper, but that was due to the fact that in 1892-3 there was a special grant of £1,500, which did not re-appear in the current year. But though there was a decrease in that item for the British Museum, there was a considerable increase in the Natural History Museum. A purchase had been made of a valuable collection of insects, which was considered a good purchase, and was much appreciated by the Trustees of the British Museum. It would be a matter of great satisfaction for the Committee to know that the number of visitors to the Institution had increased.

Mr. Acland

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston) asked whether the increase had been in the day or evening attendances?

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT: It is in the day attendance chiefly.

SIR R. TEMPLE remarked, that whereas the amount for the purchase of acquisitions had risen from £4,900 to £6,900, yet, *pari passu* with that, the amount for the purchase of pictures had fallen from £5,800 to £4,300?

*SIR F. S. POWELL said, that some years ago they had a discussion about attendance in the evening, and it was agreed to allow the British Museum to remain open in the evening. He should be glad to hear whether many had availed themselves of this opportunity?

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, that in 1891 the attendance in the evening was 40,149; in 1892, 40,649.

Vote agreed to.

3. £6,382, to complete the sum for National Gallery.

MR. TOMLINSON said, he had heard it stated that purchases of pictures had been restricted on the ground that there was no immediate accommodation for their exhibition. It would be very much to be regretted if good opportunities for purchasing valuable pictures were lost merely because there were no means to exhibit them at once.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby) said, it had long been felt that the space in the National Gallery was inadequate, and arrangements had been made to obtain further space by the additional accommodation which would be afforded at Millbank. The restriction of purchases was rather due, he suspected, to want of money than of space.

Vote agreed to.

4. £736, to complete the sum for National Portrait Gallery.

*SIR R. TEMPLE pointed out that there was a fall in salaries from £2,200 to £1,700. No doubt there was some good reason for the decrease.

MR. LODER (Brighton) inquired when the National Portrait Gallery was likely to be finished?

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT could not give any definite reply as to when the work would be finished. The decrease in the

salaries was due to the fact that the Director who had retired did not receive a salary, but a gratuity for services he rendered.

MR. BURNS (Battersea) expressed the hope that the Financial Secretary to the Treasury would consult with the First Commissioner of Works in order to see whether the approaches to the National Portrait Gallery could not be improved by taking away entirely or setting back the ugly railings opposite St. Martin's Church.

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, that the suggestion of the hon. Gentleman should receive consideration.

Vote agreed to.

5. £13,663, to complete the sum for Scientific Investigation, &c.

MR. TOMLINSON asked whether a larger amount might not properly be made to the Royal Geographical Society? He saw the sum of £4,000 was allowed to the Royal Society. No one would say that was a vast amount, considering the work that was to be done. Having regard to the vast importance of proper geographical investigation and the admirable work which was done by the Royal Geographical Society, it was desirable for the Government to consider whether the time had not arrived when a larger grant should not be made to that Society. There was no doubt if a larger amount were granted it would be used in a manner calculated to produce the greatest possible benefit to this country.

MR. BURNS sincerely trusted the Secretary to the Treasury would discriminate between assistance given for real geographical and scientific purposes and assistance given to Mashonaland, ostensibly in the interests of science, but really in the interests of syndicates of company promoters.

*SIR R. TEMPLE said, that there was no Society which did more useful work than the Royal Geographical Society.

MR. TOMLINSON was sure the people of this country would not look coldly upon the efforts made in South Africa to open up new markets and promote the interests of this country.

MR. BURNS: I am very glad that my shot hit the target.

*MR. PAUL (Edinburgh, S.) would oppose any grants to this Royal Geographical Society unless and until it admitted women as Fellows.

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, the points raised should receive consideration, but no application had been received for an increase in the grant.

Vote agreed to.

6. £49,000, to complete the sum for Universities and Colleges, Great Britain.

*MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Notts, Mansfield) : The Committee will remember that in the latter part of 1891 King's College and University College endeavoured to obtain a Charter for a new London University, of which they would have been the dominating constituents. Happily, as I and many others think, the scheme for creating the Albert University failed, and it is, therefore, not necessary for me to enter into that controversy on the present occasion. I refer to it because of the fact that during the discussion great surprise was expressed at the discovery that King's College was in receipt of a Parliamentary grant of £15,000 a year. The surprise was due to the fact that, whereas, by passing the University Tests Abolition Act of 1871, the Legislature had abolished all religious tests and disabilities at the National Universities, Parliament had accorded national support to an Institution in which those tests and disabilities exist and are rigorously enforced. The original Charter of King's College declared that the College was established as a College "In which instruction in the doctrines and duties of Christianity, as taught by the Church of England, should be forever combined, with other useful branches of education;" and the Archbishop of Canterbury, for the time being, was appointed Visitor. It was further declared that no person who was not a member of the Church of England should be competent to fill any office in the College, except the Professorships of Oriental Literature and Modern Languages. I am aware that that Charter is not now in force; but in 1882 King's College obtained an Act of re-incorporation, and that Act distinctly re-affirmed its Church of England character, and also maintained the religious test. I cannot speak from my

own knowledge, but I am told that these provisions of the Charter are rigorously carried out, so that all officials, from the highest to the lowest, must be members of the Church of England. I am also informed that the Archbishop of Canterbury has a voice in all the College appointments. There are about 12 Colleges in all which participate in the grant of £15,000 a year annually voted by Parliament, and it is the only denominational College in the list. How came it to find a place there? In 1889 the late Government included in the Estimates for the first time a Vote of £15,000 for University Colleges in Great Britain, and by a Treasury Minute, dated March 11 in that year, they appointed a Committee of four persons to advise them as to the best mode of distributing the grant. That Minute named certain Colleges as claimants, and among them was King's College. The Committee proposed that grants of various sums, ranging from £500 to £1,800 should be paid to 12 Colleges, and King's College was set down for £1,700, which it has since annually received. Last year the same Government appointed a second Committee, to report as to the results of the grants, and to consider whether they might be advantageously increased, diminished, or withheld. That Committee recommended, not only that the grants should be continued to each College until the expiration of five years from the date at which they commenced, but that there should be a substantial addition to the total amount—that, in fact, it should be doubled. They also proposed a new scale of payment, and had it been adopted King's College would have received, not £1,700 a year, but more than double that amount, or £3,500. For reasons with which I am unacquainted, the Government did not adopt the recommendation of the Committee, and so the amount has continued to be as at the beginning; the Vote now before the Committee being £15,000, of which King's College will receive £1,700. Now, there is a passage in the Report of this second Committee which has an important bearing on the question I desire to raise upon the Vote. The following appears as an addendum to the Report:—

"We have not dissented from the recommendation of the Committee that King's Col-

lege, London, should be included in the grant to University Colleges, because we understand that questions of general policy have not been referred to this Committee. But we desire to record our view that King's College, being by its constitution a strictly denominational institution, so far as relates to its Governing Body and its teaching staff, stands in a position differing from that of the other Colleges dealt with in this Report; and we reserve our own freedom of action on the subject, as Members of the House of Commons, in case the question of the right of King's College to participate in the grant should hereafter be raised in Parliament."

That note has attached to it these signatures "H. E. Roscoe; J. Bryce." I am heartily glad that the Chancellor of the Duchy has put on record his opinion on this subject, and has reserved his freedom of action in the matter, and I now confidently look to him to use his influence with the Government of which he is so efficient a Member to induce them to give effect to the view thus expressed. I am also glad that the hon. Baronet the Member for South Manchester has done the same, because he has the advantage of even greater freedom than the Chancellor of the Duchy. This is not a case in which vested interests stand in the way of a change; nor can any cry of confiscation, or spoliation, be reasonably raised. The Treasury Minute, July 1, 1889, after stating that if the grant is continued it should be liable to be reviewed every five years, proceeded to say that—

"My Lords are anxious clearly to establish the principle that no College is to have a vested right to share, even for a limited number of years, in the sums voted by Parliament. On the contrary, each College should be considered as liable to be excluded at any time from further participation in the grant, if it should appear to the Treasury that, from any cause, it has ceased to be deserving of support from the National Exchequer. But any change must be made in connection with the Estimate, and be brought under the notice of Parliament."

And, as I have already said, the second Treasury Minute also asked the Committee to consider whether the grants should be increased, diminished, or withheld. Parliament is, therefore, quite free to act in the matter; and this Government is also free, as not having been a party to the present arrangement. I, however, do not propose any harsh or precipitate action, and, therefore, do not wish the grant to King's College to be withheld this year. But as the term of five years, for which it was promised, is approaching its termination,

I wish to elicit from the Government an expression of opinion on the subject, and to obtain an assurance that it shall be dealt with, not by a Departmental Committee, but on the responsibility of the Government and of this House. The Committee will have observed that I have said nothing in disparagement of King's College as an educational institution. But however efficient it may be, and however useful, it is disqualified for receiving Parliamentary support by the fact that it belongs, not to the nation or the public, but to a single religious body. The founders of King's College were fully entitled to give it a denominational character if they thought fit; but they must submit to the disadvantages, as well as enjoy the advantages, of denominationalism. They have had the opportunity of abandoning religious tests, and of throwing their doors as wide open as those of the other Colleges which share this grant. They were recommended to do so by an authority of great weight—I refer to the Duke of Devonshire's Committee on Scientific Instruction, from whose Report I quote this passage—

"With regard to King's College, we would further suggest that the College should apply for a new Charter, or for an Act of Parliament, with a view of cancelling the proprietary rights of its shareholders, and of abolishing all religious restrictions (so far as any such exist) on the selection of Professors of Science, and on the privileges extending to students of Science. *We consider that any grant of public money which may be made to King's College should be conditional on such a re-constitution of the College as should effect these objects.*"

The Commissioners who so expressed themselves were not Liberationists, and certainly were not opponents of King's College; for they included, besides the then Duke of Devonshire, the Marquess of Lansdowne; Professor Miller, a Professor of King's College; Professor Stokes, and Sir J. Lubbock. This weighty advice of the Commissioners was not taken; for, when King's College obtained its new Act of Incorporation, these restrictions were not, as they then might have been, removed, and the authorities of King's College deliberately resolved to remain a denominational institution. They had a right, if they thought fit, to disregard this plainly-expressed opinion of the Commissioners; but there were two other bodies who ought not to have ignored it—I mean the Committee which

recommended this grant to King's College and the Government which adopted their recommendation. I think that these are facts which should be brought under the notice of this House before it renews the grant even for a single year. And I hope that, as the result of the consideration which the subject deserves, the present Government and the present Parliament will by their future action re-affirm the great principle that Universities and Colleges claiming public support should, in the language of the University Tests Abolition Act of 1871, be "freely accessible to the nation."

MR. ACLAND: My hon. Friend has called attention to a subject which has more than once engaged the attention of the Government. As he says, the grant was not absolutely promised, but it was indicated that at the end of five years the present arrangement would cease. It is perfectly true that the Charter which was laid on the Table of the House a year or two ago, which gave King's College, or proposed to give it, an established position in relation to the new London University, was largely affected by the condition of King's College in relation to the demands made upon its Professors and officers in regard to their being members of the Church of England, and I have no doubt myself that, among other causes of dissatisfaction which caused the withdrawal of the Charter, that was a very important one. But, of course, that is not the question immediately under our consideration. We have to note that when it was proposed to increase the grant to these University Colleges, two Members of this House—the hon. Member for Manchester (Sir H. Roscoe) and the Chancellor of the Duchy (Mr. Bryce) did place on record their view that King's College, being by its constitution a strictly Denominational Institution as far as relates to its Governing Body and teaching staff, stands in a position differing from that of other Colleges dealt with in this Report. If we take our great Universities and the Welsh Colleges, and all the other University Colleges which get grants from Parliament, there is no doubt the position is an exceptional one. In the King's College (London) Act, 1882, which gives the Charter, it is stated—and no doubt it is the fact—

that no person in King's College who is not a member of the Church of England shall be competent to fill any office in the College except the Professorship of Oriental Literature and Oriental Language. That, of course, means that whereas at Oxford, Cambridge, and elsewhere no such demand is made for a Professor of Science, a Professor of Ancient Languages, or Political Economy, and the like, King's College stands alone in that particular, and in demanding that such Professors shall declare they are members of the Church of England before they can receive an appointment. I do not think it is necessary to enter into this matter in a controversial spirit. My hon. Friend has stated it in a perfectly reasonable and fair way, and I can only say that the Government will carefully consider the matter on the lines which he has indicated, both in view of any increase of the grant or possible modification of the conditions under which the grant may be received. I understand he does not complain of the five years' arrangement; therefore, there is no actual complaint of the Estimates now, but he wishes us to look into that matter, as we shall do very carefully, in the future.

*SIR F. S. POWELL (Wigan) said, he had given notice to move a reduction of the Vote, but he should not proceed with that Motion, confining himself to a few general observations, his remarks applying more particularly to the Welsh Colleges. First of all, he wished to say one or two brief words respecting King's College. He thought the recommendations or suggestions which had been quoted would have carried more weight if they had come from Members of different political Parties. His hon. Friend the Member for Manchester and the Chancellor of the Duchy were both justly eminent Members, but they were of one particular Party. He thought it was rather unfortunate there should not have been recommendations from both sides; for more weight would have been attached to recommendations so originated. He thought there was also a broad distinction between King's College and these new Colleges. King's College was an existing Institution with an ancient constitution when these new Colleges were established, and it was not unnatural that these latter should

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be based on what some regarded as a wider and more liberal foundation. Considering that only the previous night the House declared in favour of denominational teaching in Ireland in connection with Training Colleges, it was a rather hard measure that the members of the Church of England, only a few hours afterwards, should be exposed to difficulties and embarrassments in their career. He did not understand that the restrictions which referred to the teaching staff of King's College had occasioned the slightest difficulty to those who were taught. As regarded University Colleges, especially in connection with University Colleges in Wales, he felt anxious to make his position perfectly clear. He was by no means antagonistic to University Colleges. On the contrary, he had borne a humble but most energetic part in the foundation of the Yorkshire College at Leeds, and was a member of the Court of the Victoria University, which had to deal with these most promising, hopeful, and already most valuable undertakings. But what occurred to him was this: that they ought to have, as regarded these University Colleges, further particulars, so that they might be able to see what work these Institutions were doing. The statement as to these Colleges was almost a blank; whereas in regard to the Scotch Universities, the Royal University of Ireland, and the Queen's Colleges, Ireland, the fullest information was given on all the different points. He hoped the Government would next year present a Report from which they might really gather what had been done.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: I will promise that this matter shall be considered.

*SIR F. S. POWELL hoped the word "considered" would be taken in a Parliamentary sense, and that it would lead to action. He did not desire a meddling interference with these Colleges—he should deprecate any such interference—but he thought there should be such a statement as would secure public confidence in these Institutions. Then, with regard to the Welsh Colleges, perhaps he might be permitted to make some brief remarks respecting Bangor. Some weeks ago he should have been inclined to state the case of Miss Hughes, who was the head of the women's portion of Bangor College, but the progress

of matters had been such that her position had been fully established.

*THE CHAIRMAN: I must point out to the hon. Baronet that this, being a matter of internal discipline, cannot be brought forward in Committee of Supply.

SIR F. S. POWELL bowed to the Chairman's ruling, but submitted that the conduct of the teachers of this College, which was maintained out of the Vote, with reference to a person holding a high position, was a matter that they might discuss in Committee.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think not.

*SIR F. S. POWELL said, of course, he would obey the ruling of the Chair; but perhaps he might be allowed to say that Miss Hughes's character was entirely restored. Though he was not allowed to say anything on this subject, he felt that those who guided this College, those who were responsible to Parliament for the administration of the funds provided by this Vote, should have regard, and very careful regard, to the delicate character of their duties; for when they were bringing together as an experiment young men and young women, and the mothers of England were asked to send their daughters to a College sustained by a Parliamentary Vote, they were entitled to be thoroughly satisfied that the most anxious care would be taken as regarded, not only the teaching and discipline, but the formation of the character of these young persons. There was, as they all knew, a considerable number of young women in Cambridge, but they were gathered together at Girton College and Newnham College, and some slight difficulties had at first arisen there, but, at the same time, he was only speaking of the fact that there were——

*THE CHAIRMAN: I must call the hon. Gentleman's attention to the fact that they are not in this Vote.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE DUCHY OF LANCASTER (Mr. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.): As the hon. Member has made that statement, I feel bound to say that if he has been informed that there were difficulties at Girton or Newnham he has been misinformed. I have been from its first foundation one of the Governing Body of Girton College, and I can

assure him that no difficulties have arisen.

*SIR F. S. POWELL would not carry the point any further. Another question he wished to ask was, how many students there were in these Welsh Colleges? There seemed to him a great contrast in the numbers between the Welsh Colleges and the Victoria Colleges. In the Yorkshire College the number was 1,110; at Bangor, 120; Aberystwith, in 1891, 132; and what number there was at Cardiff he did not know, but it seemed to him that if real good work was to be carried out there must be a considerable enlargement in the number of students, and he hoped the increase would soon take place. He had not spoken in a hostile spirit with reference to these Colleges, for he hoped and earnestly desired their prosperity. Another important point connected with the College was, how many students took advantage of the complete curriculum, and how many attended, as it were, only incidentally and, so to say, as amateurs? Another question was whether there were any means for recording any comparison between the students of Welsh nativity and residence, and students of other nativity and other residence? It had been reported of some of the Colleges that they were greatly frequented by English persons. He did not regret that circumstance, but he thought the Committee should have cognisance of it, as it might have some effect on the deliberations of Parliament in regard to the Vote. Of those educated at these Colleges, he wished to know how many were men, and how many were women? He rejoiced to see the attention paid to the education of women at two of these Colleges. Then he thought they should have some information of the character of the entrance examination, and the instruction given throughout. The success of any establishment and institution must depend on the attainments at the entrance. If the attainment was inferior, the teaching throughout would follow that inferiority. He hoped to hear in answer to his remark that there was an effective examination and entrance in order to make certain that the students were qualified to take advantage of the instruction given in these Colleges. He should then wish to know how many students in these Colleges had taken

degrees in the University of London? In Manchester there was a great desire to have the examinations by teachers at the College where the instruction was given to the students, and this was one reason for the application for the Charter. He hoped someone in charge of the Vote would be able to inform them what were the number of degrees won by the students at the London University. The only other point he desired to mention was the fees paid by the students. He himself was entirely ignorant of the scale of fees paid, but they had an important bearing on the financial position of any University, and no University could prosper without being in possession of considerable funds. Thanking the Committee for the patience with which they had heard him, he only wished further to say that he had not made these remarks in a hostile spirit, because he hoped that a career of prosperity was before the University Colleges.

MR. ACLAND: I think I had better answer the points raised by the hon. Baronet at once. Certainly, in relation to the Colleges, my hon. Friend has a very reasonable and real right to speak, as few men have taken more intense interest in them than he has himself. I will not touch the general question further than to say that questions of internal discipline are not matters with which we, as a Government, ought to interfere; we think that so long as a College goes on reasonably and satisfactorily in general education the Education Department is not called on to look into questions of internal discipline. You must trust the College authorities to do their duty, and until you have grave reason to suppose that they are not doing so you would not be justified in considering the withdrawal of the grant. This is the first time the Vice President has been asked to extend the Vote, and I can only say I echo what my right hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury has said, that we have enough material—and the authorities of the College will assist us in this matter—to lay before the House in another year some adequate Report on many of the points raised, as to the men and women students, as to the numbers, the degrees, and generally such an account of each College as Parliament is thoroughly entitled to see. As to the

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English and Welsh Colleges, I think I ought to say the number of day students in the first instance are between 600 and 700; and if we take the Yorkshire Colleges, the day classes are something over 300. The work at the Welsh Colleges and the increase of students has been of a most remarkable character. I am not able to give the number of London degrees, and for details of that sort we must wait for the Report I have promised. I can say the Welsh Colleges are doing as rapidly increasing and good work as the English Colleges, and when they get, as we hope they may now get, some arrangement of their own in connection with the University, I have the fullest possible confidence that every one of these three Colleges will develop and increase even more rapidly than before.

SIR A. ROLLIT (Islington, S.) said, that as allusion had been made to King's College, and some criticism had been directed to the denominational character of the College, and as no one connected with the College had replied to them, he thought he ought to say a few words. He would not go into the question of denominational education, though he thought what was said last night in regard to the Training Colleges in Ireland was perfectly relevant. The Queen's Colleges were denominational. According to the district in which they were placed, there the religious denomination of that locality was prevalent. For instance, Belfast was distinctly Presbyterian; Cork was almost entirely Roman Catholic, and a denominational character, as was natural, was given to those Colleges. As to King's College, not only did students come from all parts of the world, but he did not know any College or school where the religious character of the College was more diverse. Persons of all religions were educated in common at King's College, and he need scarcely add that in these days a Conscience Clause not only existed, but was rigidly acted upon, so that all the benefits of a high education were given without the disadvantage of any encroachment on the religious opinions of any student. He preferred to leave that question, and to say they were prepared to report fully and regularly on the character of their work. So far as the education given was concerned, the higher class work was well performed,

and in one instance it would be impossible to improve on the work done at King's College—he meant the instruction given in Civil Service work; it had been extremely useful to the large class of students who had to get their knowledge how and as best they could. He regretted to be compelled to admit that by no means as many of their students went to their own University of London as they should wish. It had been his personal desire to stimulate that in every possible way, and to ally the College as much as possible with the University. The whole question, they must remember, of education in London had been in solution; they were looking anxiously for the Report of the Royal Commission, which he presumed they would get about December, and he hoped one of the elements of that Report would be a closer association with the University, which was the only means of doing a good teaching work in London. The Parliamentary grants had been extremely useful, and he did not know how they could have carried on the work at King's College without them. Their teaching staff, also, had made great sacrifices in order to continue the work, and he hoped the time might come when, instead of £15,000, a larger grant might be made for higher education. Everything pointed to the greater cost of modern scientific education. They must have equipment, appliances, modern laboratories, and the like, both for teaching and examination purposes, which rendered the cost infinitely greater than in the old days, when the education was of a classical character, extremely useful in its way. And he would point out as a suggestion for more help what might, perhaps, surprise the Committee. The encouragement given by other nations to higher education was remarkable. In the case of Germany the fees paid by the students at all the Universities in the country did not amount to the sum paid by the students attending King's College in London, and that meant a great State subsidy, and it was a sacrifice that was economical and most amply repaid. Take the case of what had been done at Strasbourg, since the war. That University had risen until it consisted of some eight departments, each of which was better than anything they had here; and when they found competing nations

doing that class of work, and showing the effect of that work in their everyday industry, it ought to be followed. He had only one word to say in conclusion, and that was in regard to secondary instruction. This work would not be complete until, by a process of selection, the poorest clever boys and girls were enabled to rise, first, to these Colleges, and, ultimately, to the attainment of the University degree. He hoped the day was not far distant when they would be able to put the whole course of instruction on a higher and a better footing.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon, &c.) said, before this Vote was taken he wished to make a few observations with reference to Bangor College. He fully recognised the way in which the hon. Baronet had referred to this College, and he only wished the same spirit which animated the hon. Baronet had also animated the hon. Baronet's friends in the country and in another place. He was sure that if it had, a great deal of difficulty and a considerable amount of ill-feeling would have been spared. He was aware the Chairman had ruled any reference to this matter out of Order. The College itself had nothing to gain by burking any discussion; they were fully prepared to refer to the whole of the circumstances, and he was positive the College would not lose by the discussion. Perhaps he might be permitted to make one observation about the character of Miss Hughes now being perfectly established. He was not aware that any attack was made upon her character by the College authorities; his recollection was that it was the other way about; that Miss Hughes made an attack on the College authorities. He quite agreed with what had been said about the desirability of having an annual Report of what occurred in the Colleges, and he was glad that the Vice President of the Council would do his best to carry it out.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: After the interesting discussion we have listened to, may I appeal to the Committee to allow us now to take this Vote?

MR. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion) only wished to make a few observations. The hon. Baronet regretted that both political Parties had not joined in the recommendation with regard to

King's College. He (Mr. Bryn Roberts) joined in that regret, but if they had to wait until the Conservative Party joined the Liberal Party in a representation for the removal of religious disabilities he feared they would have to wait for a very long time, and that none of those which had been removed would have been removed if they had to wait until the Conservative Party joined with the Liberals in attempting to remove them. With regard to Bangor College, he was not going to discuss the difficulties that had arisen there, but he must notice one observation that was likely to lead to a misapprehension. The hon. Baronet referred to difficulties of a delicate nature which might probably arise in mixed Colleges where young men and young women were educated together, and that rather led to the supposition that the dispute that recently arose in Bangor had reference to that mixed education. He wished to point out that it had no reference whatever to anything of the kind. Male and female students had been educated there ever since the establishment of the College, 12 years ago, but no difficulties of any kind had ever arisen in consequence of the mixed character of the College. In this matter the real difficulty that had arisen—

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon Member is not in Order in discussing that.

MR. BRYN ROBERTS said, he only wished to say that the difficulty arose amongst the female students with the Principal.

MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS (Birmingham, S.) said, his hon. Friend opposite had made the best defence that could be made for King's College, but, after all, it seemed to him to be unsatisfactory. The hon. Member had spoken of the Conscience Clause, but why on earth should not the Conscience Clause be applied to the Professorships? It seemed to him that a system under which they excluded a Christian from a Professorship because he did not take precisely the same views they took, and at the same time admitted a Buddhist or Mohammedan to a Professorship, was in itself ridiculous. King's College was a Theological College, and they were subscribing national funds to support it; it had a very strong theological side, and it was difficult to say the contribution it received from the Crown was not in some

sense in aid of that theological side. He thought his hon. Friend the Member for Nottingham (Mr. Carvell Williams) was right in calling attention to this matter, and he hoped it would receive the consideration of the Government.

SIR F. S. POWELL only wished to say that from the latest Report 440 students attended the evening classes, and there were 670 regular day students.

Vote agreed to.

7. £12 (including a Supplementary sum of £100), to complete the sum for London University.

*MR. A. C. MORTON asked whether the right hon. Gentleman had considered the question, raised early in the Session, with regard to the reduction of the fees, so as to make the University examinations still more useful to the people?

SIR A. ROLLIT said, that further accommodation in the University of London was urgently needed. The examinations could not continue to be properly carried out without it. These examinations were highly scientific, and required special accommodation. The Thames Embankment had been suggested as the place upon which the accommodation could be given, but he was representing the views of those connected with the University when he said that that would not be a satisfactory site. With regard to the fees of the University, he would point out that they went to the State.

MR. POWELL-WILLIAMS said, that the fees for local examinations were higher than those charged at the University itself. The fee was one guinea at the University, but two guineas at some of the local centres, which was clearly a grievance.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, he would inquire into the matter.

Vote agreed to.

8. £2,650, to complete the sum for National Gallery, &c., Scotland.

CLASS VI.

9. £249,625, to complete the sum for Superannuations and Retired Allowances.

10. £4,100, to complete the sum for Merchant Seamen's Fund Pensions.

11. £15,352, Savings Banks and Friendly Societies Deficiency.

12. £706, to complete the sum for Miscellaneous Charitable and other Allowances, Great Britain.

CLASS VII.

13. £15,177, to complete the sum for Temporary Commissions.

SIR T. ESMONDE (Kerry, W.) said, that on this Vote he wished to draw attention to the way in which the Irish Congested Districts Board discharged its duties. During the past 12 months he had laid a number of schemes for the construction of piers, and so forth, before the Board, but so far nothing had come of it, although during the past 12 months they had had ample opportunity for considering the schemes. He had had a correspondence with the Board respecting a pier at the Magharees, County Kerry. He would not read the whole of it, but he would go through a portion to show how the work of the Congested Districts Board was conducted. In August last year he forwarded to the Board a Memorial praying for the construction of a pier at the Magharees. On the 16th August, 1892, he received this reply—

"I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 15th instant, in support of a Memorial from the fishermen of the Magharees, County Kerry, praying for the construction of a fishery pier, and to state that it shall be brought before the Congested Districts Board."

He wrote again, and received this letter of 19th September—

"I am directed by the Congested Districts Board to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 15th instant, and to inform you that no decision with respect to the construction of a pier at Magharees has yet been arrived at."

He wrote again, and received the following reply on the 30th September—

"In reply to your letter of the 28th instant, I beg to state that I am not in a position to say when a decision as to the proposed pier at Magharees will be made by the Congested Districts Board for Ireland. I shall place your letter before the Board at its next meeting."

He wrote again, and received the following, dated 14th December :—

"I am directed to inform you that works mentioned by you were discussed minutely by the members of the Board at their recent meetings, but no final decision has yet been arrived at."

He wrote again in February, 1893, and this was the answer, dated February 7—

"I am directed by the Congested Districts Board for Ireland to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 4th instant, and to state that . . . they regret that they are not yet able to inform you definitely which of the proposed works in County Kerry will be constructed."

He wrote again, and on March 22 received the following:—

"I am directed by the Congested Districts Board to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 16th instant, and to inform you that they are not yet in a position to state definitely their decision as to the proposed pier at the Magharees, County Kerry."

He wrote again, and on March 30 received this answer—

"With reference to your letter of the 23rd instant as to the proposed pier at Magharees, I regret that I am not authorised to make a more definite statement than that contained in previous correspondence."

He wrote again in April, and on April 20 received this answer—

"I am directed by the Congested Districts Board for Ireland to inform you that they are not yet able to state what they will do in reference to the proposed marine works at the Magharees."

He wrote in June, and on the 22nd of that month received the following:—

"I am directed by the Congested Districts Board for Ireland to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13th instant, and to state that they are not yet able to state definitely what action will be taken by them about the proposed pier at Scraggane."

He wrote again, and, on August 3rd, received this—

"I am directed by the Congested Districts Board for Ireland to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 2nd instant, and to state that no decision has yet been arrived at as to the building of a pier at Scraggane Bay."

He wrote again, and on the 24th August received the following:—

"I am directed by the Congested Districts Board for Ireland to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 22nd instant, and to state that they have not yet finally decided upon building a pier at Scraggane Bay, County Kerry."

He had another letter dated 13th September, 1893, as follows:—

"I am directed by the Congested Districts Board for Ireland to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 11th instant, and to state . . . the Board's Marine Engineer is at present engaged in making some surveys along the West Coast of Kerry, and the Board now await his Report."

This might be very fine fooling, but it certainly was not business. He could assure the Government that unless they

gave satisfactory consideration to the various schemes brought before them it would be necessary to trouble the House at considerable length on these subjects. It was ludicrous to say that a body of this kind should not be able to decide within 12 months whether they would spend £200 or £300 or not on a certain object. The question was really one whether the Irish Government would insist upon the Board paying more attention to the representations of Irish Members. He had submitted a number of schemes to the Board on behalf of his constituents in West Kerry. In addition to the pier he had first spoken of, a landing place was needed in the Great Blasket Islands, and there were a number of rocks in the mouths of creeks which ought to be removed, as they very easily could be, because they blocked up harbours.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: This is a matter which I think ought to have been brought forward on the consideration of the Chief Secretary's salary, as he is the Chairman of the Congested Districts Board. In my right hon. Friend's absence, I am not able to deal specifically with the subject. I can only say I have much sympathy with my hon. Friend in the difficulties he has experienced in obtaining the consent of the Congested Districts Board to his proposals. I know, from my own experience of the work of that Board, that they have a great amount of work to do, but at the same time I think it is desirable that the Board should, whenever they can, assist in the formation of piers and the improvements of harbours, where such improvements are needed. I will bring the matter before my right hon. Friend, and ask him to give attention to the complaints the hon. Baron has made.

*SIR C. W. DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) said, this Vote was one which had always aroused discussion, because it furnished the only opportunity of calling in question the practice of appointing Commissions to get out of difficulties. A great number of the Commissions which were appointed certainly did no good whatever to the country. They produced great masses of evidence which were never read. Statements of the highest importance by the most competent persons, which, if published in the

newspapers, would attract much attention, secured no attention whatever if they were buried in the Report of a Commission. Two kinds of Commissions were provided for in the Vote—Executive Commissions and Inquiry Commissions. The Colonisation Board was one of the Executive Commissions. He did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Scotland (Sir G. Trevelyan) thought that any expenditure on behalf of that Board ought to be continued, inasmuch as the Commission had been a total failure. With regard to the Highlands and Islands Commission, as far as he could make out, it was going over again ground which had been covered by previous inquiries. It seemed to him to be a waste of public money to repeat an inquiry which took place only a few years ago. A great number of Commissions were now being promised almost from week to week. *"Cries of 'No!'"* Hon. Gentlemen dissented, but he had heard of three or four within the last few weeks. He supposed that the item in the Vote respecting Commissions not specifically provided included the Agricultural Commission. Two-thirds of his constituents were agriculturists, and he knew their opinion was, as his opinion was, that the Agricultural Commission was a mere band, and was not likely to lead to any good result. It was a mere pretence of doing something. He should not himself divide the Committee upon it, but if the gentleman opposite did he should certainly vote with him, because he thought the time had come when Members should raise their protest against the continued reference of inquiries to Commissions, the usual result of whose proceedings was merely to produce a great mass of evidence which nobody read.

SIR J. GORST (Cambridge University) entirely agreed with the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down as to the entire uselessness of Royal Commissions, and should like to add that when the House chose to have a Royal Commission the least it could do was to pay for it. Amongst the Commissions dealt with in the Vote was one appointed in consequence of the views expressed by the House for the purpose of making a very expensive inquiry into the consumption of opium in India. He understood the arrangement the Government had

made was that half the costs of that Commission should be paid by the taxpayers of this country and the other half should be imposed upon the impoverished taxpayers of India, who did not want a Commission of the kind, and would gain nothing whatever by its inquiry. He intended to raise this question upon the Indian Budget.

MR. LODER (Brighton) remarked that the Vaccination Commission, which was appointed four and a-half years ago, had at present only presented a short interim Report. He hoped the President of the Local Government Board would urge the Commission to prepare their full Report at the earliest moment. The evidence taken had now become so voluminous that he should think that hardly anybody would take the trouble to read it. As to the Colonisation Board, he did not entirely agree with what had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir C. W. Dilke). It was perfectly true that the settlement made in 1889 had not been at all a success, but, at the same time, the 30 families who were settled at a place called Killarney in Manitoba in 1888 had done comparatively well according to the last Report.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. H. H. FOWLER, Wolverhampton, E.): I cannot speak as to the Scotch Commission, but I should like to answer the question put to me about the Vaccination Commission. The other night, when the Vote was taken on the Local Government Board, I expressed the opinion that it was of the greatest importance that the Vaccination Commission should report as soon as possible, and I quite agree with what the hon. Gentleman opposite has said on the subject. The position, however, is that the Commission has felt it its duty this year to inquire into certain outbreaks of small-pox which had taken place recently. I think the inquiry will come to an end very shortly, and I hope to have the Report on the general question this year. Certainly any influence I possess shall be used with the object of getting the Report as soon as possible. I must express my dissent from the conclusion at which my right hon. Friend (Sir C. W. Dilke) has arrived on the subject of Royal Commissions generally. There are Commissions and Commissions, and no one knows

better than he does that some of the most valuable legislation this House has ever passed has been recommended by Royal Commissions. My right hon. Friend must also remember the pressure that is put upon the Government week after week to appoint Commissions, and that the Commissions actually appointed bear a very small proportion to those we are asked to appoint. As to the amount of the evidence which appears in the Reports of Royal Commissions, it must be borne in mind that the evidence really forms the basis of the conclusion at which a Commission arrives, and it is, of course, necessary to give with the Report the evidence on which it is based. I may say that the Commission on the Aged Poor is bringing its labours to a very rapid conclusion, and I hope that the Report will be laid on the Table before the next Session—not the Autumn Session, but the next Session—commences.

*SIR R. TEMPLE agreed with his right hon. Friend (Sir J. Gorst) that it was too bad to put even a fraction of the cost of the Opium Commission on the Revenues of India. The Commission was never asked for by the Government of India, or by the people of India, and he believed that if the truth were known it was very much objected to by the people of India. Under these circumstances, he thought that to charge the cost of the Commission on the Indian taxpayers was unworthy of the generosity of this Imperial Parliament.

*MR. A. C. MORTON concurred in the opinion expressed by his right hon. Friend (Sir C. W. Dilke) that a great many Royal Commissions were shams and frauds on the nation. In a great many cases they were appointed for the purpose of putting matters off, and sometimes for electioneering purposes, as was the case with the Labour Commission two years ago. As he understood, the main object of the Colonisation Board was to drive away from Scotland the crofter population in order to make room for deer, so that Londoners might amuse themselves in the autumn. He hoped to hear from the Secretary for Scotland that something would be done in the direction of emigrating the deer instead of driving the people from their country. The crofters were anxious to have the land and till it,

and they were prepared to pay a fair rent for it; and the land should surely be used for the people, instead of for deer. Then, he agreed with the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean that the Deer Forests Commission was of no use whatever. Everyone knew what was wanted, but it was necessary to put off the question for a time. But the worst of it was that it was put off not only to the detriment of the crofters, but at a waste of public money. He had to complain that one of the Commissioners, apparently in the interests of the landlords of Scotland, was a paid Commissioner; that he got five guineas a day and one guinea allowance; and that he was allowed a vote. They were informed that the Commission themselves had allowed this payment; but without the vote of this particular Commissioner, and the casting vote of the Chairman, the resolution would not have been carried. He submitted that if a paid Commissioner was to be put on this Commission there should have been one on each side, and that the crofters should have had a paid representative on the Commission just as this land agent was. Nothing had been done during the present Session to assist the crofters, who had waited patiently for the advent of a Liberal and Radical Government; and they did not know when the Commission was going to report. He hoped they would have an assurance that the Government were going to do something for the crofters. He had personal experience that they were a most deserving, hard-working people. They had been during the Session trying to do justice to the Irish people. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Members might laugh; but he came there with a sincere desire to do justice in that matter. He hoped the claims of the crofters would not be forgotten. They had waited very patiently. He had laid the facts before the Committee; and he felt sure the Secretary for Scotland, if the Government would allow him, would do something. The patience of the crofters deserved some recognition at the hands of the Government, and he repeated that he hoped to have an assurance on the point.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Sir G. TREVELYAN, Glasgow, Bridgeton): Mr. Mellor, the hon. Gentleman and the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean have

asked me why this Commission is kept up, and the right hon. Baronet has described the Colonisation Commission as a deplorable failure. Well, Sir, the Report of the Colonisation Board will be before the House very soon, and Members will then be able to judge whether the remarks of the right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean are well founded. All I can say is that when that Report is before hon. Members, I think it will be many a long year before a Government will undertake a scheme of State Colonisation. Both colonies sent out have proved failures. The colony of Saltcoats has been reduced from 49 families to 18 already; and in the case of the colony of Killarney, where the people were said to be fairly flourishing, none of the instalments which became due last autumn have been paid. But that is not all. The very moderate municipal taxes have not been paid by 35 of the crofters of Killarney, who were said to be so flourishing. Their houses and farms have been put up for sale, and have actually been bought in by the Municipality, and the tenants were now, he imagined, very much in the position of caretakers. That would give some idea of what the state of matters is.

MR. A. C. MORTON: What is the cost?

SIR G. TREVELYAN: The matter comes very much to this—and it will give the Committee some idea of what State emigration is when conducted by well-meaning men with ample funds. I believe that the people who were sent out were not natural emigrants; and not only so, but that even when they had energy and self-reliance, they were so cockered up under this system that they lost it, and did not consider it an obligation even to pay their taxes. There were no emigrants from the Highlands for whom Parliament voted this money to emigrate. Last year invitations were sent to all the congested districts from which this class of emigrant had been drawn. Those invitations were drawn up in the Gaelic language, yet there was not one single family which presented itself from any of those districts from which Parliament intended the emigrants to be drawn. That is the state of affairs,

and I think Parliament will consider that the Government are quite right in suspending their action in the matter and suspending that action certainly, so far as I am concerned, indefinitely. As to the cost, £20,000 in round figures have been spent on these two colonies, of which £18,000 was from Vote and £2,000 from private subscriptions. The hon. Member and the right hon. Gentleman speaks of the Highlands and Islands Commission.

*SIR C. W. DILKE: What is the salary of the gentleman in charge on this side?

SIR G. TREVELYAN: The salaries are:—£150 for a gentleman on this side of the water, and £200 for a gentleman on the other side. The gentleman on this side, Mr. Colmer, is attached to the Canadian Agency here, and he conducts the whole correspondence and has the whole matter in hand. He, in fact, is the best representative we have of a strong Executive Board upon the business. In my own opinion, the salaries are all the more necessary on account of the state of things I have mentioned. We need agents and servants for two purposes—one to protect and look after these unfortunate people, and the other for the purpose of protecting the interests of the Government. I may say that there is still some £7,000 of the money which has been voted unspent, and that will more than cover the necessary salaries and expenses of winding up the scheme. The Government have sunk £18,000 in land, all of which is bound to be repaid, and we can get nothing, or little, back when the farms have been sold for the purpose of paying the taxes of the Municipality. Not only is it an unfortunate thing that this scheme of colonisation was set on foot, but that, having been set on foot, it should not have been conducted by the Executive Government. To divide the responsibility of it with a Board was a misfortune. With reference to the Highlands and Islands Commission, the very antipodes of the other, my right hon. Friend did not speak with his usual acumen when he said that the Commission was doing over again the work of former

Commissions. Lord Napier's Commission, which worked with very great energy and thoroughness, made recommendations as to what legislation should be carried out for the benefit of the Highlands. But they did not examine and survey the land, whereas this Commission has spent the whole of its time in a very careful and minute examination of land suited for the purpose of the enlargement of crofter holdings. This is entirely different work; it is work that must be done after legislation, even if it were not done before legislation, were passed. At this moment the difficulties of the Commission arise from the resignation of one member, Mr. M'Leod, whose resignation we all regret. Mr. M'Leod has thought it right—he has given no reasons—and I think he is right in that—for his resignation. He has simply stated that it arises from differences in the Commission, and I have no authority to say, on behalf of Mr. M'Leod, or even to conjecture, what those differences are. But it is well-known there has been a difficulty—and I separate this altogether from Mr. M'Leod—about the payment of one of the members of the Commission. But this payment is in accordance with a very general practice of the Treasury, which frequently pays not five guineas, but 10, which is the usual sum paid to professional men conducting such an investigation. That practice has been followed in this case in the person of a very eminent surveyor and valuator, and I am bound to say I did not expect it would raise in any quarter any serious objection. This gentleman has been employed not because he is a landlord's man—I do not know what is meant by that—but because he is an eminent surveyor and valuator. I will not enter into the pros and cons of what that gentleman's political views and leanings are; but he is paid for his professional work, and he has done that work very well. I hope and believe that the Commission will carry on its work to the end, unless, indeed, it should resolve to give a Report soon, and give the Government the benefit of its experience and labours. When that Report does come to hand, I will lose no opportunity of urging on the Government any proposals which may be made for the enlargement of the holdings of the Highland people, and the extension

Sir G. Trevelyan

of the advantages of the Crofters Act to leaseholders.

*MR. A. C. MORTON said, it would be interesting to know how it was that the Government did not also appoint a surveyor in the interests of the crofters?

SIR G. TREVELYAN said, the gentleman who was referred to was a surveyor, and he did not represent the interests of the landlords specially. The hon. Gentleman thought the crofters should be more strongly represented on the Commission; but the fact was that he had been charged with giving them too strong a representation on that Body.

*MR. BUTCHER (York) said, he wished to refer for a moment to the matter which had been brought forward by the hon. Baronet the Member for Kerry (Sir T. Esmonde). He was anxious to support the contention of the hon. Baronet with regard to the necessity for piers in Kerry and along the West Coast of Ireland generally. He had no doubt that for the purposes of the fisheries such piers would be of the greatest advantage to that part of the country. The Congested Districts Board had very great demands upon them, and very large sums placed at their disposal; but the sums were small enough for the purposes to which they were to be applied, and he was not surprised that this Board was unable to meet all the demands. He hoped the Government would do what they could towards the construction of these piers and the development of the coast industries. There was one other question. He wished to know when they might expect the Report of the Labour Commission?

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: At the end of this year.

MR. BUTCHER said, that was all he wished to ask.

*MR. PAUL said, referring to the cost of the Labour Commission, some of the items appeared to him to be exorbitant. Upwards of £4,000 had been paid for salaries and £3,000 for travelling expenses. He thought that the Committee

ought to know when this Commission, which seemed to have withdrawn itself very modestly from the public eye, last held a meeting, and when it proposed to hold another meeting, or whether it was simply engaged in the preparation of its Report?

MR. W. WHITELOW (Perth) said, he wished to ask the Secretary for Scotland one question about the funds of the Highlands and Islands Commission. He knew that a difficulty had arisen within the Commission, but he did not desire to press the right hon. Gentleman upon that point. He had his own opinion on the matter. But he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would tell them that the Commission would proceed with its work. As to what the Member for Peterborough (Mr. Mortou) had said regarding the land valuer, he (Mr. Whitelaw) thought that the Secretary for Scotland had been quite right in appointing a gentleman of skill independently of whether he held one class of opinions or another. He had no doubt the right hon. Gentleman had taken considerable care to appoint a gentleman whose impartiality he could thoroughly trust, and he thought in the case of expert evidence it was very much better not to put one man against another. He presumed there would be a further Vote for the Commission, and when the Vote was presented next year they would be in possession of the Report and would be in a better position for offering criticism.

SIR J. GORST: In reply to the hon. Member opposite, I desire to say that the public meetings of the Labour Commission concluded some months ago, and since then the Commission has been withdrawn from the public eye. Two Committees of the Commission have been preparing Digests of the evidence and summaries of the Reports of foreign countries; and I expect that everything will be ready in time to enable the Commission to meet for the consideration of its Report about the end of next month. It is confidently anticipated that the Report will be presented to Her Majesty before the end of the year.

SIR G. TREVELYAN: I wish to say, in reply to the hon. Member for

Perth, that the same sum will be on the Estimates next year.

Vote agreed to.

14. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £1,885, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894, for certain Miscellaneous Expenses."

*SIR C. W. DILKE said, he objected to the item for Queen's Plates in Ireland, but he would not trouble the Committee by dividing upon it. The item was rejected at one time by the House, the Irish Members voting against it, though they afterwards turned round and supported it.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES said, he approved of the Queen's Plates, because they encouraged the breeding of horses. But the item of £6,228 in the Vote seemed to him to be an alarming sum to pay for honours and dignities—for the Lyon King of Arms, the Ulster King of Arms, the State Trumpeters, and Kettle Drummers. He was far from advocating the abolition of these honours and dignities, or of heraldic distinctions, for he thought them of interest and importance, but he thought those who desired such distinctions should pay the cost themselves, just as coats of arms on carriages were charged for. He was shocked that an eminent Radical like the right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean should pass these things by and object to the Queen's Plates. He was also shocked that the most Radical of Radical Governments, which had been returned pledged to economy, did not begin by doing away with this entirely unnecessary and foolish expenditure. £2,000 were paid for this nonsense and frippery. There was one matter in the Vote to which he particularly desired to call the attention of Members from Ireland. He found that whilst the cost of the installation of the Knight of the Order of St. George was £440, the cost of the installation of a Knight of St. Patrick was only £40. If that was not a wrong and an insult to Ireland he did not know what was. St. Patrick was put at only one-tenth the value of St. George. It appeared to be perfectly monstrous. He found that every Knight

of the Garter paid £700 or £800 for the honour conferred on him. The Collar and the George cost £265. The Garter itself cost £30 16s. Every Knight of the Garter had also to buy three pairs of hose at a cost of £7 10s. If he were to become a Knight of the Garter he should certainly object to pay £2 10s. a pair for his stockings. The Knight's two pieces of Garter ribbon cost £13 1s. That ribbon was extremely dear. But, at any rate, the cost should fall on the Knight of the Garter and not on the public. For the mere frippery connected with these offices the public had to pay £4,265. They who earned their bread by the sweat of their brow could not afford to spend £4,265 on old clothes. [*Laughter.*] Yes, many of them were old clothes. It often happened he was told; for he did not, personally, understand these mysteries, that when a new Knight was appointed he succeeded to the old insignia of his predecessor. He was sure that the Committee would be delighted to hear that the Tower of London, in which the Royal jewels were kept, paid its own expenses, and something more. The cost of the Tower was £1,088; but the admission fees paid by the public to see the jewels during the year was £1,900, so that there was a profit of £900. Why should not the country also make money out of the Knights of St. George and St. Patrick? A chamber could be fitted up with effigies with the insignia of those Orders upon them—he would not make it an essential condition that the Knights themselves should be there—and by charging for admission the cost of the College of Arms might be defrayed. He was sure the Committee would consider his proposal very proper and very sensible.

MR. A. C. MORTON said, he had opposed this Vote every year since he entered Parliament, and meant to oppose it now. The whole of this matter might be called tomfoolery. The people who wanted this tomfoolery ought to be made to pay for it, and not the nation. He saw an item of £20 for cost of medals, awarded by Her Majesty for saving life on land. That was one £20, at any rate, that was properly, usefully, and even decently spent. He had always objected

to the Queen's Plates for Ireland. It was merely to encourage racing, one of the greatest scandals and the worst evils they had to deal with in this country—a practice which had done more mischief than almost anything else he knew of. As a protest against all this tomfoolery he begged to move the reduction of the Vote by £100.

Motion made, and Question put, "That a sum, not exceeding £1,785, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. A. C. Morton.*)

The Committee divided :—Ayes 39; Noes 83.—(Division List, No. 307.)

Original Question put, and agreed to.

15. £45,000, to complete the sum for Pleuro-Pneumonia, agreed to.

16. £23,000, to complete the sum for Highlands and Islands of Scotland (Public Works and Communications).

SIR C. W. DILKE directed attention to an increase in the Vote in respect of the construction of roads in the Highlands, and asked for an explanation on the subject.

MR. W. WHITELOW expressed the opinion that if there was to be an increased expenditure upon increased communications in the Highlands, it should be upon railways. He would only make one appeal to the Government upon this point. The Garve and Ullapool Railway—

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: I submit that the question of railways cannot be raised upon this Vote.

THE CHAIRMAN (MR. ROBY): Railways do not come under this Vote.

SIR G. TREVELYAN said, this Vote was a peculiar one in some respects. In former years not half of the money had been spent, and that had been largely due to the circumstances that it had been voted to purposes which were extremely difficult to carry out, and which the country did not really stand in need of. But this year there was very great distress in the Highlands, and he found himself obliged to refuse altogether any-

Mr. Gibson Bowles

thing in the way of direct aid. He looked upon that as pauperising a district beyond all hope of recovery. The only form in which they felt that aid could possibly be given was not the making of roads, as it was called in the Vote, but of footpaths in this part of the country where the people were quite unable to make them themselves, and where the children were kept from school in great numbers by the danger and inconvenience of the means of travelling. The money was extremely well laid out, and he did not think it could be taken to establish any dangerous precedent. £1,000 was allotted on a previous occasion for a great road across the Island of Lewis, and nothing fresh of that sort had been done. This small sum of money, dealt out in this manner, had relieved the Highlands from a good deal of distress and from a great deal of demoralisation.

MR. W. WHITELOW said, he found he could make reference to the question of railway communication in the Highlands on the question of the harbour at Ullapool. A Report had been made to the Treasury condemning the harbour at Ullapool as unsafe for navigation and as unsuitable for the fishermen of the north-west of Scotland and the Lews. He was informed that of the Committee who reported on this harbour not a single man went near it, or took any local evidence upon it. The harbour was declared to be unsafe because of the number of islets and rocks at the mouth of it. But he had received evidence, the authority for which he thought the Secretary for Scotland would recognise—Mr. Mac Brayne and Sir John Burns—who declared that the navigation of this harbour was perfectly safe in all weathers and at all tides. Beyond that he had the evidence of the masters of all sorts of vessels. He thought that, after the evidence he had been able to put before the Secretary for Scotland, he really ought to satisfy himself as to whether the Report of the Treasury Committee should continue to receive credit; or whether it was a Report, at any rate, in respect to this harbour which ought to be discredited. He wanted to get the Treasury to admit that the Report was

wrong in this respect, because, if he could get them to do so, he thought he would have made some progress towards securing some day or other a grant to the railway which he was interested in.

Vote agreed to.

17. £1,000, to complete the sum for Chicago Exhibition, agreed to.

18. £11,868, Repayment to the Local Loans Fund, agreed to.

19. 5,005, Repayments to the Civil Contingencies Fund.

*MR. BUTCHER (York) asked for information respecting an item for a new Great Seal for Ireland. He understood that a new Great Seal was provided whenever a new Lord Chancellor came into Office. He also drew attention to the equipage money given under this Vote to the Lord Chancellor of Ireland and the Lord Lieutenant, the sums being respectively £923 and £2,700.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.) thought the item for equipages was reasonable as regarded the Lord Chancellor. With respect to the Lord Lieutenant, if there was to be one at all, the Office should be kept up tolerably well.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, it had been necessary to provide a new Great Seal, because the one in use previously was worn out, and it was ordered in the year 1891. How it came to be in that condition he could not say. It was an error to suppose that a new Seal was provided whenever a new Lord Chancellor was appointed in Ireland. The equipage charges were the same as had always been allowed. They were customary payments.

*MR. A. C. MORTON wanted to know why the salary of the Secretary to the Lord Privy Seal was included in this Vote? He also would like particulars as to how this money in the Vote now before the Committee was spent.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, the Vote had been carefully considered, and not a single item had been allowed to be

entered without the assent of the Treasury.

Vote agreed to.

REVENUE DEPARTMENTS.

20. £663,264, to complete the sum for Customs.

*SIR C. W. DILKE said, there was a great saving to be made in the amalgamation of the Customs and Inland Revenue, and a great increase in efficiency would also thereby be produced. He was quite certain that this matter must come forward shortly.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I entirely agree as to the importance of this matter, but I do not know whether my right hon. Friend is aware that there has already been a most elaborate examination of the subject. My predilections were entirely in the direction of those stated by the right hon. Gentleman, but a Committee which was appointed to inquire into this subject reported not long ago that the amalgamation would not be advantageous, and would hardly be possible. Thus, so far as the most recent investigation has gone, it has been adverse to the plan of amalgamation.

MR. MACDONALD (Tower Hamlets, Bow) said, he had been asked by the hon. Member for North West Ham, who was absent through illness, to call attention to the grievances of the outdoor officers of the Customs. Duties that had originally been performed by a superior class of officers had been imposed upon them, but no increase had been made in their salary. Mr. Murray, the Chairman of the Customs Board, stated before the Ridley Commission that the duties performed by these outdoor officers were in all particulars analogous to those performed by the assistants of Excise. But, although the duties were analogous, the minimum salary paid to an outdoor officer of the Customs was £55, increasing by annual increments of £2 10s. to £75 10s. after seven years' service, with a maximum of £100; whereas the assistants of Excise started with £78, increasing by annual increments of £5 after seven years' service to £115, with a maximum of

£250. Both classes of officers had to pass in the ordinary elementary subjects; but in the case of the outdoor officers arithmetic and geography were compulsory subjects, while they were optional with the other class of officers. The grievance in respect of salary had not been inquired into, because these officers, naturally relying upon a Memorial they had sent in on the question of the inadequacy of their salaries, had, on the inquiry, given evidence in respect of minor grievances only. In consequence of that mistake on their part, the late Chancellor of the Exchequer had in his Minute entirely failed to take notice of the grievance in respect of the smallness of the salary, although he did something to remedy the minor grievances. He hoped, under the circumstances, the Treasury would consider that the case of these officers was one that ought to be taken into their favourable consideration.

SIR W. HARCOURT: With great respect to my hon. Friend, I would submit to him that the House cannot undertake to settle questions of the internal organisation of the Departments of this country. How in the world is the House of Commons to undertake to say whether the salaries correspond to the duties performed by these particular officers, or as to how they compare with the salaries of other officers? There could only be an *ex parte* statement on the one side and the answer of a Minister on the other. You might as well undertake the discipline of the Army as undertake a matter of this kind. The responsible Heads of the Departments ought to be left to deal with the details of matters of this kind. This matter was undertaken by my Predecessor in Office. He made a careful examination into the condition of all these officers. I am not prepared to reverse the decision which has been come to after inquiry by a competent body; and, although the Treasury will always consider any representations made either by hon. Members or by the parties concerned in respect of such matters, I would deprecate any further discussion at the present time and under present circumstances.

MR. HANBURY (Preston) said, he could not quite agree with the dictum of

Sir J. T. Hibbert

the right hon. Gentleman, because there were some classes of salary which were capable of being dealt with by this House; but having been upon a Commission that dealt with this question, he knew that nothing gave them so much trouble as matters connected with the Customs and Inland Revenue. He, therefore, agreed that it would be very difficult to deal with these particular salaries. With regard to the outdoor officers, some of them were remnants of the bad system of patronage under which Civil servants were appointed on the nomination of Members of this House, and he would ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he could not do away with this somewhat obsolete system of patronage? If that were done the boatmen would come before the House without the prejudice that at present attached to their appointment, and their case would be much better than it was now.

MR. SEXTON (Kerry, N.) agreed with the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the time and general circumstances were inconvenient for the discussion of this question; but a gross disparity between these particular salaries had been shown. While he thought this Committee was not competent to enter into a comparison, because it was not competent to inquire how far the duties were analogous, he thought a case of grievance had been disclosed. The men had forwarded a Memorial to the Department previously, which dealt with the question of salaries; and thinking that matter had been sufficiently mentioned, they only put forward minor grievances before the Commission. He hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would see that any representations on the subject would be duly considered.

MR. BURNS (Battersea), whilst agreeing with what the hon. Member had said in relation to wages and supporting the hon. Member for Bow, who had so ably put this question before the House, generally concurred with the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the line the right hon. Gentleman took in his remarks as to the undesirability of the House settling questions of the internal organisation of a Department. But when

they had exceptional abuses such as those disclosed, he thought it was the duty of the House to interpose, and not always to take the advice of the Head of a Department. Some of the Customs boatmen were on duty for extremely long stretches of time—sometimes 10, 12, 14, 18, 24, and, in some cases 36 hours. That was altogether unnecessary, and a simple re-organisation would prevent such a thing. He would recommend the Chancellor of the Exchequer to see the Head of the Department and get him to put a stop to this anarchical and ignorant method.

MR. MACDONALD pointed out that the comparison was really instituted at the Commission, and was made by the Chairman of the Customs Board.

Vote agreed to.

21. £1,382,914, to complete the sum for Inland Revenue, agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

“That a sum, not exceeding £5,140,575, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894, for the Salaries and Expenses of Post Office Services, the Expenses of Post Office Savings Banks, and Government Annuities and Insurances, and the Collection of Post Office Revenue.”

SIR T. ESMONDE asked the Postmaster General for some information as to how the matter stood with reference to Queenstown as a port of call for the American mails. The question was one of enormous importance to Ireland as well also to Liverpool, Manchester, and other large cities and towns in England. The present arrangement was one of a purely temporary character; and if Queenstown was to remain as a port of call for the American mails, it would be necessary that considerable improvement should be made in the present system, so that Queenstown might not be left behind. The existing contract for the carriage of mails expired with a year's notice towards the end of 1894; and if a proper service was to be instituted between Queenstown and London, it would be necessary that the

Post Office authorities should take such steps as were necessary to secure that time should be given to whatever companies were anxious to enter into that contract. It was impossible for Queenstown to hold its own if the present system continued, but, on the other hand, it was quite easy for Queenstown to be placed in such a position of superiority that her position as a port of call could be maintained with perfect safety. A saving of time could be effected between Queenstown and Dublin, between Queenstown and Holyhead, and also between Holyhead and the large centres in the North of England. This could easily be done if the Post Office would signify their intention of paying for an improved service for the carriage of mails. The matter was one of pressing urgency. All the Irish Members were united in their determination to retain for Queenstown and Ireland generally the great benefits of having that place a port of call for American mails, and he hoped to hear some favourable reply from the Postmaster General on the subject.

MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE (Hereford) wished to call attention to a matter of considerable interest to his constituents, whose wishes had been altogether disregarded by the Postmaster General or his Department. A sub-postmastership had been instituted in Hereford at Harold Street Post Office. It was located in a most convenient spot, and the postal business was conducted in a shop where there was ample accommodation for the purpose. About May of this year the proprietor of this shop—who was a provision merchant—died, and the widow disposed of the business to a man named Reynolds, who entered into possession in May, and from that date until August conducted *pro tem.* the duties of postmaster of that sub-district with satisfaction. He made application to be appointed sub-postmaster. It was true that another application probably was made to the late Member, Mr. Grenfell, by a person named Kaye, but the priority of the application did not affect the point in question. When it was known that there was a suggestion that Harold Street Post Office should be removed to a less eligible spot a Memo-

rial, signed by 300 residents of the district, was sent to the Postmaster General, praying him to retain this particular office on the ground that it was the most convenient place, and one where the business had been admirably conducted for many years. No answer was sent to that Memorial for a period of three months. Then Mr. Grenfell resigned; on the 15th August he (Mr. Cooke) was elected in his place, and on the 16th August the Department for the first time replied to the Memorial, stating, in effect, that they could pay no attention whatever to the wishes of the residents of the district concerned, and they appointed Mr. Kaye to the sub-postmastership, and the business of the office was removed to a less convenient district, and to an establishment where the accommodation was insufficient. He thought this was a disregard of the wishes of the people of a district, which required some explanation.

MR. R. WALLACE (Edinburgh, E.) said, he wished to place two points before the Postmaster General. One had reference to the mode of selection to vacant postmasterships, and the other was with regard to the increase of their pay. He understood that when a vacancy occurred in a locality for a postmaster the method was to advertise it in the weekly official Circular. Then, after some time, when candidates had sent in applications, an announcement was made in the same Circular that so-and-so had been appointed to the position. He was not sure that that was the most encouraging way for the Service. It encouraged suspicion sometimes of private and indirect influence being used in making appointments. He was asked whether it would not be better to substitute the system that worked very well in other Departments of the Public Service, of promotion by recognised seniority and position and merit, in preference to the present accidental and, to a certain extent, haphazard way of filling up vacancies. With respect to the encouragement given to postmasters, he was told that increase of pay was made to depend on the commercial prosperity of the place in which he officiated. That had often a very unfair and discouraging influence upon the

Sir T. Esmonde

position and prospects of particular postmasters. He wished to know whether that rule applied in other Departments of the Service? He wished to know whether, on these two points, the right hon. Gentleman would give the Committee information as to what changes and reforms he had in his mind?

SIR A. ROLLIT, in reference to the subject of the Queenstown mail route, said, the question was one of public convenience as well as of expense. The London Chamber of Commerce had taken a poll in order to ascertain the feeling of its members on the subject, and the result was that there was a very great and preponderating feeling in favour of that route being continued and made efficient.

MR. MACDONALD said, he had formally put down a Motion for the reduction of this Vote in order to bring before the Committee various circumstances connected with the Post Office Department. The proposal he desired to urge on the Postmaster General was that he, on behalf of the Government, should consent to the appointment of a Committee of Inquiry into the administration of the Post Office with special bearing upon the grievances which he was informed affected the main body of the Post Office servants. He believed it was originally intended that the Ridley Commission should inquire into the administration of the Post Office, where, more than in any other Department, disorganisation prevailed. The main grievances of the men were classification, split duties, and the existence of a supernumerary staff. The men desired an independent inquiry into these grievances by a Parliamentary Committee, and they had expressed their perfect willingness to abide by the result of that inquiry. He pointed out that in 1891 the present Postmaster General voted in favour of an inquiry such as that for which he (Mr. Macdonald) now asked, and he wished to know whether anything had occurred to cause the right hon. Gentleman to change his view since that time?

SIR A. ROLLIT said, this was a question in which his constituents were interested, and he would like to impress the

importance of the matter on the Government. Nothing could be more disadvantageous to the Service than that these men should labour under grievances, and should be denied full inquiry. He hoped the Postmaster General would agree that such an inquiry should be held. There could be no question with regard to the grievances of the postmen and auxiliary postmen, and the only request by these men was for impartial inquiry. Might he also venture to ask the Postmaster General, who had already recognised to so large an extent the rights which the Post Office officials had claimed, if he would consider whether an amnesty could not now be granted in favour of those who had been dispossessed of their posts? These men were suffering for principle; one of his own constituents was among the number, and he thought he and his fellows laboured under great injustice, and that their case was entitled to favourable consideration.

GENERAL GOLDSWORTHY (Hammersmith) said, he should feel bound to support the hon. Member opposite if he went to a Division, unless the Postmaster General was prepared to promise that an inquiry would be granted. All they asked for was inquiry, and that could be granted with the best results, he believed, to the Public Service. He trusted the late Postmaster General (Sir J. Fergusson) would support this appeal simply for an impartial inquiry.

DR. COMMINS (Cork, N.E.) said, he would urge upon the right hon. Gentleman the desirability of renewing the contract with the Liverpool Steamship Companies for the carriage of the American mails *viâ* Queenstown. He would remind him that two Liverpool vessels had recently made the journey in five days and 13 and a-half hours, which was an astonishing improvement, and one that showed how efficient the service was likely to be made. The present contract would expire on September 30, 1894, and the Liverpool Companies were anxious to be assured that they would have the renewal of it. To adopt another route now would be, he was satisfied, a great inconvenience to many parts of England—the North, for example—and he would

appeal to the right hon. Gentleman to give an answer to his inquiry which would be satisfactory to those who wished to see a really good Transatlantic service.

*MR. BUTCHER said, he would like to refer to the Regulation which prohibited postmen in some districts from smoking when in uniform. In certain localities postmen wore uniforms for 15 hours a day, although they were on duty for only eight hours. That they should be prohibited from smoking during the remaining seven hours was a vexatious restriction. What was the result, however? Why that the men were driven—or tempted, at any rate, to resort—to the public-house. He hoped something would be done in this matter.

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston) said, he would point out to the right hon. Gentleman the necessity of acquiring sites for new Post Office buildings. A plan ought to be devised under which the Department would be empowered to acquire sites when favourable opportunities presented themselves. Otherwise, in his opinion, the Post Office would never make good bargains. If they acted upon his suggestion they might have good cheap sites. He trusted this matter of administration would not be lost sight of by the Postmaster General.

MR. BURNIE (Swansea, Town) said, he had been in communication with the Postmaster General, whom he found to be exceedingly kind and courteous, with reference to increased postal facilities for Swansea, and he hoped they would be granted. He desired also to express a hope that like facilities would be given to South Wales as to other parts of the United Kingdom, especially with regard to American correspondence.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.) said, he only wished in a word to support what had been urged by the hon. Member for West Kerry and others in favour of the Queenstown route. He hoped the Postmaster General would give serious attention to the views of the London Chamber of Commerce as stated by its Chairman, the hon. Member for South Islington (Sir A. Rollitz).

Dr. Commins

MR. R. WALLACE said, the Metropolitan Post Office of Scotland happened to be in the constituency he had the honour to represent, and he had received many pressing applications on the subject of an inquiry into the grievances of Post Office servants. He believed there was a strong desire in Scotland for this inquiry, and that the granting of it would be the best way of allaying any existing discontent.

MR. MACDONALD begged to move the reduction of the Vote for the Postmaster General's salary by £100.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A, Salaries, be reduced by £100, in respect of the Salary of the Postmaster General."—(Mr. Macdonald.)

*SIR J. FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.): The discussion has been a little discursive, but I think it my duty to deal with one matter which has been referred to by several hon. Gentlemen. As I have had recent experience of the grievances that have been the subject of complaint, I think I may venture to say a few words regarding them. It would, undoubtedly, be very wrong if a Government or the Head of a Department were to neglect inquiry into substantial grievances until they culminate in grave dissatisfaction or disaffection. But the complaints of large classes in the Post Office have been a matter of careful inquiry in successive years, and has been met by very large concessions on the part of the Department. If hon. Members will look at the Return showing the income and expenditure of the Post Office, they will see that the income has not increased in proportion to the expenditure. There has been an annual progressive increase in the percentage of salaries as compared with total Revenue. Many of the concessions were made in the time of my Predecessor; and when I succeeded to the Post Office I found that the mere fact of raising the salaries of the suburban postmen had caused a new grievance among Metropolitan postmen, and the Treasury consented, on my application, to raise the wages of these men very substantially. My experience is that no case whatever has been made

out for inquiry outside the Department, and Members ought to be slow in committing themselves to any such contention merely because certain allegations have been made. Hon. Gentlemen will agree with me that the Service is very popular, and, I think, if we find the employment in any branch of Her Majesty's Service is popular, that shows that the remuneration is not insufficient. There is no branch of the Public Service more eagerly sought after than the Post Office, because there is regular work, proper discipline, and the certainty of a pension at the end, when a man is no longer able to work. I must, therefore, say no case has been made out for inquiry, and hope the Government will resist the inquiry that has been asked for. With respect to the conveyance of mails from Queenstown as against the growing popularity and facilities of Southampton, I have to say that Queenstown has proved a most speedy and convenient route for mails, and I cannot conceive that it is likely to be ousted from its position. But the claims now made involve a very large expenditure. In my time a very considerable contribution was made to the Great Southern and Western Railway to accelerate the mails by the Queenstown route, but it would be necessary to prove a general public advantage when any great increase of expenditure is asked for. The demands made for shortening the conveyance of the mails by two or three hours would certainly involve an expenditure so great as to interfere with other corresponding claims. And now a few words upon a subject which I have raised more than once in this House; that is, with regard to the employment of soldiers in the Post Office. I have seen with regret that the Postmaster General has altered the Regulations, framed when I was at the Post Office, with regard to the employment of soldiers in that Department after they have left the Army. The right hon. Gentleman has drawn up what is called an "enlistment scheme," and has arranged that telegraph messengers shall have a preferential claim to appointments as postmen, instead of soldiers as I had arranged, always, of course, having regard to existing engagements, explicit or implied. When I made the arrange-

ment as to the employment of soldiers I was led to believe that it was a popular movement. It was mentioned more than once in the House, and received with approval, and it was believed that it would tend to the benefit of the two Services—both of the Army and the Post Office. No doubt it would be impossible to carry out a scheme of that kind without giving dissatisfaction in some quarters; but if we are to make the employment of soldiers at the Post Office the rule rather than the exception we must persevere even in the face of considerable opposition. The system that I endeavoured to introduce prevails in foreign countries—in France, Germany, Austria, and Italy. Not only are soldiers largely employed in preference to civilians, but an expectation is held out to soldiers of employment after their discharge from the Army; and non-commissioned officers, after 12 years' service, are entitled to employment in the Civil Service. A young Army, though it will have weaknesses, may be kept practically efficient if it has experienced non-commissioned officers. At present it is not easy to get men to remain in the Service long enough as non-commissioned officers, for if they are not discharged until after they reach 30 years of age, it is difficult for them to obtain employment. But if they had a prospect of obtaining Civil employment under the Government on leaving the Army after long service, they would be content to stop, and the result would be beneficial both to the Army and the Post Office. The right hon. Gentleman the present Postmaster General has not abandoned the system I inaugurated, but he has modified it in a very important particular. According to an answer he gave me the other day about 1,000 appointments a year are lost to the Army by the arrangement he has made, which makes a great hole in the number of appointments the soldiers were led to expect. As a result of the system I adopted, I have been told by officers that they find a great improvement in the conduct of the young soldiers, who know that if they behave themselves there will be a good prospect of obtaining work when they leave the Army. I wish I could think that the Government are in earnest in this matter, for unless the

Government and the House are in earnest they will lose a great opportunity of improving the respectability and the conduct of the men who join the Army, and also of improving the character of those who serve in the lower ranks of the Civil Service.

EARL COMPTON (York, W.R., Barnsley) said, he had several times in past years stood up and spoken for the telegraph clerks, and as the Amendment before the Committee related practically to them it would be dishonest and mean on his part if, having taken a strong course in opposition, he did not take the same course now his friends were in power. He desired in the first place to thank the Postmaster General for the courteous communications he (Earl Compton) had received from him, and for the course the right hon. Gentleman had taken on various matters which had tended to give great satisfaction to the Post Office. They were all thankful to the right hon. Gentleman for having reinstated some of the postmen whose case had been brought before the House in previous Sessions. With regard to the telegraphists, he had to say that he did not think anything would settle the matter except an impartial inquiry. If such an inquiry were held, and a decision adverse to the telegraphists were arrived at, he believed they would honestly bow to that verdict. He had listened attentively to the speech of the ex-Postmaster General, and he had found it very like the speeches the right hon. Gentleman had made in previous years. He had assumed that the present Postmaster General would endorse his view; but in that the right hon. Gentleman was a little premature. What was occurring just now in the Telegraph Department of the Post Office? The Postmaster General would agree with him (Earl Compton) that a large amount of overtime was being worked. The right hon. Gentleman would say that this overtime work was voluntary and that the telegraphists would be very much displeased if it were taken away from them. But it was not a question of their working overtime for an hour or two. When they agreed to do such work they were kept on until they were dismissed, and he

conceived it to be the absolute duty of the Department to see that men should not be allowed to work too long hours, to the probable detriment of their health. Previously, whenever he had brought forward the case of the telegraphists, he had been told by the late Mr. Raikes and the ex-Postmaster General that his statements were correct. The case he had laid before the present Postmaster General he had gathered not from one individual, but from various sources—as was his custom before calling attention to a grievance. He was told to-day that his statement was exaggerated. Well, if the information he had received from a large number of individuals employed in the Telegraph Department was at variance with the information supplied to the Postmaster General, all the more reason was there for an inquiry. He hoped that even now the right hon. Gentleman would see the necessity for an inquiry. The right hon. Gentleman had once voted for the Motion he (Earl Compton) had brought forward, and nothing had occurred since then to change the situation. Other Members of the present Government had also voted with him, and he hoped to-day they would redeem the pledge they had given to him. There had been an increase of salary granted to Post Office officials, and he wished to know how much was added to the salaries of the higher officials when a rise in the salaries of the juniors was asked for?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. A. MORLEY, Nottingham, E.), who was very indistinctly heard, was understood to say that he recognised the friendly tone of the Debate so far as he himself was concerned. Therefore, he did not look upon the Motion for reduction of the Vote as a personal matter. The Motion was, however, unfortunate, because the issue it raised was mixed up with other questions. He was asked how he could account for his Vote in 1891 when he had supported the Motion of the noble Earl the Member for Barnsley. He accounted for it on two grounds: He had supported the proposal, which was an unprecedented one, because there was an unprecedented condition of discontent prevailing through-

Sir J. Fergusson

out the Postal and Telegraph Service—or, he confessed, he was under that impression at the time. The condition of things in various branches of the Service was serious. There had been an *emeute* in the Savings Bank Department, and, whether with reason or without reason, the whole of the Services were discontented with their position. The condition of things at present, however, did not bear out the idea that there was anything like general discontent prevailing. He accounted for his action on another ground. Since 1891 large concessions had been made, with enormous additional expense to the country, and that made the state of things very different to what it was when he supported the noble Lord's Motion. Having had a year to look into the grievances, he had come to the conclusion that they could be examined into—and he would take care that they should be examined into—by himself and others associated with him in the administration of the Department. As the Chancellor of the Exchequer had said, a Committee of the House was not a proper tribunal to try questions of this kind. He knew, from his own experience, the intricate and complicated nature of the grievances at the Post Office. Those grievances, as he had said, had been remedied. Revisions had been effected greatly to the advantage of the postal and telegraph staff; and he did not think they could expect men who had not spent a long time in the Public Service to thoroughly examine into the classifications and organisations of a great Department like the Post Office. He would point to the great number of applicants for vacancies in proof of his assertion that the Post Office was a popular Service, and the same could be said of the Telegraph Department. For instance, for male telegraph clerks in London, Edinburgh, and Dublin, there had been 624 candidates to fill 28 vacancies; in the Second Division there had been 582 candidates to fill 59 vacancies, and in the Third Division an equally large number of candidates to fill 75 vacancies. These figures showed that the Public Service, so far as the Post Office Telegraph Service was concerned, was a popular Service. It was not likely that they would find such a large number of persons applying for

these vacancies if there was ground for distrust. He was not going to argue that that fact was conclusive evidence, but he did say that it showed that the would-be telegraphists, who were seeking to get into the Service, did not think the terms and conditions hard or unsatisfactory. But there was another piece of evidence which bore strongly on this matter—the question of resignations from the Service. He had had a Return prepared which showed that the resignations from the Central Telegraph Office since 1890—more than three years—had been 23 out of 2,000 clerks, and 15 of those had left to go into foreign telegraph service, where wages were higher and the conditions as to promotion better, and three had sought to come back again. In the Metropolitan District only two resignations had taken place, whilst in 11 of the largest Provincial Post Offices there had been only 49 resignations since July, 1890, out of a staff exceeding 2,000 men. He thought it would be admitted that if there had been widespread discontent there would have been a much larger number of resignations. In regard to the salaries, the figures had increased year by year since 1889-90. In 1890-91 the increase was £364,248, in 1891-92 it was, in round figures, £423,000, in 1892-93 £435,000, and this year it was still more—namely, £485,000. There had, in fact, been an absolute increase of £1,678,513 in the amounts paid in wages and salaries, of which about £1,200,000 was paid in the Postal, and the remainder in the Telegraph, Department. It might be said that a great deal of the increase was due to increase in the force, and that was true. He had had a Table drawn out which showed the percentage of salaries and wages as compared with the total expenditure in the Telegraph Service, and also as compared with the total revenue, which showed that there had been enormous additions to wages and salaries. In 1883-84—10 years ago—the percentage of wages and salaries to total expenditure was 49·50, and in 1892-93 it was 63·78; so that there had been an increase of over 14 per cent. in the 10 years. The percentage of wages on the total revenue in the Telegraph Service, in 1883-84, was £50·05, and in 1892-93 it was 67·95, showing an in-

crease of nearly 18 per cent. There had been revisions during that time in nearly every branch of the Postal Service. The increase in the amount paid in salaries and weekly wages was estimated at £500,000 sterling. He thought, therefore, he had substantiated the statement made in an earlier part of his remarks that there had been an enormous expenditure consequent on the revision which had taken place.

SIR A. ROLLIT asked whether that proved anything more than that the men were underpaid before?

MR. A. MORLEY said, he was not going to say that there was not justification for the increase in the amount paid, but he contended that fair and liberal additions had been made to the wages. He had practically admitted that there might be grievances at the present time, but he said they were not grievances which could be fairly submitted to such an inquiry as was suggested. He had had an inquiry made as to what would be the cost of doing away with split duties. He had only the figures with regard to London; but he was informed that, on a rough estimate, the addition to the force that would be necessary in the London District would be 1,300 men, and the cost would be £120,000 a year. As to overtime in connection with the Central Telegraph Office, he was strongly of opinion that it ought to be kept down as much as possible. It had been stated that the increase this year was due to the great increase of work consequent on the exciting nature of the Debates in the House of Commons. It would be impossible to have a permanent staff in a Department like the Telegraph Department capable of meeting sudden emergencies of this kind. If they had such a staff it would mean an enormous waste of labour when the emergency came to an end and the work of the Department fell into its former routine. He was of opinion that not only overtime but the auxiliary staff should be kept down as much as possible. A great deal had, however, been done during the past year in reducing overtime in the main Departments of the Postal Service, and in turning auxiliary and unestablished postal servants into permanent members of the Civil Service.

Mr. A. Morley

He regretted that he was unable to accede to the suggestion of his hon. Friend, who, he hoped, would not press his objection to a Division. He was prepared to consider any grievance that might be brought forward, or anything that bore on the face of it a *prima facie* appearance of a grievance; but he did not think that a Committee of the kind suggested would be really beneficial or would lead to a satisfactory conclusion. He proposed now very shortly to deal with the various questions raised by the different speakers. The late Postmaster General (Sir J. Fergusson) referred to the subject of enlistment. He (Mr. A. Morley) had already informed the right hon. Gentleman of the grounds on which he came to the conclusion that a change was necessary. One of the first facts that was brought to his knowledge after he was appointed to his present post was that there was very serious objection felt by parents of many boys to the rule which prevailed that at the end of so many years' service as telegraph messengers they should be excluded from the Postal Service unless they passed through a period in the Army. He had called for Reports from various Postmasters in the large centres of population, and he should like to just mention one or two of them which he thought were very fair samples of the great body of them. The Postmaster of Liverpool wrote, when the proposal was first placed before the Department, his communication being dated 2nd December, 1891, that he could not reasonably expect a father to send his son to act as messenger during the best years of his life when at the end of four or five years the boy must be cut adrift. The Postmasters of Manchester and other towns wrote in a similar strain, all of them deprecating the system of enlistment. Under these circumstances, he felt that there was no course before him but to rescind that portion of the Regulations which dealt with enlistment. At the same time, he allowed that portion of the Regulations which gave precedence to Army Reserve men over outsiders to remain in full force, and certainly at present he saw no ground for rescinding it. Questions had been asked by several Members with reference to the Queenstown Mail Service. He thought hon. Members from Ireland

were a little unreasonable on this subject. He thought the Government had done something to justify the confidence of the Irish Members and to show their desire to give every reasonable facility for the Queenstown Mail Service. One of the first things that was done by the present Chancellor of the Exchequer on coming into Office was to grant a considerable subsidy to the Great Southern and Western Railway Company of Ireland to facilitate the mails, and since that time a special mail service had been instituted. Although that service was only tentative, he thought hon. Members knew that when the Post Office started a service of the kind as a tentative proposal it was not likely to be abandoned unless it proved to be a hopeless failure. He thought, therefore, it might be taken that the special service would be crystallised into the ordinary service. It was not correct to say that the Holyhead contract would terminate in September, 1894. It could only be terminated on the 13th September, 1895, by notice given on the 13th September, 1894. He would undertake that before the time came at which notice would have to be given, if at all, the matter should be very carefully considered and that opportunity should be given to hon. Members who took an interest in the subject to express their views. The hon. Member for Hereford (Mr. Radcliffe Cooke), who had called attention to the appointment of a sub-postmaster in his constituency, was evidently ignorant of the rule governing such appointments. Whether wisely or unwisely they were regarded as matters of patronage, and were not in his hands at all. The Secretary to the Treasury had a right to make the appointment, and the nominations were sent to him (Mr. A. Morley), but it was only in the event of the person named being unsuitable or the premises being unsuitable that he had the right or power to interfere. In the particular case referred to the Report which reached him from the surveyor of the district was that the person was suitable and that the situation of the office was, on the whole, as satisfactory as that of the old office. Under these circumstances, he had no power to interfere. His hon. Friend for East Edinburgh (Mr. R. Wallace) had referred to the question of head postmasters, and had

asked whether seniority and recognised merit could not be taken into account in making appointments to these positions. He could assure his hon. Friend that recognised merit and seniority had been the whole and sole ground for every appointment he had made, and he should be extremely averse to disturbing that system of selection. He had done all in his power to prevent political or other influences being brought to bear on these appointments, because he thought it was of immense importance to have men in these positions who had good powers of organisation. As to the question of the amount of the estimates for sites, the sum adopted was that which was thought to be reasonable this year, and he could not agree that the Post Office ought to purchase sites before they were needed.

MR. TOMLINSON said, his point had been that the Post Office ought to know some years beforehand that they would want a new Post Office.

MR. A. MORLEY said, that he quite agreed that the Post Office ought to have its eyes open as to future needs. The only other question he had to mention was that of postal communication in South Wales. He should be very glad if he could see his way to accede to the request which had been made to him on this subject, but he must protest against the notion of the Post Office being expected to put on special trains to carry mails under ordinary circumstances at an earlier or a later hour than the Railway Companies could under ordinary circumstances carry them. There must be an enormous mass of mail matter to justify the putting on of a special train, and at the present time South Wales did not produce a sufficient amount of correspondence to justify special trains. He would inquire into the question which had been raised respecting postmen smoking in uniform. He did not believe that any rule against smoking in uniform existed—certainly there was no Service Rule of this kind. There might be rules made by particular postmasters, but if

so he would take care that such a prohibition was not continued.

SIR W. HARCOURT : I rise to point out, in the interests of the Committee, that this discussion might now close. I would suggest to my hon. Friend behind me (Mr. Macdonald) that the most positive way of securing an increase of salaries is not by moving to diminish the salary of my right hon. Friend the Postmaster General. From my own knowledge, if there is any man who works overtime at the Post Office it is my right hon. Friend. I hope my hon. Friend will not be disposed to press the reduction to a Division, but that if he wishes to do so he will take the Division at once.

MR. MACDONALD said, he understood that the Government admitted that there was some grievance. He understood the right hon. Gentleman had consented to inquire into the matter, and on that understanding he begged to withdraw the Motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

SIR W. HARCOURT : I should have been very glad if we could have brought the Debate to a conclusion this evening, but it is not now likely that it can be done within a reasonable time according to the information which I have received. I hope that everything that remains will be dealt with and concluded on Monday, and I think I shall be consulting the convenience of the House if I now move to report Progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again." — (*The Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Mr. A. Morley

MR. SEXTON : I have some observations to make on the Queenstown Mail Service, but it will be as convenient to us to take that subject on Monday.

Question put, and agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported upon Monday next ; Committee also report Progress ; to sit again upon Monday next.

MR. A. C. MORTON asked what Votes would be taken first on Monday ?

SIR W. HARCOURT : Class V.

SUPPLY—REPORT.

Resolutions [15th September] reported and agreed to.—[See page 1297.]

EAST INDIA REVENUE ACCOUNTS.

Ordered, That the several Accounts and Papers which have been presented to the House in this Session of Parliament, relating to the Revenues of India, be referred to the consideration of a Committee of the Whole House.

Resolved, That this House will, upon Wednesday next, resolve itself into the said Committee.—(*Mr. G. Russell.*)

NAVY AND ARMY EXPENDITURE, 1891-2.

Resolutions [15th September] reported, and agreed to.—[See page 1400.]

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made, and Question, "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*The Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)—put, and agreed to.

House adjourned at half after Six o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 18th September 1893.

QUESTIONS.

RIFLE RANGE AT OMAGH.

MR. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that a rifle range reported by a Military Board as suitable for the magazine rifle exists within a short distance of the barracks recently erected at Omagh, and that a drill and encamping ground of large extent and excellent quality lies under the barrack walls, which can both be acquired at reasonable rates, and that their acquisition has been recommended by successive officers commanding the brigade depôt and the district but refused by the War Office; and whether it is in contemplation by the War Office to acquire land on the west coast of Donegal for a rifle range, and permanently to train the Militia battalions of Fermanagh and Tyrone out of their own counties at a further large annual charge to the public; and, if so, whether the whole subject will be reconsidered and further inquiry made before any permanent course is finally decided upon?

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (MR. WOODALL, Hanley): The recommendations of local officers to establish a range and camping ground at Omagh have not been approved by the General Officer Commanding in Ireland, because he does not consider it desirable to continue the practice of hiring local rifle ranges and camping grounds for the Militia, but prefers that battalions should be brought together at some central place for training and musketry where they would have the advantage of association with Regular troops. Nothing is known of any proposal to acquire land for a range on the Donegal coast.

WAR DEPARTMENT CONTRACTS.

MR. O'KEEFFE (Limerick): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will direct inquiries into the complaints

regarding the working of two contracts under his Department in the City of Limerick, recently brought forward by the Trades Council of that city—namely, that, in the contract for works and repairs of the several barracks in the stated military district, no local carpenters, masons, or painters have ever been employed by the Government local contractor; that the contractor refused the Trade Society standard wages, although himself drawing a large margin of profit from the declared contract price; and that, as regards the contract for bread to the Army in Limerick, no regular trade bakers are employed or standard wages paid by the contractor for such supplies; and whether, having regard to the Resolution of this House of February, 1891, arrangement will be made to secure payment of the proper standard wages to competent workmen by the War Department in the contracts mentioned?

MR. WOODALL (Hanley): No complaint has been received as regards the non-employment of local men. I may, however, point out that the War Office has no power to insist upon the employment of workmen from any particular locality. All contractors are bound to pay the current rates of the district; and no complaint of their having failed to do so has reached the War Office.

POSTAL PROMOTIONS.

MR. MACDONALD (Tower Hamlets, Bow): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether a sorting clerk at Bristol has been promoted over 10 men his qualified seniors; and, if so, on what grounds?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (MR. A. MORLEY, Nottingham, E.): The facts are as stated. I am informed that the men passed over, or the most promising of them, on being tried on higher duties, were found not to possess the necessary qualifications. I am, however, making some further inquiries, and will communicate with my hon. Friend.

THE CONGESTED DISTRICTS BOARD.

SIR T. ESMONDE (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can explain why the occupiers at Slen Heul, County Kerry, who agreed to give up a portion of their land for the use of the Congested Districts Board, and were

promised the sum of £38 10s. for so doing, have received £8 less than the amount agreed upon; if, in view of the poverty of the occupiers, the Congested Districts Board will be instructed to pay them the full sum originally agreed to; and if he will give the terms of the original agreement?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. J. MORLEY, Newcastle-upon-Tyne): I am informed by the Congested Districts Board that the tenant occupiers of land required for this road were not promised the lump sum of £38 10s. as stated, and that the payments to them were, individually, in strict accordance with the terms of the agreement entered into between them and the Board's engineer, the total amount so paid being £29 15s. The original estimate of the engineer was made for the confidential information of the Board, and it would be contrary to practice to disclose its contents.

SIR T. ESMONDE asked if the sum of £38 was left in the hands of the parish priest?

MR. J. MORLEY: I was not aware that any sum was left in the hands of the parish priest, but I will inquire.

THE NEWSPAPER POST.

MR. HOGAN (Tipperary, Mid): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether New Zealand weekly journals weighing over ten ounces, such as *The Canterbury Times* and *The Auckland Weekly News*, were delivered in London on 14th September at the 1d. postage rate, whereas newspapers of the same weight and character published in the neighbouring Australian Colonies cannot be posted to London without a fee of 2½d.; and whether any means are available for the rectification of this difference of charges?

MR. A. MORLEY: At the Postal Conference held at Brisbane in March last, at which New Zealand was represented, it was decided to adopt for newspapers addressed to the United Kingdom a rate in accordance with the Postal Union Regulations—namely, 1d. for the first four ounces and ½d. for every additional two ounces. But the New Zealand Post Office does not appear to have yet brought the new rate into operation, as newspapers from that Colony are still prepaid at the old rate of 1d. per paper.

Sir T. Esmonde

As soon as the New Zealand Post Office adopts the new rate, the difference of charges referred to in the second paragraph of the question will disappear. As the hon. Member probably knows, I have in practice no power to alter the rates of postage from the Colonies to other places.

ANTHRAX.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether, considering the persistent vitality of the bacilli of anthrax, and more especially of their spores, as proved by the researches of Rastem and others, he will impress on Local Authorities the importance of burning the bodies of animals infected with this disease?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. H. GARDNER, Essex, Saffron Walden): The objection to burning the bodies of animals affected with anthrax is that without costly and elaborate appliances the operation entails the cutting up of the carcase and its movement to a convenient place, both of which acts are obviously undesirable. On this account we have advised Local Authorities that burial is the least dangerous method of disposing of bodies in such cases. As my hon. Friend is probably aware, the microbe in anthrax is aerobic, and cannot therefore live without air, and I am informed that it has been demonstrated that it does not retain its vitality in a carcase which has been burned without having been cut.

THE LAND REGISTRY OFFICE.

MR. GREENE (Shrewsbury): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether Her Majesty's Government are aware that a highly contentious leaflet [L. R. 8370—300. 9 93. G. 35. D. & S.], bearing the Royal Arms, has just been issued officially from the Land Registry Office, professing to reply to a publication circulated privately by the Incorporated Law Society, criticising the Land Transfer Bill, 1893; whether the printing and circulation of this leaflet has been sanctioned by Her Majesty's Government; and, if not, whether its cost will be provided for out of public funds, and be included in the Estimates; and whether it is in accordance with the rules or usages of the Public Service

for Departments, or the Heads of Departments, to engage in controversy at public expense, either in support of such Departments or their management, or as to the merits of Bills before Parliament; and, if not, whether any, and what, steps will be taken in respect of the leaflet referred to?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Sir J. T. HIBBERT, Oldham): I have not seen the leaflet referred to, but I understand that it was prepared by the Land Registry in reply to a pamphlet circulated to all Members of the House of Lords and containing statements about the work of the office which the Department considered itself bound to answer. If the leaflet in question is demanded by the public interest, I see no reason why it should not be paid for out of public funds.

H.M.S. "LATONA."

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty, with respect to H.M.S. *Latona*, if it is a fact that 43 of the complement are practically obliged to sleep on the upper deck for want of more adequate accommodation; whether this was originally laid down in the design; and if this is the case generally as regards the second class cruisers?

*THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Sir U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH, Lancashire, Clitheroe): No report has been received of any necessity for 43 men to sleep on the upper deck of the *Latona*. The *Latona* and the 20 other vessels of the *Apollo* class, which are similar in accommodation, were not designed with any intention that part of the complement were to sleep on the upper deck.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD: Can the right hon. Gentleman state as a fact that there is sufficient accommodation for the men, without requiring them to sleep on the upper deck?

*SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: The complement of the ship has been somewhat increased, and no doubt she may be somewhat crowded, but considering that all the men have not to sleep at the same time, probably there will be found to be sufficient accommodation.

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston): Is this a temporary increase, or will the ship be always crowded?

SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: As to that I shall require notice.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD: Will the right hon. Gentleman make inquiries?

SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: Certainly, Sir.

INDIAN MEDICAL OFFICERS.

MR. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether the Indian Government will arrange to have the principal medical officers' inspections made twice a year in India as in this country?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. G. RUSSELL, North Beds.): The War Office Regulations provide for half-yearly medical inspections at home, and yearly ones at foreign stations. The Secretary of State sees no reason for proposing any alteration of the system, so far as India is concerned.

MR. A. C. MORTON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether the Indian Government, in allotting bearer company and field hospital equipment for training the Medical Service of the Indian Army, would see that Netley was included in the distribution, so that the medical officers for the Indian Army could benefit by instruction there?

MR. G. RUSSELL: Yes, Sir. The existing system provides for the instruction of the Indian medical officers at Netley in bearer company and stretcher drill.

STOCKTON-ON-TEES SCHOOL BOARD.

SIR R. TEMPLE (Surrey, Kingston): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether the requisite facilities have been withheld from the School Board of Stockton-on-Tees, in respect to the building of a school of a superior grade unless the superior fees are remitted or not charged?

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Mr. ACLAND, York, W.R., Rotherham): This is a case of a new school. No existing facilities have been withheld, and it is not a case of remission of fees. The Department hold that under Section 4 (1) of the Act of 1891 it would not be for the educational benefit

of the district that fees should be charged in the proposed school, and so interposed at a period in a child's life when such a charge may be a barrier to his or her further advancement.

WOODS AND FORESTS DEPARTMENT.

SIR R. TEMPLE : I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether it is the intention on the occurrence of a vacancy to place at the head of the Woods and Forests Department an officer practically versed in forestry ?

SIR J. T. HIBBERT : No doubt the First Lord of the Treasury will, before making a new appointment, give every consideration to the requirements of the Department.

ARMY EXAMINATIONS.

SIR R. TEMPLE : I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that widespread anxiety prevails as to the future educational course for entrance into the Army, and that no information on the subject can be obtained from the War Office ; can he tell when the subjects of examination for next April and June will be published ; can he also say if Latin is to be obligatory, and, if such be the case, what is the minimum standard of marks to be in this subject ; and if he is aware that a high standard in Latin must result in the rejection of numbers of very promising candidates ?

MR. WOODALL : With regard to the first question of the hon. Member, I may say that every inquiry on this subject has been answered by the War Office. The Regulations for the examinations in April and June are in the printers' hands, and will be issued shortly. Latin remains an obligatory subject, and candidates who have not already passed the preliminary examination will be required to obtain such an aggregate of marks therein as may satisfy the Civil Service Commissioners.

SOLDIERS AND SAILORS' GRAVES IN NEW ZEALAND.

SIR J. GORST (Cambridge University) : I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether it is true that the graves of the British seamen and soldiers who fell at Rangiriri in 1863, in the Maori War, are now in a ruinous and neglected state ; and whe-

Mr. Acland

ther he will make a representation to the New Zealand Government on the subject ?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. S. Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar) : No complaint has reached the Colonial Office of the state of the cemetery at Rangiriri, but if the right hon. Gentleman possesses any recent and authentic information an inquiry will be addressed to the Governor of the Colony. This was done on the occasion of a previous question in this House as to the graves at Tanranga, which it was alleged were in a discreditable condition, and the inquiry elicited the fact that they were kept in good order.

EDINBURGH MUSEUM.

MR. PAUL (Edinburgh, S.) : I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he can now state what steps have been taken to improve the position of the attendants at the Edinburgh Museum, and to place them more nearly on a level with the attendants at South Kensington ?

MR. ACLAND : The Department of Science and Art have for some time been in correspondence with Her Majesty's Treasury and with the Director of the Edinburgh Museum, with a view to modifying the present arrangements in respect to the service of attendants at the Edinburgh Museum, and it is hoped that a satisfactory solution of the matter will be shortly arrived at.

HEREMAKONO.

MR. TOMLINSON : On behalf of Mr. Lawrence (Liverpool, Abercromby), I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether it is a fact that Heremakono, which is about 200 miles from Sierra Leone and well within the sphere of British influence (being south of the tenth degree of N. latitude) as defined by the Treaty between Great Britain and France of 1889, is now occupied by French troops ; if so, whether Her Majesty's Government will call upon the French Government to withdraw from that post ; and what was the result of the expedition to Falaba and Heremakono which left Sierra Leone early last year under the then Administrator of the Government, Sir William Quayle Jones, and whether

Papers relating to that Expedition can be laid upon the Table ?

MR. S. BUXTON : Heremakono is at present occupied by French troops. Her Majesty's Government have for some time past been in correspondence with that of France on the subject. The fact of Heremakono being south of the tenth parallel of latitude, and, therefore, within the British boundary under the agreement of 1889, is disputed by the French Government. Further information on the point is now being awaited, upon the receipt of which the discussion of the question will be resumed. Sir W. Quayle Jones succeeded in the principal objects of his Mission, which were to open the roads, which had been closed by quarrels between various Native Chiefs, and to make some arrangement with the Sofas at Heremakono for the protection from their attacks of the people within the sphere of British influence. It is not considered desirable, in the public interests, to lay the Papers on the Table at present.

THE QUEEN'S MESSENGER TRAIN.

MR. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that the Duke of Fife made use, on the 7th instant, of the Queen's Messenger special train in Scotland, which is paid for by the Treasury ; and whether other persons may use this train ?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby): No, Sir ; I know nothing about this.

MR. A. C. MORTON : May I ask the right hon. Gentleman if he will inquire about it ?

SIR W. HARCOURT : No, Sir ; I shall not.

WESTFIELD SCHOOL, WOKING.

SIR R. TEMPLE : I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether the Report of the inquiry into the Westfield School, at Woking, was adverse to the erection of a new school ; whether he will authorise the managers to renew the lease to the School Board, with the provision that the hours and conditions of the religious instruction shall remain the same as heretofore ; and whether, as an alternative, he will allow

the managers to provide from their own resources any additional accommodation that may be required, or whether, failing that, he will permit the matter to stand over till after the next School Board election ?

MR. ACLAND : The Report was adverse to the erection of the new school proposed by the School Board, but suggested the erection of an infant school by the Board. The Education Department has communicated with the School Board (enclosing a copy of the Report) in reference to the renewal of the lease, and now await a reply from the School Board. The action of the Department will depend upon the nature of that reply. The Department understand from the School Board that they are in communication with the managers of the school. I cannot, therefore, at present answer paragraphs 2 and 3 of the question.

ARMENIAN PRISONERS.

SIR R. TEMPLE : I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he will consider the possibility of interceding with the Sultan's Government on behalf of a young Armenian student, Dikran Gulbankian, who has been sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment on a political charge ?

***THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir E. GREY, Northumberland, Berwick) :** This case is already occupying the attention of Her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople, who will do what he can to bring it under the favourable consideration of the Porte.

IRISH MAGISTRATES.

MR. BUTCHER (York) : I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland how many licensed victuallers have been appointed to the Commission of the Peace in Ireland for (a) counties and (b) boroughs since the present Government came into Office ; what was the total number of licensed victuallers holding the Commission of the Peace in Ireland at the time when the present Government came into Office ; and whether there is any case in England in which a licensed victualler holds the Commission of the Peace ?

MR. J. MORLEY : The Lord Chancellor informs me that it would take

several days to give a definite and complete answer to the second paragraph of the question. So far as his inquiries have proceeded, he is able to confirm what I stated to the House the other day, that since the present Government acceded to Office there is only one case in which a gentleman has been placed in the County Commission who retains a publican's licence in his own name. This gentleman, however, is a farmer, and holds the licence more as trustee for others than for his own benefit, and the licensed premises are situated in a different district from that in which he resides and acts as a Magistrate. Moreover, this Magistrate is disqualified by law from adjudicating in cases under the Licensing Acts. Several other gentlemen appointed to the County Magistracy by the present Government held spirit licences prior to their appointment, but they were required on their appointment to transfer their licences, and have done so. There are several instances of County Magistrates appointed by former Governments who, for reasons at the time deemed sufficient, were allowed to retain their spirit licences in their own names, but these persons are also debarred by law from taking part as Magistrates in licensing cases.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman two questions arising out of his answer—namely, first, whether the Magistrates referred to are debarred from sitting at Petty Sessions as they are at Quarter Sessions in licensing business; and, secondly, in the case of the publicans who have transferred their licences, to whom have they transferred them, and was it a mere power of transfer?

MR. J. MORLEY: I cannot answer the last question. Of course that is a point I should be glad to have information upon, but it has not been supplied to me. As to the first question, whether they can decide cases at Petty Sessions, my information from my legal adviser is that they are disqualified by law from adjudicating in any case under the Licensing Act. That is all I can say.

MR. SEXTON (Kerry, N.): I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether any of the brewers and distillers appointed by former Governments to the Commission of the Peace in England and

Ireland are allowed to administer the Licensing Laws in districts where the liquor they manufacture is sold and consumed?

MR. J. MORLEY: That is a question of which I must beg notice of my hon. Friend. I will make inquiry. I cannot answer offhand.

MR. BUTCHER: Can the right hon. Gentleman say approximately how many of these licensed victuallers hold the Commission of the Peace in boroughs?

MR. J. MORLEY: I will inquire, and inform the hon. Member. The total number of County Magistrates in Ireland is 4,697, of whom 331 have been appointed by the present Government. There are 530 Borough Magistrates, of whom 79 have been so appointed.

WORKING MEN MAGISTRATES.

MR. MANDEVILLE (Tipperary, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland is he aware that a number of working men have been appointed Magistrates in England; and is it the intention of the Lord Chancellor of Ireland to appoint any working men to be Magistrates in Ireland?

MR. J. MORLEY: I understand it is the case that a number of working men have been appointed to the Commission for boroughs in this country. As regards Ireland, I believe no appointment of working men has yet been made, but the question will certainly be carefully considered.

THE WINDSOR BARRACKS.

MR. A. C. MORTON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the Army Sanitary Committee is an inspecting body, and have they visited Windsor or other barracks; whether the weekly Sick Returns of the Army and the Sanitary Returns of Garrisons are submitted to the Army Sanitary Committee for examination and report; whether their Reports for Great Britain and abroad are published; and can they be obtained by the public?

MR. WOODALL: As a general rule, the Army Sanitary Committee is not an inspecting body; but, in very exceptional cases, they inspect particular barracks. They have not visited Windsor, but when the drainage system at Windsor is revised the subject will be referred to the Committee. The weekly Sick Returns

and the Sanitary Returns are not referred to the Sanitary Committee. Their duties are confined to Reports on sites and buildings. Their Reports are not published.

MR. HANBURY (Preston): I should like to ask when the drainage arrangements of Windsor Barracks are going to be revised, because they are in a most dangerous state at this moment?

MR. WOODALL: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for War has on several occasions made specific statements with regard to the Windsor Barracks, and I have nothing to add to what he has said.

MR. A. C. MORTON: The hon. Gentleman has not answered the last part of my question.

MR. HANBURY: I really must press the hon. Gentleman to get information to give to the House as to the date on which the drainage of these barracks will come under consideration, because I must repeat they are in a most dangerous state.

MR. WOODALL: The condition of the drainage of Windsor Barracks has been under consideration, and very full particulars have been given to the House; but if the hon. Gentleman chooses to put a question down for tomorrow, I will be prepared with further information upon it. I have already informed the hon. Member for Peterborough that none of these Reports are published. They are confidential.

MR. HURLBERT.

MR. PAUL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to two recent letters in *The Standard*, purporting to have been written at Genoa by one William Henry Hurlbert, otherwise known as Wilfrid Murray; whether a warrant has been issued against the said Hurlbert for wilful and corrupt perjury committed in this country; whether he is believed to be now in Italy; and whether any steps have been or will be taken for bringing this person to justice by extradition or otherwise?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. ASQUITH, Fife, E.): My attention has

been called to the letter in question. A warrant for perjury was issued for the arrest of this person in November, 1891. It might tend to frustrate the ends of justice if I were to say where he is now believed to be; though I may observe (without any special reference to the particular case) that a letter to the newspapers by a fugitive from justice, purporting to be written from a named place, is, as a rule, *prima facie* evidence that the writer is somewhere else. All possible steps have been, and are being, taken to bring this man to justice.

RIO DE JANEIRO.

MR. CLOUGH (Portsmouth): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs a question of which I have given him private notice—namely, what steps, if any, have been taken for the protection of British life and property at Rio de Janeiro?

*SIR E. GREY: Her Majesty's ships *Sirius* and *Beagle* are now in Rio harbour, and the *Racer* is under orders to proceed there. Ships of war belonging to France, Germany, Italy, Portugal, and the United States are also on the spot or on the road to Rio, for the protection of neutral shipping. Communications with Her Majesty's Minister have necessarily been brief; he has reported that trade is paralysed, and that it is impossible for vessels to unload cargo for want of labour and lighters. He has requested Her Majesty's Representatives at Buenos Ayres and Montevideo to warn British merchants and others interested of the risks attending shipments to Rio. In a telegram received on Saturday night he reports that the commanders of the neutral ships of war were endeavouring to prevent the bombardment of the town by the insurgent vessel.

THE LOSS OF THE "VICTORIA."

COMMANDER BETHELL (York, E.R., Holderness): May I ask the Secretary to the Admiralty a question of which I have given him private notice. Perhaps he will be good enough to state whether the Admiralty have come to any decision as to the nature of the inquiry into the causes which led to the loss of the *Victoria*?

*SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: No, Sir; the matter is under consideration, and it is expected a decision will be arrived at within a few days.

MASHONALAND.

SIR G. BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any further news has been received from Mashonaland?

MR. S. BUXTON: Since the Papers which were circulated on Saturday we have received the following telegram, dated the 11th, from Sir H. Loch:—

"In answer to your telegram of September 9, Administrator of Mashonaland was instructed August 17 not to communicate with Lo Bengula without my approval. Rhodes leaving on or about September 11 for Beira, *en route* for Salisbury. Jameson will keep me informed by telegram, and will not make any aggressive movement without my authority. It is rumoured that Barotsi impi had been put in quarantine for two months on account of small-pox by Lo Bengula. Peaceful sign, if true."

THE NEW HEBRIDES.

MR. HOGAN (Tipperary, Mid) (on behalf of Mr. T. Curran): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he has received any Reports that would enable him to state approximately the extent of territory in the New Hebrides that has been either claimed or actually acquired by French Trading Companies?

*SIR E. GREY: The claims on the part both of French and British subjects to have acquired land by purchase appear to be remarkably extensive and vague. As a matter of fact, it was stated in 1891 that the area of land being cultivated by French subjects was about 100 acres, and that by British subjects somewhat less.

THE COURSE OF BUSINESS.

SIR J. GORST: Will the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer inform the House what will be done with the Government Bills after No. 5 (the Expiring Laws Continuance Bill)? Will they be withdrawn?

SIR W. HARCOURT: Yes, Sir; I think that is so. All after No. 5 will be withdrawn.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—COMMITTEE.

SUPPLY,—considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS, 1893-4.

CLASS V.

1. £213,101, to complete the sum for Diplomatic and Consular Services.

*SIR C. W. DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) would like to ask one or two questions on this Vote. He held in his hand the Report of the Ridley Commission upon Civil Establishments. That Commission made several recommendations in regard to the Foreign Office, and he should like to know how far those recommendations had been carried out. There had been some who had advised—and it was the case in some Foreign Services—that there should be an amalgamation of the Consular and Diplomatic Services, and also the Foreign Office into a single Foreign Service. The Ridley Commission did not recommend the adoption of that course; but, at the same time, they did recommend a partial amalgamation. He should like to ask his hon. Friend whether it was the intention of the Government to act any further than they had done in the past in the direction of the amalgamation of these Services? With regard to the cost of the Diplomatic Service, the Ridley Commission did not seem to see the way to any considerable economies. They did, however, suggest that with regard to some of the Embassies—especially that in France—there was probably too large a staff. If we were to compare our Diplomatic Service with that of other countries they were very similar, except in the point of the amalgamation of the Services, and he was bound to say there was no more expenditure on our part than prevailed on the part of many foreign countries, although their Diplomatic and Consular duties were less heavy than ours. Although that was so, there was some reason to think there was often kept on foot in Embassies an unnecessarily large staff. He was not one of those who would desire in any degree to cut down the expenditure of the Diplomatic or Consular Services of this country. He

fancied that money properly spent would be well spent, and would be beneficial to the trading interests of this country. But that was not the same point as over-expenditure on particular points; still less was it the same as being over-staffed in certain points. Our present system was to have Ambassadors at high rates of salary. He did not at all object to that, and in posts of great trust there should be large salaries, in order to give men of fitness for the place an equal chance. But whilst these Ambassadors were paid large salaries in large Embassies, there were placed by the side of them many juniors who had not sufficient work to do to keep them fully employed. In many cases they were paid very small salaries; in some cases none at all. They had a large number of men doing work that could be done better by a smaller but better paid and more efficient staff; and as a result of paying small or no salaries they did not get the very best work. If a man was not willing to work, practically he was not worked at all, and the effect of this system was naturally to cause great stagnation. A great number of the lower ranks were doing extremely uninteresting copying work, or drudgery, with the result that by the time they had reached an age at which they might reasonably expect promotion to important posts, very often they had become inefficient—from doing mere drudgery or no work at all—for doing work of a higher kind. He therefore asked whether any attempt had been made to carry out the suggestions in this direction of the Ridley Commission, and especially on the point of the partial amalgamation of the Services? The next point he should like to allude to concerned the care which was taken as regarded secrecy in the Embassies. Recently there had been a case where a very important disregard of secrecy in a great Embassy occurred through the action of a person who was a subject of the country in which the Embassy was situated. We paid a great deal of money for the Queen's Messenger Service, and we also paid a large staff in Embassies. There seemed to be a hiatus between the two. There were boxes sent to these Embassies by Messengers, which ultimately reached the Ambassador or Secretary himself. But sometimes these boxes had to pass

through the hands of persons who were subjects of the country in which the Embassy was situated, and in these cases there was an evident risk of Despatches being opened and read, or copied, or even, in some cases—as in the case of documents which were not of the highest importance—of not reaching their destination at all. Both these things had undoubtedly occurred; and although, no doubt, in the particular case to which he alluded the man had been employed for so many years and was looked upon as trustworthy that there was a great excuse for what occurred, yet, notwithstanding, there was this serious fact—that when this man was dismissed he was found in possession of more than one of the most secret keys which existed in any of our Foreign Embassies. Although it would be out of Order on this Vote to discuss the affairs of the Niger Company, he thought it would be competent for him to ask a question as to the boundaries of the territory administered by that company, and of that which came within the sphere of the Foreign Office. The Charter of the Company had never been laid on the Table of the House, but he found from a published version that the company's territory was supposed to extend to the whole of the basin of the Niger. The view of foreign countries, however, was that the Niger Company administered the country for only 48 miles on each side of the Niger. He would be glad to hear what were the working arrangements between the Company and the Foreign Office. He also found that the expenses of the Mission of Sir Gerald Portal to Uganda were charged on this Vote. No information had been received from the Government as to their views upon the subject of the future of Uganda. Less authorised sources of information would lead to the supposition that there was some idea of extending the Zanzibar Protectorate so as to include Uganda and the whole of the territories now or recently under the control of the British East Africa Company. The Protectorates of the Oil River, or west coast, of the Zanzibar coast, and also in South Africa raised a very serious question—namely, whether these Protectorates ought to be under the control of the Foreign Office or of the Colonial Office? To his mind, the Foreign Office could not properly be

charged with details of government. On that ground Lord Granville, when at the Foreign Office in 1880, got rid of the administration of Cyprus. It was very likely true that the Foreign Office could do the work more cheaply, but he thought it would be found in the long run that the system was not a cheap one. There was another point which he wished to press upon the Government, and that was that if any sums of money had to be paid as compensation to foreign subjects on account of the action of the agents of the British East Africa Company, they ought to come out of the pockets of the company and not of the British taxpayer. Captain Lugard was not a servant of the Government, but of the company; and if, in consequence of his proceedings in Uganda, expenditure was necessitated, the money ought to come out of the coffers of the company, if it had any funds, and not out of the pockets of the British taxpayer. If the administration of the country by the company was really very weak and insufficient, surely the time had arrived when the Charter should be forfeited. If this country was to be called upon to pay money as compensation to Roman Catholics on account of acts done by the company's agents, there certainly would be a strong demand for the forfeiture of the Charter. There was the case of Nyassaland, or the Central African Protectorate. It was an anomaly that, although all the territory was administered by one man—namely, Consul Johnston—yet on the north of the Zambesi he acted under the Foreign Office, and south under the Colonial Office, the result being that when Lo Bengula sent his forces north of the Zambesi their Representative had to communicate with the Foreign Office, and that when he sent them south their Representative had to communicate with the Colonial Office. The two Departments were in consequence involved in constant correspondence, and there was a certain amount of friction. In his opinion, the duties to be discharged in connection with the Protectorates should be undertaken by one Department, and not two. He should like, further, to ask whether anything was being done by the Secretary of State in the direction of limiting his own discretion in the patronage of the Consular Department? Even within the last

15 or 20 years Consular administration had been one of jobbery—he had almost said of corruption. Money-lenders had been placed in the Consular Service in discreditable circumstances within the last 15 or 20 years, and still remained in it. He would suggest that the Secretary of State should lay down rules respecting the exercise of patronage in connection with this Service. Among the Consuls was a gentleman who had been removed from Madagascar in order to please the French. He had been removed for no other reason than because he had done his duty and had become distasteful to the French in consequence. The Consuls remaining in Madagascar had become useless in consequence of the recognition of the French Protectorate and the results that had followed it.

*SIR J. FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.) said, there was one point upon which many Members of the Committee desired further information, and upon which they should have an assurance from the Government—he meant the serious responsibilities incurred in the Uganda district. He did not agree with the right hon. Baronet (Sir C. Dilke) in his general views upon this question. He did not wish to press the Government to make any statement that might be considered premature; but he thought, before the House separated, they ought to have some fresh assurances from the Government that they were thoroughly alive to the responsibilities which undoubtedly had been incurred in the region to which he alluded, and of which they could not now divest themselves. It was probable that the Government were in possession of more recent information than that contained in the Papers which had been presented to Parliament. He should like to know, for instance, the grounds upon which Sir Gerald Portal withdrew a considerable distance from Uganda and those upon which here traced his steps? The position of affairs in Uganda could not be regarded as unsatisfactory. The latest intelligence showed that their officers had been able, with the very scanty means at their disposal, to maintain British interests in the best way—namely, with the least possible sacrifice of life. Everything depended upon their policy being firm and consistent. It must not be marked by that vacillation which in former years

Sir C. W. Dilke

characterised a Government composed largely of the Members of the present Administration—a policy which led to such grave disaster in Africa. If the notion should get abroad that their stay in Uganda was to be temporary, no confidence would be placed in the assurances given by their officers, and natives who were now inclined to act as their friends would hesitate long before they declared themselves to be on their side. At the beginning of the Session the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs (Sir E. Grey) himself declared that withdrawal from Uganda would undoubtedly be followed by local misery and disaster.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir E. GREY, Northumberland, Berwick) said, what he did say at the beginning of the Session was that statements had been made to the Government to the effect that disastrous consequences would follow the withdrawal of the company, and that the Government, in the circumstances, felt bound to make inquiries with a view to ascertain whether those statements were well founded. He gave no individual opinion on the subject on the occasion referred to by the right hon. Baronet.

SIR J. FERGUSSON said, the Prime Minister (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) referred to the statement as the opinion of the right hon. Baronet.

*SIR E. GREY said, this statement was that made by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere); it was an opinion given after reading the Lugard Report as to the real origin of the civil war in Uganda. The statement had nothing to do with regard to future action.

*SIR J. FERGUSSON said, at all events, earlier in the Session the right hon. Baronet (Sir E. Grey) recognised the responsibilities of the Government and the country, and he felt confident that the right hon. Baronet would not minimise them now. The right hon. Baronet (Sir C. Dilke) had expressed a strong opinion as to which of the Departments ought to take charge of and administer these Protectorates; but it must be remembered that in cases like Uganda, whose boundaries were little settled, and which touched on the territories of Foreign Powers, it was more difficult for them to be dealt with by the Colonial Office, as was the case with settled territories which touched only on

other British territory, or that over which Her Majesty was suzerain. It would be premature if he were to express an opinion on the subject in connection with a region such as Uganda, where the position was as yet inchoate; but, speaking generally, he thought that the Foreign Office should take charge of territories so situated that International questions were likely to arise respecting them between England and Foreign Powers. Then with regard to the Establishment, and the opinion expressed as to the staff, he would point to the recent experience in Siam as proof of the necessity of keeping up the staff so as to be able to deal with sudden emergencies. The Committee would understand that a crisis might arise suddenly and unexpectedly, and they should always be prepared to meet a crisis if it did arise. What he had said with regard to Uganda applied to Niassa. They had only just begun to exercise their influence there; and it would be premature to declare it a Colony; but with regard to Uganda, it would be highly desirable that they should have the latest information in the possession of the Government, and an assurance that no vital change would be made until the House and the country were in possession of Sir Gerald Portal's Report.

MR. R. WALLACE (Edinburgh, E.) said, he would not have intruded on the Committee but for the tone of the speech delivered by the right hon. Baronet who had just sat down. He wished to emphasise the remarks of the right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean with regard to Uganda. He quite appreciated the position of the Government. The Government was at present in a state in which their judgment was suspended. He did not suppose the Report from the Commissioner was in a state to be presented to the House. At all events, it was not in a state of preparedness for discussion in the House. He would call attention to Enclosure 7, page 24. So far as the Papers were before them, they had a right to information; he presumed, when the Report was laid on the Table, the Government would be able to tell them what they intended doing. Well, the point on which, meanwhile, information was required was this—the Paper before them seemed to him to approve that there were to be Permanent Residents. This seemed to him to be going

beyond the understanding arrived at. He should be glad to find that he was wrong in his suspicions, and he hoped they would soon know that there was to be no Permanent Resident or arrangement of the kind. Another point that occurred to him was that if they were to maintain any permanent connection with that place they would have a second Ireland—a large Catholic community and a considerable Protestant community, and they would have contest for mastery by both Parties. He was not going to enter upon the Irish Home Rule question on this occasion; but he wished to say that, as he was not frightened in the case of Ireland when there were two Parties of this character, he would not be frightened by the application of the same principle in Africa. He went upon broad principles, and he said that as the Government had not been afraid in relation to this matter in Ireland, they need not be alarmed in reference to this district in Africa. He was sorry to be obliged to complain of one feature in Sir Gerald Portal's action. Generally, he thought he was very favourable to that office; but he noticed that at the end of his Dispatch he went out of his way to pay compliments to Bishop Tucker, ignoring the Catholic Bishop. The absence of the Catholic Bishop's name was conspicuous. This seemed to reflect upon him, and to show a tendency or leaning towards the Protestant side, and he did not think they could approve of the idea that they were going to take up that side as a matter of course. He wished to say one word upon another point—the conduct of the British East Africa Company. This company seemed to him to have been acting in direct opposition to the terms of their Charter. He had no hesitation in saying that the evils and mischiefs that had arisen in Uganda were due to a lawless disregard of the conditions of the Charter on the part of the company, who ought to be called upon to bear the charge. The Charter required that before any Treaty could be acted upon it should have the approval of the Secretary of State; but they had acted in the most high-handed manner, disregarding the Secretary of State. In one case he believed the Treaty did not even reach the Secretary of State, much less receive his approbation. Such conduct as this was a source of the greatest trouble. He

was of opinion that the Charter should be withdrawn, because as long as it remained in force the Government of this country would be in danger of being involved in the responsibility arising out of the imprudence and weakness of the company.

THE CHAIRMAN: It appears to me that the hon. Member is wandering from the question. The question of policy does not arise on this Vote, and it is impossible to discuss the conduct of the company and the administration of the Charter. The hon. Member must confine himself to the Vote.

MR. R. WALLACE said, he rose mainly to deal with the Mission of Sir Gerald Portal, and he understood, as that officer was to report on the state of matters in Uganda, the question of the company and its Charter would be relevant to the point of discussion; but he really had exhausted the topic, and, therefore, there was no occasion—still less was there any desire on his part—to prolong the discussion. He hoped they would have from the Government a statement of their attitude on the whole question.

MR. HANBURY (Preston) said, he had been a Member of the Commission which inquired into these Services, and he should be glad to get from the Representative of the Foreign Office some information as to how far the recommendations of the Commission had been carried out. The Commission had recommended that the distinction which at present existed between appointments in the Diplomatic Service and in the Foreign Office should be abolished, and that the property qualification of £400 a year in the case of the former Service should be done away with. He desired to know whether any steps had been taken to give effect to those recommendations? What he wanted to speak about principally, however, was some information which had been given by Mr. Law, one of our two commercial *attachés*, to the effect that our commercial interests were not being looked after by our Ambassadors as they should be. The only *attachés* of this kind we at present possessed were Sir Joseph Crowe at Paris, who represented the whole of Europe with the exception of Russia, and Mr. Law at St. Petersburg; and the latter had stated before the Commis-

Mr. R. Wallace

sion it was practically impossible for him to do all the work that was thrown upon him at St. Petersburg, in the Levant, and in Persia, and he laid great stress on the necessity of there being at each of the higher Embassies some official directly responsible for commercial matters. He said that when he was away from the Embassy—which was generally the case, his duty being to travel through the different countries in his area—he had found that commercial work was not assigned to any particular individual, and he never knew whom to correspond with. This work being everybody's work, was really nobody's. The work did not receive the attention it would receive if all the commercial business were thrown into the hands of one official. We had not at our Embassies men who had commercial training or knowledge, and Mr. Law instanced the Reports that were sent home by the Secretaries of Legations as showing that in our Embassies we had no men of that kind. Some of the Reports were of such little value that the Foreign Office did not take the trouble to publish more than about half of them. That was a state of things that ought to be remedied; but as these commercial *attachés* had only recently been appointed, it would be well, he thought, to wait a little longer to see what use they were before we largely increased their numbers. With regard to the Consular Reports, there was not, he believed, at the Foreign Office any person who had any practical experience of Consular life. At one port in Russia—according to Mr. Law—where 300 British vessels entered in the course of the year, the Consul was only paid £10 a year. According to the same authority, our trade at Moscow was much neglected owing to the fact that we had no fitting Representative there, our Consul receiving a miserable salary, whilst the German Representative drew over £600 a year. The same state of things prevailed at Helsingfors, Revel, and Odessa. He quite agreed with what had been said to-night, and with the recommendations of the Commission, that in view of the small amount we paid our Consuls we should cut down the salaries of some of our Ambassadors. The salary which should be cut down was that of the Ambassador to Paris. The Embassy in Paris cost the country £16,000 a year,

while the Russian cost £10,000, and the German £9,000. The salary of our Ambassador there was equal to the whole cost of the German Embassy. It was said that it was necessary for him to entertain a good deal; but Paris was, by reason of the way in which French society was split up into parties, just now, perhaps, the last place in the world where any Ambassador would do much good by entertaining. As had been pointed out, the men at the top of the Service were highly paid, but the lower officials were badly paid—certainly not on the same scale as the corresponding German officials. This was a matter which required some alteration. He thought it was the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster who had alluded to the fact that neither in ability nor in general qualities was the standard in the case of these officials up to that of other countries, nor to the standard which this country had a right to expect. That was largely due to the drudgery they had to go through in their early years in the Diplomatic Service, which disgusted them with it, and to the absence of any training which fitted them for the work they had to do in the future. The drudgery they had to do absolutely disgusted them with the profession they had taken up. With regard to Consular pensions, while there was no distinction between the Consular and Civil Service scale of pensions there was great difference between the Diplomatic and Civil Service scales. To begin with, anyone in the Diplomatic Service who was ill could draw a pension after five years, whereas in the Civil Service no one could draw it unless he had served 10 years, and the scale of pensions in the Diplomatic Service was ridiculously high. In the Civil Service a man got for every year of service 1-60th of his salary, and in the Diplomatic Service it was fully double that amount. The pension of an Ambassador was based on the salary received during the past three years, and the result was that the pensions we paid to our Ambassadors were extremely high, indeed out of all proportion to Ambassadors in any Foreign Service. As to minor details, he should like to know what account was kept of the valuable plate at the British Embassies abroad? He should also like to know how the

amounts for Ambassadorial expenses and "outfits" were regulated, and why the expenditure in Paris was the fixed sum of £4,000, whilst in connection with other Ambassadors it was one-third of the salary on appointment and one-sixth on transfer? The sum paid under this head in connection with the Embassy in Paris was out of all proportion to the amount paid in respect of outfit in connection with all other Embassies. He did not see why they should go out of their way to add to an item of this kind having regard to the heavy charge already imposed on the British taxpayer in connection with the Ambassador to France. He had to complain that the regulation of the Foreign Office requiring heads of Legations to send home confidential Reports as to the officials serving under them was never observed, and he wished to urge on the Government that there should be some limit to the authority of the Foreign Secretary in the selection of Consuls. The only condition at present was that a Consul on appointment should not be more than 50 years of age, but the most incompetent man might be jobbed into the most important position. It was all very well to say that a Foreign Secretary would not do this, but such things had happened in the past and might happen again. There ought to be some rule which would prevent such a thing happening. A great deal of injury was done to English trade from the fact that Consuls often knew nothing of the language of the country in which they resided. It seemed ridiculous to send men into foreign countries to discharge duties so important to England, and expect them to do so efficiently, when they were unacquainted with the very language of the countries to which they were sent. With regard to the Soudan, he was told that as the winter came on Osman Digna would be "raiding" again. A great deal of the Lancashire trade had been lost through this "raiding." We lost our customers through trade being stopped because crops were raided, and the people had nothing to buy Manchester goods with, and because in some cases the people who would have traded were killed. He thought the idea of starving out the Soudan was a ridiculous one, the sole result being that trade for England, which ought to go through Suakim went through Massowah, the only gainers

Mr. Hanbury

being the Italians. He put aside the question of our pledges to the Soudanese. There people were told we would protect them, and they were disarmed, and then we left them to the attacks of Osman Digna and retired to S. akim without giving them any protection at all. We had broken our pledges to the natives of the Soudan. And both from the point of view of honour and of trade, the present policy of starving out the Soudan ought to be abandoned. With regard to the present position of Nyassaland, he wished to know whether the country was under the authority of the Imperial Government, or under that of the British South Africa Company? There were very grave doubts on the point. To begin with, the Public Accounts Committee had had complaints brought before them of the way in which judicial fees were being expended in building a Court House at Blantyre. The British Government could get no account of the taxation, and revenue, and expenditure of that country, and there was nothing to show whether this money was being properly expended or not. Then Proclamations were issued, but it was impossible to ascertain the effect of them at the Foreign Office. This was unfair to the traders, who had a right to know the general laws of the country, so far as they were embodied in Proclamations. Mr. Albert Grey, in a letter he had addressed to *The Spectator*, had stated that Nyassaland was practically the property of the company, which subsidised Her Majesty's Government at the rate of £17,000 per annum; and that the expenses of the Commissioner of Nyassaland were paid by the company and not by the Imperial Government. They knew that Mr. Johnston acted as Commissioner of Her Majesty's Government in the Protectorate, and also as agent of the British South Africa Company in their sphere of influence. That was an anomalous dual position which he did not think tended to good government. He asked for a definite statement as to who was responsible for the government of this important district of Nyassaland. Was it Her Majesty's Government, or was it, as this Director of the Company said, that the British South Africa Company were subsidising the Imperial Government, finding them £17,500 a year, and paying the expenses

of the Imperial Commissioner? He did not say how this ought to be, but he maintained that they ought not to play fast and loose with the matter. If Nyassaland was to be governed by the British South Africa Company, let them say so, but if it was not, it ought to be governed as an Imperial Protectorate, and we ought not to accept a subsidy.

*SIR A. ROLLIT (Islington, S.) said, that the right hon. Baronet had rendered a public service by drawing attention to the Ridley Commission, and to the necessity of a closer relation between the Diplomatic and Consular Services. He was afraid it would be some time before that reform could be effected, but in the meantime he desired to point out the great importance of rendering to our Diplomats every possible commercial assistance, in order that they might be able properly to fulfil the duties they owed to their country in connection with the commercial affairs of this country. He was bound to admit that he thought there was improvement in diplomatic circles with regard to their commercial duties; but it was capable of extension. If their position was not strengthened he had no doubt that the commercial interests of this country would greatly suffer. The number of our commercial *attachés* was less than it ought to be, while the areas over which their duties extended were too large and ought to be reduced. In the Diplomatic Service it was necessary for our Ambassadors in large and important negotiations to have ready at hand the assistance of some one familiar with all the commercial interests of the country. Take the case, which occurred to him at the moment, of the negotiations connected with the Commercial Treaty with Spain. That was a matter of immense moment to the trade and industries of this country. At present we were under a *modus vivendi*; but when the Cortes met, there might be some ratification of the proposed arrangements. He wanted to know who had been rendering, more or less permanently, assistance to our Ambassador in Madrid, and whether during the ultimate portion of the negotiations he would have that or what assistance at his command? On behalf of the Chambers of Commerce he had seen Sir Henry Drummond Wolff before he left for Spain, and he was bound to admit that that gentle-

man had entered fully into these questions; but there were many matters with which it was not possible that he should be so fully conversant as to be able to represent the wants and desires of this country adequately. He hoped the Under Secretary would be able to give an assurance to the Committee that when the Treaty was in course of revision commercial assistance would be given to Sir Henry Drummond Wolff in the matter. He agreed with the hon. Member for Preston that the list of Consular remuneration required revision. A good deal more expedition, moreover, might be used in the publication of Consular Reports. These were not the days in which they could wait for commercial intelligence for a whole year with regard to foreign trading competitors, and yet he noticed that a Consular Report from Bavaria, dated "August 20th," was brought up to the end of last year. That Report was full of most important and suggestive matters—matters that had a distinct bearing on all our commercial interests. It was only a small document, covering not more than 15 pages, and yet nearly a whole year elapsed before it was made known to the country. Such a state of things should not be allowed to exist. He would suggest that the Congested Districts Board in Ireland should give most careful perusal to the Commercial Reports which had been sent by the Consul in Denmark. These Reports dealt with matters of the greatest importance to the people of this country, and they were suggestive in every possible way of that collectivism in agriculture which was all-important. He referred to creameries and the making of butter. From what he had himself seen, the collection of milk and the packing of butter at Copenhagen were admirable. If the Danish methods were observed in Ireland they would be suggestive of improvements there which would be of the greatest value. One of the chief exporters of produce from Denmark had told him that the one country which he and others feared, as a rival, in the future, if it possessed better processes of preparation, manufacture, and packing, was Ireland. As to Newfoundland, he urged, with reference to the claims of the French for compensation in the matter of the lobster factories, that equal consideration should be given to the

owners of British vessels and other subjects as were given to the French, for their ships had been seized and confiscated under the forms of law, and they had been most inequitably dealt with.

*MR. A. C. MORTON said, he desired to support the observations of the hon. Member who had just sat down as to Consular Reports. Two years ago he had suggested to the Government that some means should be taken to circulate the Reports and other Papers for the benefit of the public by sending them to the Public Libraries and other institutions. He believed that if these were so circulated they would be found of great value. The Vote comprised very nearly half-a-million of money, and he was afraid that there was a great deal of waste in connection with it. It struck him as extraordinary that whilst our Ambassador in the United States received only £6,000 a year our Ambassador in France received £9,000, and those in Austria and Turkey obtained £8,000 each. He should like to have some explanation of the differences in the amounts. He also desired to know why it was we had Secretaries of Legation at Coburg and Darmstadt, and a Minister in Saxony? He wanted, further, to know why certain Members of the House who happened to be lawyers had been paid for their services in reference to the Behring Sea Arbitration, whilst laymen who had attended that Arbitration had not received anything at all? If he had his way, if there was anybody who was not paid it would be the lawyers, because they already got enough of the public money. At the same time, he congratulated the Attorney General (Sir C. Russell) and the ex-Attorney General (Sir R. Webster) on the services they had rendered to the country in connection with the Arbitration. As to Uganda, he thought that money was being spent there with a view probably to annexation. He was told that the majority of the Cabinet were infected with the Jingo sentiment. Everybody knew that the Tories took an extraordinary interest in foreign affairs, the reason being that they wished to divert attention from home affairs, and to prevent necessary reforms being carried out. He noticed very often that when the Liberal Party was in power those who had seats on the Treasury Bench did not think it at

all necessary that they should carry out Radical principles. That was not good enough for the Radical Party, and he should certainly like to know what was now the position of the East Africa Company with regard to Uganda? He was afraid that there was some danger of Her Majesty's Government being led into doing a great deal more than their supporters anticipated, and he trusted they would give a further assurance that they intended to keep the undertaking already given not to pledge the House or the country in any way until after Sir Gerald Portal had reported.

*SIR R. TEMPLE (Surrey, Kingston) desired to assure the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down that the reason why Conservative Members took a keen interest in all Consular and Diplomatic matters were not those which the hon. Member supposed. Their real reasons were that they desired to secure the promotion of British interests abroad, the security of British capital, and the extension of British commerce. If the hon. Gentleman and his friends did not sympathise with those objects, he thought they would have sooner or later to reckon with the industrial classes of this country.

MR. A. C. MORTON said, Radical Members entirely sympathised with the objects which the hon. Baronet had stated, but it was the Radical and Liberal Party that had really made the trade of this country what it was.

*SIR R. TEMPLE said, he would not discuss with the hon. Gentleman which Party had shown the greatest interest in the extension of foreign commerce in semi-civilised regions beyond the ocean. He wished to make some remarks on the Consular Service, with which he necessarily had a special acquaintance. He quite agreed with all that had been said regarding the extreme importance of that Service, and the importance also of its being properly organised. The Service was adorned with many officers and gentlemen who did credit to their country; and as they were not present to speak for themselves, he desired to say on their behalf, as one who knew their worth, that England was greatly indebted to her Consuls and Vice Consuls in many parts of the world. At the same time, he admitted that the Service ought to be better organised, although

Sir A. Rollit

he was afraid the subject of organisation was more difficult than it at first sight appeared. There was already an organised group of Consuls in the China Seas for China and Japan, and he fancied that no other nation trading in those regions had a better staff of Consuls than we had. He thought it would be desirable to have one group of Consuls for the Mediterranean. He was very well acquainted with the shores of the Mediterranean, and he believed that one or two languages would carry a man pretty well all around the Mediterranean—certainly, Arabic and Italian would be sufficient for that purpose. There might also be a group for the West Indies. He had often heard complaints made of Consuls being transferred from somewhere in Asia Minor or Turkey to the West Indies. In carrying on the work of organisation a difficulty always arose with reference to the arranging a proper size for each group, and for giving the officers proper chances of promotion in their own group. With reference to Uganda, he had listened with regret—he might say with pain—to the expressions used by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean (Sir C. Dilke), and afterwards by the hon. Member for Edinburgh (Mr. R. Wallace), regarding the conduct of Captain Lugard. He thought that great reserve ought to be exercised by hon. Members in criticising our officers, who had certainly done their best for us.

MR. A. C. MORTON: He is not our officer.

*SIR R. TEMPLE said, Captain Lugard was an officer of the British Army, and was employed by a great British Chartered Company. In that sense he was a British officer, and he had certainly done his best for his country.

*MR. A. C. MORTON said, it had been distinctly stated over and over again that Captain Lugard was lent to the Company, and that we were in no way responsible for him.

*SIR R. TEMPLE said, he had not stated that we were responsible. What he had said was that Captain Lugard virtually was our officer. At all events, whether he was our officer or not, he was our countryman and a member of our Army, who had done yeoman service abroad. He thought hon. Members should maintain a careful reserve until the whole particulars were forthcoming. He was

sure that Captain Lugard would come out of the ordeal of an investigation of his conduct as gold came out of the furnace. Two gentlemen opposite had spoken of compensation having possibly to be paid to some of the Roman Catholics in Uganda. He hoped that the Government would not consent to pay any compensation unless and until a proper judicial investigation had taken place. As regarded Sir Gerald Portal's Mission, it would be very interesting if the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs would explain what was the exact position of our Representatives in Uganda at this moment. Was it not the case that Sir Gerald Portal left Uganda, proceeded a certain distance towards his headquarters at Zanzibar, and then retraced his steps? Whilst he quite understood that no conclusion could be arrived at by the Committee until the result of the Mission was understood, and there had been an opportunity of discussing the question, he might be allowed to express a hope that the Mission would result in the establishment of the British Protectorate in Uganda. He said this partly on behalf of British commerce and of British interests generally in East Africa, and partly in the interests of the religious world, over and above all the arguments relating to the Slave Trade. The day had passed when the House of Commons could afford to ignore the wishes of the great number of our countrymen who were interested in Protestant Missions. He could assure the House that the keenest anxiety was taken in the subject, and that all those who were interested in Protestant Missions breathed a prayer that the House might be led to a wise conclusion in the matter, and that the Protectorate so long wanted might be established.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping), said, that whilst appointments had, he believed, been made from the Foreign Office to the Diplomatic Service, he was not aware that anybody had been transferred from the Diplomatic Service to the Foreign Office, although he knew that such transfers were frequently desired by members of the Diplomatic Service. He noticed that the hon. Member for Peterborough (Mr. A. C. Morton), who was always ready to abolish everything, wished to abolish the Missions at Coburg and Darmstadt. There was no doubt that we received

valuable information from Germany on commercial matters ; and in view of our relations to the present Duke of Coburg, it was necessary that we should keep up our Mission in that Duchy. He believed the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Hanbury) overstated the matter when he said that *attachés* of 10 years' standing were kept at copying work, but he believed that *attachés* of seven or eight years' standing had to do that work. This rather pointed to the necessity of creating a sufficient staff of permanent officials at the Embassies for the purpose of doing clerical work of this kind. He was aware that many of our Representatives abroad were against the establishment of such a staff, but he thought the suggestion was well worth the attention of the Secretary of State.

*MAJOR JONES (Carmarthen, &c.) thought we were paying too much at one end and too little at the other of our Diplomatic and Consular Services. For a great many years we had paid more to our Representative at Washington than the President of the United States received, whilst we were not giving a penny to Her Majesty's Consular Representative at Saint Paul, which was a very important commercial centre. A short time ago, having written to one of Her Majesty's Vice Consuls for information respecting towage dues, pilotage, &c., he received a reply in which the Vice Consul said that as no allowance was made to him for postage he was compelled to post unstamped the replies to those letters in which postage had not been enclosed. He (Major Jones) contended that it was somewhat undignified to place our Representative in such a position that he had to write humiliating notes of this kind. Some little allowance ought, he submitted, to be made to our Consuls for postage, stationery, and office expenses.

MR. R. G. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.) thought that everybody in the House must have agreed with what the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir C. Dilke) said with regard to our Chartered Companies. Our diplomatic relations might be strained not only with regard to the British East Africa Company, but with regard to other Chartered Companies.

THE CHAIRMAN : That subject comes under another Vote.

MR. R. G. WEBSTER said, he wished to refer to the Mozambique Company, with regard to which there was a

Consular Vote, and with whose Suzerain State—Portugal—we had Consular relations. The Mozambique Company was established in 1889, and various Charters and rights were given to individuals in the country. Within a very short time afterwards the British South Africa Company was formed. That Company obtained from some individual, who they declared was a King, a Charter, or deed, and they then bundled all the settlers, many of whom were British subjects, out of that part of the country. These people attempted to appeal to the High Court of this country, but were told there was no jurisdiction. There was a jurisdiction at the time of Warren Hastings ; and though he (Mr. Webster) was a Member of what had been described as the Jingo Party, he was ready to stand up for those who were wronged, whether they were British or Portuguese subjects. He did not wish to blame anybody for the arbitrary action of the British South Africa Company ; he simply blamed the system under which we had given over our rights to a Company.

THE CHAIRMAN : The hon. Member must not go into the operations of the British South Africa Company. They do not come under the Vote.

MR. R. G. WEBSTER said, that in that case he would bring the question before the Foreign Office.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said, that in view of the fact that the Diplomatic and Consular Vote had increased this year by nearly £27,000, he did not wonder that that undaunted patriot, the hon. Member for Peterborough (Mr. A. C. Morton), had attacked it with his usual vehemence and success. The right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir C. Dilke) had expressed an opinion that our Ambassadors were not too well paid. Witness after witness before the Ridley Commission avowed that they were more highly-paid than those of other countries. The standard that ought to be adopted was not what we paid here, but what other countries paid, for that was regulated by the cost of living in the particular place. One of the arguments put forward in favour of the present high salaries was that our Ambassadors had to entertain very largely. In his opinion, that was absurd. He thought it a very vulgar idea of an Ambassador that he should go abroad to dispense chicken and champagne, and he did not believe

an Ambassador ever obtained any State secret or other secret by that method of procedure. With reference to the plate, he knew that the plate in the Paris Embassy alone cost this country £8,500 15s. 11d. This would indicate that we had knocking about the rest of the world something like £100,000 worth of plate. He would draw the attention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to this fact, so that when occasion arose the right hon. Gentleman, instead of putting his hand into the Treasury Chest, might put it into the Ambassadorial Plate Chest. He (Mr. Gibson Bowles) would like to see the Consuls increased, and the Ambassadors decreased, in number, and he would also like to see the Consuls better paid. He objected to the monstrous system of private letters indulged in by our Ambassadors. It had been stated that Ambassadors put their most important information into private letters, which were the property of the Secretary of State for the time being. No record whatever was kept of these letters; those received from Ambassadors were taken away from the office by the Secretary of State, and the result was that the records of the Foreign Office were absolutely falsified by them. The system was reckless, bad, and improvident, and he should have thought that a high-minded Government like the present Government, with a particularly high-minded Secretary for Foreign Affairs, would at once have taken steps to put an end to it. He complained that the methods by which correspondence was conveyed to and from the Ambassadors was such as to enable Foreign Governments to get hold of our most secret affairs. There were several foreigners employed as messengers in our Ambassadorial Service. There was one who had been in the Permanent Service, most improperly, he thought, and perhaps it was that official who had divulged the secrets referred to by the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean. He considered that our Ambassadorial Service was altogether too dear. In Denmark our establishment cost £4,132, while France, whose interest in the country was much greater, spent only £3,080 there. In the Netherlands we spent £4,478, and France £3,600. In Sweden the figures were—England, £4,000; France, £2,960. Switzerland, the only country in which the natl. of the

French Ambassadorial Service was greater than the cost of ours, the figures being—England £1,900, and France £2,860; but, as was well-known, Switzerland was of the most terrible moment to France. He thought the cost of our Establishments might be reduced in Denmark by £1,500; in the Netherlands by £1,600; in Sweden by £1,000; and in Switzerland by £500; and we should still have our Diplomatic Service carried on excellently well in those countries. Then there were a number of small German States in which we maintained Diplomatic Establishments without the slightest necessity. Our Establishment at Bavaria cost £2,150; at Coburg, £700; at Darmstadt, £702; and at Saxony, £1,150; and yet at all those places there was absolutely no diplomatic work to be done. All those States formed part of the German Empire; and as their foreign affairs were conducted at Berlin, our Diplomatic Establishments were altogether unnecessary. He was surprised that the present Radical Government, which was pledged to economy, did not abolish every one of these unnecessary posts, by which they would save the country £2,550 a year. The time had arrived when our system of Embassies should be overhauled. England had given a pledge to the world that she would never fight again; and as no one now believed that there was any danger of war with England under any circumstances whatever, the action and influence of our Ambassadors was very much circumscribed. Since 1882 there had been no Report from the British Commissioner who had been sent out to secure the free navigation of the mouth of the Danube. It was time that something was done in the matter. It seemed to him that we did not want a Commissioner there at all, for he was simply set aside or bullied by Russia. What we should do was to secure the separate and independent rights of Roumania to the free navigation of the mouth of the Danube. He noticed that at Shanghai there was a Consulate General and Judge, as well as a Consul and Assistant Judge. The business had been done there for years by one Consul, and he thought one Consul was still sufficient. But, in any case, we had there an officer who discharged duties which were inconsistent with each other, for it was impossible for a man properly to be a Judge and a Consul at the same

time. As Consul he was the advocate of British interests, but as Judge he ought to be entirely independent. He thought this officer should be deprived of his Consular duties and remain Judge only.

*MR. BURDETT-COUTTS (Westminster) said, that he recognised the inconvenience of attempting a debate on East African affairs at such a time in the Session. But an attack had been made on the Company and on one of its officers which called for a brief reply. He did not have the advantage of hearing the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean (Sir C. Dilke), but he did listen to the hon. Member for East Edinburgh (Mr. R. Wallace) indulging in a ferocious attack—unsupported by a single atom of fact—on Captain Lugard, the brave officer who had done such valuable work in Uganda, almost single-handed, and under tremendous difficulties.

MR. R. WALLACE: I refrained from mentioning Captain Lugard's name. Anything I said was about the British South Africa Company.

*MR. BURDETT-COUTTS said, he was sorry to say he had clear in his recollection the fact that the hon. Member had referred to the Administrator of the company. The Administrator of the company was Captain Lugard, who was responsible for everything that had occurred in Uganda at the time. The hon. Member had been ruled out of Order; but he (Mr. Burdett-Coutts) found this connection between the work of Captain Lugard and the subject under discussion, that the former had paved a way for the future work which he hoped Sir Gerald Portal would do in that country in the future. The attack on Captain Lugard was based on the fact that he had not waited for the approval of the Foreign Office before taking action. He commended to everyone who was acquainted with the history of British enterprise in all parts of the world the ridiculous suggestion it was that a man engaged in carrying out an enterprise in a wild, savage country like South Africa should wait for 12 months until he got a reply from the Foreign Office, before taking action on the critical problems that hourly presented themselves. He would not, at the present time, go into the general attacks which had been made on the com-

pany. He would only say that it was a matter of special regret to him to hear those attacks of unreasoning violence made by a Representative of the capital of a country which had always taken a foremost part in every enterprise for the amelioration of the savage tribes in Africa, and a country especially which had originated and had given the greatest and most valuable support to the British East Africa Company. The company claimed, and believed they could prove to the hilt, that they had expended the greater portion of their capital in doing a national work, and he was sure that that same public opinion which had thrust them forward in Uganda would, when all the circumstances were under review, declare that in pursuing their way amidst the greatest difficulties the Company had always kept clear before them the honour of British enterprise in that country.

SIR G. BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale) said, he desired to say a few words on one important matter, upon which he had had recent personal experience. This was the question of the amalgamation of their Diplomatic and Consular Services. He emphasised the fact that their Diplomatic Service in nearly all the capitals was overworked at the present moment; but there was an improvement desired with the view of getting better commercial information for the traders of this country. In appointing commercial agents, however, they must be very careful not to fall into the error of other countries, and appoint those who were, to say the least, financially interested in the concerns of the locality. They ought also to have some means instituted for a redistribution or reclassification of salaries in accordance with the growing wants or the decreasing wants of a particular post. If there were some general scheme for the redistribution of salaries at stated periods, he believed they would get more work done with greater economy. Here, as elsewhere, they were very much too apt to judge of the importance of the work done by the statement of the exports and imports of the country, whereas those who had been behind the scenes knew that equally important British interests were those of the employment of British subjects in the country, and of the investment of British capital in any particular country. He was convinced that their Diplomatic

Mr. Gibson Bowles

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and their Consular Services were both underpaid; but, at the same time, he must acknowledge that they obtained far better work from both those Services than any other nation did.

*SIR E. GREY said, the most important point raised was that of the appointment of commercial *attachés* for different districts, whose business it would be to travel over those districts, ascertain their needs, and give advice as to the organisation of the commercial trade of those districts. That was an important suggestion, but he was not able to announce any decision in the matter, because the power of the Foreign Office in procuring assistance of this kind was, undoubtedly, limited by the funds placed at its disposal. The commercial work was some of the most important work to be discharged at the Foreign Office, and he was glad to say that it was receiving more and more attention. During the time he had been at the Foreign Office he had seen a growth of Commercial Reports, and the tendency was for them to grow more and more. Preliminary steps had been taken to carry out the recommendations of the Royal Commission towards the amalgamation of the Foreign Office and Diplomatic Services, and successful candidates in the examinations recently held had received certificates qualifying them for both Services. Other recommendations of the Commission, which there was no intention to evade, were going to be discussed with the Treasury, and since the date of the Report of the Commission something had been done towards the reduction of small German Legations. As to the alleged over-working of Embassies, he did not think that there was any general overwork, though, undoubtedly, the work was irregular—sometimes very heavy and sometimes light. So far as the present Government was concerned, no charge could be made against the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of having imported into the Consular Service people from outside who had no special training. The doctrine had been strictly adhered to that when a good post fell vacant it should be given to someone who had already proved his fitness by work done in the Service. With regard to trading and unpaid Consuls, he admitted that wherever there was any British shipping or trade, they should have a paid Consul, but naturally they

had to make the best use of what they had, and where they found an unpaid Consul it was because it was necessary to place some limit on the expenditure devoted to the Consular Service abroad. They endeavoured to devote the expenditure to the most important places, and filled up the less important positions by unpaid men who were engaged in trade, but who were well recommended and trustworthy people. He would only say with regard to the dates of the Commercial Reports, it was sometimes true that the dates were considerably in advance of the time to which the Report referred, but that was in consequence of it frequently happening that the statistics necessary were not published sooner in foreign countries. He passed over the plate provided for the various Ambassadors, though he rather thought the hon. Member for Lynn Regis (Mr. Gibson Bowles) did recommend the Chancellor of the Exchequer to have it seized and melted down for purposes of the Mint. As to the question of private letters, that was not a matter the Committee would really expect him to deal with, as there had been no change made in the system. With regard to the larger political questions raised, he would take first the question of the Soudan. He could only repeat on that what he had stated the other day, that no doubt it was very desirable that the Soudan should be opened up to trade, but the difficulty was that past history had not made it easy to approach the people in the Soudan itself. Any means that were taken would have to depend on political considerations, and, of course, the policy of the Egyptian Government would enter into the question. As to the present state of hostilities, he hoped they would soon pass away, but he was afraid it would be a question of time. Then he took the question of Nyassaland. It was true that Her Majesty's Representative there occupied more than one position. He would answer at once what the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Hanbury) had said, that it was the Imperial Authority that was responsible for affairs in Nyassaland, and to the Foreign Office complaints must be addressed in regard to any matter in that district. The Chartered South Africa Company had subsidised Nyassaland to the extent of £10,000, but at the same time it did not carry with it any reversionary rights.

Undoubtedly, when the late Government were dealing with this question of Nyassaland, when they determined to have a Protectorate, they were bound to ask the House for a sum of money or take advantage of the South Africa Company. Up to the present moment it remained the same. They had to choose on such questions as this either payment of a sum annually for the administration of the country, place it under a Chartered Company, or they might receive from the Chartered Company an annual sum in payment of expenses, because, somehow, the expenses had to be met. That was the plan of the late Government, and was the plan of the present Government. As to the suggestion that Nyassaland ought to be transferred to the Colonial Office, that was a question that might arise, but not just yet. The hon. Member for St. Pancras (Mr. Webster) believed it belonged so much to the Foreign Office that he had endeavoured to-night to discuss the whole question.

*SIR C. W. DILKE: That was on the difficulty in Matabeleland.

*SIR E. GREY: Yes; but his contention was that something which was now under the Colonial Office ought rather to be discussed on a Foreign Office Vote.

MR. R. G. WEBSTER: I simply stated that wrongs had been committed against Portuguese subjects in Mozambique territory.

SIR E. GREY said, with regard to the former points, reference was made to the arrangements that were closed before the present Government came into power. In the early stages of these African territories a great deal of the correspondence, chiefly in reference to boundaries, had to be carried on by the Foreign Office, and it was therefore convenient that for a time they should be administered by that Department.

MR. HANBURY asked why there was no Return of the expenditure and taxation, and why it was impossible for anyone interested in Nyassaland to get information as to the proclamations?

*SIR E. GREY should have thought the information could have been obtained from the Foreign Office. He believed some new arrangement had been come to; through its being a new territory, a good deal remained to be done in the way of organisation, and this was being done by the Commissioner as fast as possible, and he informed the Foreign

Office fully in the matter. Then the question of Uganda had obtained considerable attention, and the hon. Member for Peterborough (Mr. A. C. Morton) seemed to think that the present Government were using Uganda as a means of diverting attention from home matters.

MR. A. C. MORTON: I referred not to the present Government, but to the Tory Government generally.

*SIR E. GREY understood the hon. Member to say that the present Government were inclined to carry out a Jingo policy, one of the features of which was to divert attention from home affairs. He did not know that the present Government had done anything of the sort; he thought it had been very much the other way, and that the Government had not directed the attention of the House chiefly to Uganda, or any other foreign question. The hon. Member for East Edinburgh (Mr. R. Wallace) objected to the word "Resident." It might well have had "temporary" before it, but, as a matter of fact, Sir Gerald Portal was the Resident at the time in Uganda, and the hon. Member ought not to infer from that that any step was taken to appoint a permanent Resident. If the hon. Member read the correspondence he would see that the arrangement come to was not dictated by Sir Gerald Portal, but was an arrangement that the two heads of the Mission came to; Sir Gerald Portal signed it because it was drawn up in his presence. When the right hon. Baronet the Member for North-East Lancashire was speaking on this question he (Sir E. Grey) stated he thought individual opinions had been attributed to him that he had not expressed. What he really did say was that the Government had been told by the only people who had been in Uganda or near it that the withdrawal of the company would cause serious disaster. The Government decided to send an expedition to the spot in order that those disasters might be prevented, and that a Report might be made on the best method of dealing with the country, or, if it was decided to withdraw, the best means of that withdrawal. He had never gone further than that. In the circumstances, the Government were bound to send Sir Gerald Portal's Mission; and so long as that Mission remained in the country they had a right to expect that the Government would

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make such arrangements that none of the disasters which were apprehended should occur. For instance, the other day four officers were sent to Uganda, but they were not sent there to take new measures, but simply in order to take over the control of the Soudanese troops, so as to guarantee the security of the country until it was decided whether it should be occupied permanently or not. That was his answer to the right hon. Baronet the Member for North-East Lancashire. In reply to his hon. Friends behind him, who were anxious that they should not be committed against their wills to the permanent occupation of Uganda, all he could say was that Sir Gerald Portal had stated that in taking over the Soudanese troops in that country he had carefully prevented anything being done that would lead to the permanent occupation of the territory. All that the Government had done was—without prejudice to the question whether the occupation was to be permanent or temporary—to guarantee the peace of the territory until they had arrived at a final decision in the matter. Sir Gerald Portal was now on his way home, and the Government had received recently from him only a short telegram which corresponded with the information that appeared in the newspapers, and until they had obtained further information from him they could arrive at no final determination in reference to the matter. But undoubtedly he could say that there was no intention in the minds of the Government to come to a hasty decision with regard to it, and until the House had had an opportunity of considering the subject. He had now travelled over all the points raised.

*SIR C. W. DILKE: There is the question of the French Catholic claims.

*SIR E. GREY said, the Government had not come to any decision on that, as they required further consideration.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.) said, the hon. Baronet had made a very important statement. Did he pledge the Government that they would take no steps with regard to the retention of Uganda or the future government of that country without first submitting the matter to the consideration of the House?

*SIR E. GREY said, he was not in a position to pledge the Government to that extent; all he could say was that

the Government had taken no decision at present, and did not anticipate taking any decision, certainly, before the Autumn Session. Sir Gerald Portal had not reached the coast; and, before any final decision was taken, they must communicate with him. Emergencies might arise, but undoubtedly it was not their present intention to come to any specific decision on this question before other Papers were laid before Parliament.

SIR R. TEMPLE asked where Sir Gerald Portal was now?

SIR E. GREY replied that Sir Gerald Portal was somewhere between Uganda and the coast, but he could not state exactly where; he expected to be at the coast at the end of the month.

SIR G. BADEN-POWELL asked if he was to understand that on the question of principle no decision would be come to with regard to Uganda before the matter was discussed by Parliament?

MR. A. C. MORTON asked whether the hon. Baronet was going to run away from the pledge which the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had given, that nothing should be done with regard to the retention of Uganda until the House had had an opportunity of discussing the matter?

*SIR E. GREY said, that, of course, any pledge that had been given by the Prime Minister would have far greater force than anything that he could say. He had already said that no decision would be come to in the matter by the Government before the Autumn Sittings. Of the questions that remained there was the question of the Danube. They had had a Representative on the Danube Commission for many years, and there was no reason to alter the arrangement just now. It was most important they should have a Representative on that Commission; and, as to the publication of the Reports, they dealt usually with details, which were not of sufficient general interest to be published. Larger questions might arise involving careful consideration, and that was one reason why they kept their Representative on the Danube Commission. With reference to the last question raised, the consolidation of the two offices of Consul General and of Judge at Shanghai, the result of the amalgamation was a saving of £2,000 a year in salary and £416 a year in rent. The step was not taken without full

consideration, because the saving ought not to be made if it was to result to the detriment of the work to be done. The appeal cases were few in number, and it was felt the work might be done by one man, and accordingly the authorities were well advised to make this considerable reduction.

*SIR C. W. DILKE: There is the further question of the Niger Company's lands.

SIR E. GREY said, that in time the coterminous boundaries of the Niger Company with those of foreign States in Africa would be delimited by agreement with other countries. The question of boundaries was one of the most troublesome at the Foreign Office. So far as they could they were confirming the paper boundaries that now existed by lines traced on the spot.

*MR. A. C. MORTON asked whether the Trade Reports from our Consuls abroad could not be presented to the Public Libraries throughout the country?

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES wished to ask a question arising under the China Vote—namely, whether the hon. Gentleman could not now give them Papers with regard to the Pamirs matter, and also Papers with regard to Siam? There might be some difficulty with regard to the Pamirs; but with regard to Siam, he thought the time had now arrived when they might be allowed to know—which was the most important thing to know—what the Government did when the question first arose?

COMMANDER BETHELL asked the Government whether Metu was to be now regarded as a Protectorate or not?

SIR E. GREY: It is regarded as a Protectorate.

COMMANDER BETHELL: Is Mr. Reed Consul there?

SIR E. GREY said, the country was a British Protectorate when the present Government came into Office, and it remained so still. It was not annexed to Zanzibar, but it was being administered from Zanzibar.

COMMANDER BETHELL asked if it was to be administered by the Zanzibar Consul General?

SIR E. GREY: Yes; and the hon. Member would see the exact terms of the Proclamation in the last Paper that had been laid. With regard to Siam, he was afraid the incidents were not closed; and until they were closed it would be

impossible to lay Papers on this subject without running the risk of producing further complications to those that had already existed. With regard to the Trade Reports, he might say they had continual applications at the Foreign Office for a supply of these Trade Reports. The practice was to present them to the House first, and to inform other applicants where they could be freely purchased.

MR. A. C. MORTON observed that the hon. Baronet had not answered his question with respect to the hon. Gentleman opposite and the Behring Sea Arbitration.

SIR E. GREY said, that he had no wish to under-rate the work done by the hon. Member opposite on the Behring Sea Arbitration, but he would point out that the arrangements for that Commission were concluded by the late Government.

MR. A. C. MORTON wanted to know upon what principle a Member of the House who was not a lawyer was remunerated for his services upon one scale, while Members of the House who were lawyers were paid upon quite another scale?

SIR E. GREY said, it was not a question of principle at all.

Vote agreed to.

2. £638, to complete the sum for Slave Trade Services.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES observed that, whilst the efforts of the Government had been devoted with a considerable amount of success to the suppression of the Slave Trade on the East Coast of Africa, there had arisen a very considerable Slave Trade on the North Coast. The centre of the Slave Trade had been changed. It was now no longer at or near Zanzibar, but was still being carried on, though in a less degree, on the North Coast. He should, therefore, like to know whether there was any intention of extending the operations for the suppression of the Slave Trade in the direction of the Gulf of Sidra, where, he was informed, a large number of caravans arrived each year, and where the trade in slaves was still going on?

SIR W. HARCOURT said, that he was not aware of any intention at the present time to extend the operations in the direction which the hon. Member indicated.

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MR. JESSE COLLINGS (Birmingham, Bordesley) said, that while the Government were asking for this Vote to put down slavery on the seaboard, he was afraid, from the statement of the hon. Baronet, that they had an intention of giving up the control over the sources of this traffic. If that was to be their policy, then he thought the country should know, and should be released from wasting this money for putting down the Slave Trade, after having abandoned the country—if it was their intention to abandon it—in which the sources of that trade existed.

SIR E. GREY: I expressly said they had come to no decision.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS said, it was true the hon. Baronet had said no decision had been come to; but the reply left grave doubts as to what was the intention of the Government. The British people would regard this Vote for the suppression of the Slave Trade on the seaboard as insufficient if the Government gave up all control over the country inland where that Slave Trade mainly originated.

Vote agreed to.

3. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £84,066, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894, for sundry Colonial Services, including Expenses incurred under 'The Pacific Islanders' Protection Act, 1875,' and certain Charges connected with South Africa."

COMMANDER BETHELL (York, E.R., Holderness) observed that they had had no Papers whatever upon the progress of British Bechuanaland during the last two or three years. For a year or two in the ordinary commercial intelligence furnished to this House they had small leaflets about Bechuanaland, giving them the revenue and expenditure. No balance-sheet had been presented to them, and it would be very convenient if they could have such a statement, especially now, when there was a railway proposed to be made through Bechuanaland to the North, by which the revenues of Bechuanaland were to be used in order to guarantee the interest of the expenditure upon that line. He was not going to criticise the construction of the line by the British South Africa

Company—he believed there was a gentleman present who would have something to say on that subject. He was not adverse, but, on the contrary, was favourable to a line being made to develop the country; and, although he was not favourable to a Chartered Company, he thought the promotion of a transaction like that might be usefully performed by the British South Africa Company, nor did he object to the funds of the Protectorate being used for that purpose. He desired to know whether the revenues of the Protectorate were sufficient to provide the £20,000 a year which had to be found for the interest on the outlay incurred by the construction of the railway? Of course, if he had an assurance that the revenues of the Protectorate were sufficient for the purpose, and would not inconvenience the expenditure in the Protectorate, his objection, at any rate, would be removed. He might say, upon the general policy of constructing the railway, he thought it would be a benefit to Bechuanaland by tending to open up good land, which might be usefully used towards increasing the prosperity of the country. He should also like to have some information about the action of the Government in Bechuanaland in relation to the social progress of the people, education, and so on. The only other subject on which he desired to say a word or two was Swaziland. His opinion was that the interest had gone out of this question a great deal. There was no doubt that in the Transvaal the influx of English people had been so great as to have a considerable effect on the Legislature there, and it would become much greater in process of time. The anxiety which was so largely felt by a great many people on the question of Swaziland two or three years ago had largely vanished on that account, and so far as he was concerned, if the people of Swaziland were agreeable to be incorporated in the Transvaal Government, and by the terms of the Treaty they had to give their consent, he should have no objection to a new Convention being made upon that basis. Still, if the Transvaal took over Swaziland, he thought a *quid pro quo* should be given to Natal, which would obviously before long incorporate Zululand, and would then find itself with an inconvenient boundary.

He, therefore, suggested that the tongue of land which had been shown as "Schedule B," and which cut into Zululand, should be given up to us by the Transvaal in order to be incorporated with Natal.

MR. KNOX (Cavan, W.) said, there was one transaction in this Vote which, as a supporter of the Government, he regarded with the very gravest regret. He referred to the guarantee which the Government proposed to give for the railway which was to be built through Bechuanaland. The guarantee was to be £20,000 a year for 10 years, and the railway was to be built, not by the British South Africa Company—indeed, the object of the guarantee was to relieve the Company from the undertaking they had already given to build the railway. They had got concession for it for nearly the whole way. ["No!"] The railway was not to be built by the British South Africa Company, but by some independent company afterwards to be formed, and the capital of which was to be raised chiefly by debentures. The first objection to this enormous guarantee of £200,000 out of the money of the taxpayers of Great Britain and Ireland was that it was given without any formal Parliamentary sanction. That was totally different to the policy adopted in the case of the Irish Light Railways, for instance. An Act of Parliament had to be passed to enable the Irish Light Railways to be made, and yet this sum of money, which was one-fifth of the total amount spent on those railways by the Leader of the Opposition when he was Chief Secretary, was guaranteed without any application to Parliament. This guarantee had been given without any Parliamentary sanction. It was said it was not a Government guarantee, but a guarantee out of the revenues of Bechuanaland. What were the revenues of Bechuanaland? The revenues of Bechuanaland did not pay more than about one-third of the expenses of administering the country; all the rest was paid out of Imperial funds, and so when it was said this was not a guarantee out of Imperial funds, it was a mere trifling with the House. It was really, in fact, a guarantee out of Imperial funds; it was so regarded by capitalists who had asked for that guarantee, and it was only because it was regarded as an Imperial guarantee that they

would be able to get the necessary capital subscribed. A further objection he had was that the guarantee would not come into force until the railway was half completed, which might not be for five or six years, and therefore the Government by their promise had bound not only this House but a future Parliament. It was, he contended, a most dangerous precedent that the Government, by its executive action, should enter into an agreement which could not be broken by this House, but which would bind their successors. In the meantime, the money would be asked for on the market on the security of this guarantee, and when the matter subsequently came before the House it would be impossible to go behind what had been done by the Government; therefore, he said that by their mere executive action this Government would bind future Parliaments and Administrations. He found he was not without considerable and weighty support in urging this objection, because the late Government in its closing days deliberately refused to give this guarantee, stating in the telegram they sent out to South Africa that such a guarantee could not be given without consulting Parliament, and there was not then time to consult it. He thought the House would require from the Government a very strong reason for departing from the precedent set by their predecessors and giving this vast guarantee without any sort of Parliamentary sanction. His further objection was that no Papers had been presented to the House since January last until a few days ago. It was said this railway would effect a large saving in the cost of administering Bechuanaland, but that point could not be dealt with in detail at this period of the Session. He would only say that a very large saving could be made at once in the cost of the administration of Bechuanaland. There was nothing like this charge—£100,000 a year—in any of the British Colonies. What was it spent on? On a force of cavalry of a most peculiar character, composed chiefly of young men who had failed in their examinations for the Army, who had gone out to South Africa, and who were paid at a very extravagant rate, far higher, in fact, than was paid to any troops in the ordinary British service. These gentlemen were kept there, not in

order to keep the peace in Bechuanaland, but in order to protect the northern part of the Protectorate against the Matabele and other enemies of the Chartered Company, and the company had disbanded their police because they knew this force, which was paid out of Imperial funds, was near at hand. The force in Bechuanaland would have been reduced long ago by one-half if it had not been for the proceedings of the Chartered Company. He protested against this procedure of voting £100,000 a year every year for what was really the purposes of the Chartered Company. As he had said, the Chartered Company had disbanded their own police because they knew this force was at hand to help them. He believed if they wanted to reduce the expenses of the Bechuanaland administration the Government could do it without in any way going to this enormous expense of building this railway, they could do it by ordinary administrative means. He found they had already reduced the expenses of administration by £20,000 from last year. He protested against this concession on general financial grounds, because he did not think there ought to be any possibility of British Guaranteed Stock being hawked about on the Stock Exchange for a mere song, which would be the case, for the object of the Company in getting the Government promise was to float this new Stock in debentures on the London market rather than to complete the railway. Whenever they got the money they could do practically as they liked, their Memorandum of Association being so vaguely worded, and they would practically retain control of the Company. He did not think this was at all an undertaking suitable for a Government guarantee. He did not think the Government ought to enter into any financial partnership with an Association like the British South Africa Company. They knew from the Papers presented that day, and the Secretary for the Colonies had solemnly placed it on record, that the Chartered Company obtained their Charter by representing they had concessions, which it turned out afterwards they did not possess, and upon these representations they obtained their capital. They had, according to the Blue Book just published, been

guilty of most atrocious crimes—crimes which were a disgrace to British officers who ought to have been gentlemen, and who had massacred unfortunate natives for no adequate cause. The character of the British South Africa Company in its inception and administration of its territory was not such that the Government ought to enter into any financial relations which made them guarantors for the Company, and he thought it extremely unlikely the British South Africa Company would ever pay its £10,000 a year to this Company. He hoped they would have some explanation from the Government. Having said so much, he would, in order to confine the discussion to this one subject, move to reduce the High Commissioner's salary by £200.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item P., Salaries, be reduced by £200."—(*Mr. Knox.*)

*MR. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough) said, he might be allowed to say one or two words about this. He was astonished to find, with reference to the extension of the railway, that there was a guarantee of £20,000 per annum to this railway for 10 years without the previous consent of the House of Commons being obtained. It was all very well to say that the question would be brought up some years hence. That was absurd. The question to be decided was not one of confidence in this particular Government, and it was not possible for it to get fair discussion coming up years hence. He would say to the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir W. Harcourt) that they simply wanted to get an opportunity of considering the matter previous to the country being pledged. He remembered that the Radical Party in that House objected to the late Government spending money on the survey of the Mombasa Railway, and it astonished him that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who was their leader in that opposition—

THE CHAIRMAN: This question of Mombasa is out of Order.

MR. A. C. MORTON said, he found that the late Government had in a telegraphic message of June 11, 1892, declared that it was impossible to give any pledge without getting the authority of Parliament; and, again, on June 14, 1892, they refused to pledge themselves

even to submit the matter to the House of Commons. That was the attitude of the late Government with reference to the House of Commons and this matter. He merely mentioned this to show that the House ought to be consulted. He understood there had been no survey or estimates of cost with reference to this railway before the Government pledged themselves and, to a certain extent, the people of the country. There was a running survey, but that was all. He complained that the Papers had only been very recently circulated, although some of them were dated in January last. He thought they might have been circulated before now.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby): Hear, hear!

*MR. A. C. MORTON said, he was glad to hear that expression of approval of his criticism. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would convey his censure to the Department which was responsible for the delay. They should have further information regarding the guarantees and the £200,000. It was not clear what was to be done with the money, nor was it clear whether, if any profit arose, it was to come to them. They were asked to give up 6,000 square miles of land for the benefit of this speculative company. This was British land now. He thought it was not at all right that they should give money and land for ventures of this kind. It was a very unfortunate policy. He trusted it was not too late to stop it; but he thought the Government could have assisted them by an earlier distribution of the Papers, so that a matter of such importance would be discussed before the last days of the Session, when the majority of Members had left town. He wished to suggest, in conclusion, that as the Government were going to be partners in the concern a list of the shareholders should be made public.

SIR W. HARCOURT: We have no power.

MR. A. C. MORTON hoped the Government would endeavour to have the list published.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. S. BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said, the hon. Member had laid great stress on

the fact that Parliament had not been asked for its sanction before any arrangement was come to. The matter had been considered by the Treasury and the Colonial Office; and it was thought that, taking all the circumstances into account, the House would have a proper opportunity of considering the matter in the form in which it was brought before them, and that there was no need in this case for an Act of Parliament. The Bechuanaland Government were allowed to enter into an agreement with the Railway Company for the formation of the company, and a subsidy had been promised. But that agreement would not come into force until, in ordinary course, the agreement was made and the Treasury Minute laid before the House, and accepted by the absence of an adverse vote. He regretted it was considered there had been any delay, because, as a matter of fact, the Government had given the House information on this question at an earlier period than they would in the ordinary course have received it, though, under ordinary circumstances, they would have waited until the Correspondence was complete. He could only say again that he regretted very much that the Correspondence, incomplete as it was, was delayed so long; but there would be every opportunity for the House to give its opinion on the subject. If they had desired concealment nothing would have been easier than to have kept the Correspondence back 10 days, and so allowed the House to rise without seeing it. So far from desiring that, they were anxious that the House should have the Correspondence before them. They had no desire to go behind the back of Parliament, for if the House chose it could reject the proposal. He hoped, however, the House would not do anything of the kind. They asked the House to consider the position. When the Government came into Office they found that the cost of the Protectorate of Bechuanaland was very heavy, especially in connection with the transport of police and of mails. After consultation with the High Commissioner, they came to the conclusion that the only way to reduce the expenditure was to improve the means of communication. They found that negotiations had gone on under the late Government, and that that Government was to this extent in favour of the scheme—that they

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had already agreed to the running survey to which his hon. Friend had referred. When Sir H. Loch was in London he presented a more complete scheme than that which was before the late Government. The arrangement was that 600 miles were to be built before any subsidy could be given at all, and that there should be savings equal to that subsidy.

COMMANDER BETHELL: The Revenue?

MR. S. BUXTON said, the present Grant in Aid was set down at £100,000, and the Estimate was the same this year. He was sorry there was any confusion with regard to the figures.

COMMANDER BETHELL: What is the local revenue?

MR. S. BUXTON said, he could not give that. They found a scheme placed before them which would be a great benefit to the people of this district, and they thought they were entitled to do what they could to promote it. It had been suggested that they should have nothing to do with the unclean thing—that they should not be connected in any way with schemes promoted by the British South Africa Company; but he was bound to say this, after all the abuse heaped on the company, that they ought to recollect that but for the company they would probably have lost Mashonaland, and that even if they had kept that country they should have had to make a large grant in aid of administration, whereas the company was doing that work for nothing. But, apart from that, it was no use their saying that they would have nothing to do with the company. The company was there, and they were bound to deal with them and to recognise their right to British protection. It was impossible to ignore their existence. The hon. Member for West Cavan (Mr. Knox) said they had entered into a partnership with the company. He denied that. He said there was no partnership, but simply that the company got a guarantee of a subsidy when the line was completed to the satisfaction of the Bechuanaland Government. No burden would be imposed on the British taxpayer, Sir Henry Loch having guaranteed that the £20,000 a year in subsidy would be saved in the reduced cost of transport.

*MR. A. C. MORTON: What about the £200,000?

MR. S. BUXTON said, the real point in connection with the matter was, what security they would have that these savings would be had. The hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Knox) did not think they would have any security; but they had these lines of defence—the pledge of the High Commissioner, the watch-dog of the Treasury, and then the reduction of the grant in aid. With regard to the question of the share deposit, if the hon. Gentleman would look at the proposal made he would find that if there was a profit the Government would take their portion. He believed that not only would they have savings equal to the subsidy, but through the development of the country they would have a considerably increased revenue from Customs and direct taxation, and the British taxpayer, in whom alone they were interested, would benefit largely through the extension of the railway system. He believed that even before the end of 10 years they would be in a much better position than at present in regard to the Bechuanaland Protectorate, and that they would see this portion of our South African Possessions bearing its own charges and liabilities, and, like most of our Colonies, meeting its own costs of administration. There was no possibility of this benefit accruing if the railway was not made. Whatever might be anyone's opinion of the Chartered Company, and of the British South Africa Company in particular, they would have to deal directly with them, or indirectly, if they were going to extend and develop the railways throughout the British Protectorate. In no sense, however, could they enter into a financial partnership. They were free from any liability in regard to the railway, except that when it was completed and capital had been expended, and the line was open, the Bechuanaland Government were prepared to pay a subsidy, and in the end there would be no greater charge on the British taxpayer.

MR. A. C. MORTON asked if the hon. Member would give an answer as to the 6,000 square miles of land?

MR. S. BUXTON said, that if the hon. Member would peruse the Correspondence he would find that that was given for the extension of a railway in

another district, and not in connection with the 400 miles under discussion. What had occurred in that respect showed that they had already entered into relations with the Company as to these railways.

MR. KNOX said, the question had arisen out of a statement by the Secretary for the Colonies. He had said that a Treasury Minute would be made, and would be laid before the House. If he were sure that there would be a full discussion on that Minute, and that the question could be raised on its merits, it would to some extent modify his action. He recognised the futility of taking a Division at this period of the Session, but he asked for a promise that the House would have an opportunity of discussing the Treasury Minute. The views of many hon. Members would be modified if they had an assurance that the Government would be represented on the directorate of the railway in proportion to the amount of its contributions.

MR. S. BUXTON said, that the Government were not entering into a partnership in regard to this railway. When the line was constructed to a certain point a subsidy would be given. He had not been distinguishing between the Chartered Company and the Railway Company.

MR. KNOX said, that would extinguish a large part of his objection. If there was to be a guarantee given it should be understood that Her Majesty's Government or the Bechuanaland Government should have control over the railway. That matter had not been decided. He did not know any case of a congested district railway in Ireland where some control was not given to the ratepayers. A great many people distrusted Mr. Rhodes, and believed that the Chartered Company was the head and centre of a circle of swindling companies. If two thirds of the Directors were nominated by the Bechuanaland Government and Her Majesty's Government the whole situation, as far as this Company was concerned, would be materially modified.

SIR W. HARCOURT : I regard it as of paramount importance that the control of Parliament should be complete in questions of this kind. I regret that through some omission the Papers on this subject have not been presented sooner, but I assure the Committee that

there is no disposition to withdraw this matter from the control of Parliament or withhold information. If this had been a direct Imperial subsidy an Act of Parliament would have been necessary, but it is not an Imperial subsidy. It is a charge on the revenues of the Bechuanaland Authorities. It is said, and said truly, that indirectly the grant in aid is under the control of Parliament, and that Parliament can say how great or how small it shall be. I myself am not an admirer of Protectorates or of Chartered Companies, but the position in which we found ourselves was this, that there was a Chartered Company that had established a Protectorate, and there was an expenditure of £100,000 a year going on. I satisfied myself that if the railway were made the expenditure would be less and the revenue more than it was before. We arranged that under no circumstances should the expenditure exceed the present sum of £100,000 a year. Therefore, we shall have a railway which will very much increase the revenue of the district, and the expenditure coming upon the Estimates will be decreased to the amount of £20,000 a year for police, mails, and other things. As soon as the railway is made we shall have effected a good bargain. Under the circumstances, and the guarantees being many, it did not become necessary to have an Act of Parliament. The Company was only formed in August, and the agreement has not yet been settled. The Treasury Minute has not been drawn up, and, therefore, Parliament, in my opinion, has still complete control over it. I hope the Committee will be satisfied with the discussion that has now taken place on this subject, and will be satisfied with the assurance that the Government have no desire that transactions of this kind should be carried into effect without the full knowledge and consent of Parliament.

MR. KNOX asked for an assurance that the Government would afford an opportunity for the discussion of the agreement before anything was finally settled in regard to it.

MR. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough) thought an assurance should be given that the House should have an opportunity of discussing the Treasury Minute. He wished to know whether the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies could

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give the Committee a list of the shareholders of the Company.

MR. S. BUXTON: I do not know what our powers are in the matter, but I should be very glad indeed if such a list could be prepared, as it seems to me that there ought not to be any concealment on the subject. If there is anything concealed it certainly ought to be made public. It is rather difficult to give a pledge at the present moment that the House shall have an opportunity of a full-dress Debate, but at any rate I think I can assure my hon. Friend that the House will have plenty of opportunity of discussing the subject. The Treasury Minute will be placed before the House, and there will be no attempt either to rush it through or to conceal it from the House. As far as we understand at present, the Railway Company are not in a position to take up the agreement, and therefore there is no immediate prospect of the question of subsidy arising.

MR. KNOX said, he did not want a full-dress Debate, but some little time for discussion. If the Government would give him an undertaking that the Treasury Minute would not be laid on the Table during the Autumn Sitting he should be glad to withdraw his Amendment.

MR. S. BUXTON: I cannot give that undertaking, because if the Railway Company choose to go on with the agreement we shall be bound to lay the Treasury Minute before the House, but I think the probabilities are very greatly against that happening during the Autumn Session. It is almost certain to be carried over till next year.

*MR. A. C. MORTON said, there ought to be no difficulty in giving an opportunity for discussion on the Treasury Minute.

SIR W. HARCOURT: It is entirely our desire that the subject shall be discussed, and we will do what we can to give the House an opportunity of pronouncing an opinion upon it. As the House knows, we are in some difficulty as to what we can or cannot bring in during the Autumn Session. It is the desire of the Government to act in good faith and to give the House an opportunity of pronouncing upon the subject.

MR. HANBURY desired to know whether there were any understandings

with the British South Africa Company, because he had come across a very remarkable letter from Mr. Rhodes to Sir Henry Loch in which reference was made to some understanding which, as far as he (Mr. Hanbury) could interpret Mr. Rhodes' letter, meant that the railway was to be made up to the north of Bechuanaland, and that all the land was to be practically the property of the Company. He should like to know how far such an understanding existed between the Colonial Office and Mr. Rhodes. He wanted it to be made clear what were the real facts with regard to the territory and lands which the British South Africa Company were handing over to this railway. He was told that the lands which they were going to hand over to the new railway were not, after all, a free gift on the part of the British South Africa Company, but were actually lands which the British Government handed over to the British South Africa Company on condition that they should make another line, which other line was never made by them, but which Mr. Rhodes got the Cape Government to construct. He was in favour of opening up countries by means of railways; but, looking to the attitude of the British South Africa Company, he was a little distrustful in this case, and did not desire to play into the hands of a speculator.

MR. KNOX said that, after the promise given by the Chancellor of the Exchequer that nothing final should be done in this matter without the House of Commons having a full opportunity of discussing the question, he begged leave to withdraw the Amendment.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

MR. R. G. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.) desired to call attention to two or three matters in this Vote. The first was with regard to the action of the British South Africa Company in regard to the Mozambique territory and their concessions in that country. In 1888 this territory now in dispute as between the Mozambique Company and the South Africa Company was occupied by British subjects in the main, who were under the jurisdiction of the Queen and Government of this country. But when the British South Africa Company was

formed, about 1890 or 1891, these British subjects, owing allegiance to the Queen, were dispossessed from their possession, which they held under favourable terms from the Mozambique Company, by *force majeure*. Again, from the Blue Book which had been placed on the Table that day it appeared that the relations of the South Africa Company in regard to the Matabele territory were in a somewhat critical condition, and he was well aware of the fact that an important Despatch had been sent by the Minister of State to Sir Henry Loch, stating that no forward action was to be taken; therefore, it was clear that the territory owned by the British South Africa Company was not altogether in a quiescent condition. If, as he contended was the case, the British South Africa Company had wronged British subjects and driven them from territories which these subjects had acquired from a friendly foreign State, the Colonial Office ought gravely and carefully to consider the question with the view to seeing that the rights of such subjects were not taken from them. In Article VIII. of the Draft Charter of the British South Africa Company, it was stated that if at any time our Secretary of State saw fit to object to the exercise by the Company of any authority or power, in any of the territory comprised in any of the concessions, agreements, grants, or Treaties, on the ground of there being an adverse claim to that part, the Company should defer to that objection, until such time as any such claim had been withdrawn or finally dealt with or settled by the Secretary of State. It was apparent from that provision that when the Government decided to grant these important concessions to the British South Africa Company, they also determined that the rights of British subjects in these or neighbouring districts should be absolutely and completely maintained. He urged the Under Secretary to carefully consider the aspect of affairs at the present moment. The hon. Gentleman had stated that there was a safe route from the Cape through the Matabele territory to Fort Salisbury and Victoria, but he found it stated in *The Pall Mall Gazette* that 100 waggons had to turn back the other day, so that he felt bound to believe that that part of the country was in an unsettled and disorganised state. If that were so,

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and they were to use the alternative route to the Beira Railway, it was important we should do everything in our power to keep on friendly terms with the Mozambique Company and the Portuguese in the event of our having to send troops to the front. He should like to ask a question about Swaziland. The Swazis were a brave people, and were our allies. They had rendered us useful service, and we guaranteed a Protectorate to them. He was told we could not give up these Swazis to any other State without asking their consent. But how could the Swazis give this consent? It was no use to ask them to go to the ballot, because they could neither read nor write. He urged that before any step was taken which would result in handing the Protectorate over to Swazis to another Power an opportunity should be given to the House of Commons to carefully consider the question.

*SIR R. TEMPLE observed, that they had not yet succeeded in getting the Papers with regard to Swaziland; but even without the Papers he was anxious to challenge briefly, but very positively, the policy of the British Government in respect to the natives of Swaziland, without presuming to specify how far Her Majesty's present Government might be responsible for that or not. What was Swaziland? It was the territory stretching eastwards from the shore of the great bay to the base of the mountain range that formed the eastern flank of the Transvaal uplands. In this important tract inhabited by the Swazis there were two interests; first, the construction of a railway, and, secondly, the protection, direct or indirect, of the natives who dwelt there. In regard to the railway, it was obvious that this line must be vital to the interests of the Transvaal. Of course, he should desire that this important work of constructing the railway should be done by our country and countrymen; but if we could not and would not undertake the work it must be done by some other body, and if the Boers would undertake it, the Boers must have their way, and he should be very sorry to say strong opposition to that. Apart from the question of the railway, an opportunity remained this matter of the welfare of the natives. The two questions were absolutely distinct. It would

be perfectly possible for the Boer Republic to make this line, and have full control over it, and yet for the rights of the natives who lived on the South and the North of that line to be properly safeguarded; and his allegation was, they were not going to be safeguarded. On the other hand, these natives, who really needed our protection, were about to be abandoned to their fate by the British Government—the fate of being in entire subjection to a Republic eminently unsuited to control or manage native tribes—a Republic which was tolerably certain to trample into the dust the rights of the natives. He contended that England, in conjunction with the Boers, had placed itself under the moral obligation to protect the Swazis; and if the effect of the Convention was to relieve us of that obligation, he pronounced it as unjust to the people of Swaziland. We had placed ourselves under certain moral obligations to take care of these poor Swazis, and give them the benefit of that British protection which had proved a blessing to hundreds of millions of people in different parts of the world. This protection had been undoubtedly shared between us and the Boers of the Transvaal Republic, and the question was, were we going to retain our share in the management of Swaziland or not? not for any selfish aggrandisement of ours, but for the fulfilment of the rights and equitable obligations which we had incurred towards a population that could not help themselves. He assumed the Convention was going to be ratified and placed on the Table of the House; but it would be more satisfactory if the Convention was placed on the Table first and ratified afterwards, so that the House of Commons might have a little to say on the subject. The hon. and gallant Member for the Holderness Division (Commander Bethell) had alluded to the introduction of the English element into the Transvaal; but, notwithstanding that, the British duties in regard to the protection of the natives remained intact and unimpaired. The Boers were a very enterprising class of colonists, but it would be flattering them too much to say they had ever shown themselves able to manage native tribes. He was afraid the very opposite was to be said for them. There were many cir-

cumstances connected with the Boers which told most unfavourably in their conduct towards the natives of Africa. He repeated, that the Boers were the very last people to whom the care of native tribes ought to be made over. As regarded the English element, he was bound to say that, with all the splendid qualities of his countrymen in this semi-civilised country, some control over them in their dealings with the natives was absolutely necessary, and if they were to be allowed to have uncontrolled power over the native tribes to whom we were under obligations then he said we should not be doing our duty. We were bound to take care that the Swazis were protected as much against our countrymen in the Transvaal as they were against the Boers. It was said that the Swazis were to be masters of their own destinies, inasmuch as they were to settle for themselves whether they should go over to the Transvaal. But he contended that was absolutely worth nothing. The Swazis undoubtedly had a tribal organisation with a certain sort of administration of their own, which could hardly be called a Government. They had their chiefs and a King of their own. But if they were made over to the Boers—that was to say, the Transvaal Government—by a Convention under the authority of Her Majesty's Government, they would have to consent absolutely without the slightest objection or demur to any conditions which the Transvaal Government might be pleased to impose. Of course, they would consent. What else could they do? The idea of our escaping our Imperial obligations and shirking our Imperial duty upon the ground that these Swazis would consent was the merest excuse, and one which he was sanguine the House of Commons would never accept. Upon these various grounds he contended we were bound to maintain our protecting position in Swaziland; that we must continue to hold our sheltering ægis over these poor natives, to take care they were not trodden under foot and oppressed by the Transvaal Republic, and if the existing arrangements did not admit of our having the entire control we should maintain our joint control of the means of doing justice to the Swazis. Although we might not have technically and legally a Protectorate in Swaziland,

we had virtually undertaken obligations there, and the good faith of the British Government was as solemnly pledged as if it were set forth in a written document. He trusted that the House would preserve that British good faith which had never yet failed in any part of the world.

MR. HANBURY said, he did not think that there were the political objections to the cession of Swaziland to the Boers that might have existed some years ago before the growth of British influence. British interests were growing so rapidly in the Transvaal that even if Swaziland were handed over to that Government it would not be very long before it again came under the control of this country. But he attached great importance to our obligations of honour. He wanted some clear information as to how far any written or verbal engagements had been entered into with the Boers. The obligations that we were under towards the Swazis were undoubtedly strong, because the promise that they should never fall into the hands of the Boers was given at a time when they rendered us valuable assistance against the Boers; and it would be fatal if the natives of South Africa were taught that England was not true to her word. Did the Government intend to abide by the latter engagement or not? What did the Boers want with Swaziland? It was clear that their object was to acquire the land for themselves. The Boers' idea of the treatment of natives greatly differed from our own; and if we did hand the territory of Swaziland over to the Boers we ought to have the fullest guarantees that the rights of the natives would be protected. The argument that the consent of the Swaziland Government would have to be given to any arrangement was a mere farce and piece of hypocrisy, because the Swazi Government was in effect the King, a boy 17 or 18 years old, and they all knew how the consent of the Sovereign of a savage country was obtained. It did not follow that, because the Boers had treated the Swazis well, so long as we were there to control them, they would continue to do so when they were unchecked by British influence. They were being elbowed out of the Transvaal, and Swaziland was about the only piece of open country adjoining into which they could trek, and undoubtedly their idea of

the way in which natives should be treated was entirely different from ours. That must not be allowed to happen unless the fullest guarantees were obtained for the protection of the natives, to which we were fully pledged. He did not say a word with regard to the rights of the English concessionaires in Swaziland, for they were perfectly able to protect themselves. So far as he was able to understand the question, a complete change of opinion had taken place in the Cape Government as to the concession of Swaziland. Some time ago Mr. Rhodes was strong against any concession of Swaziland to the Transvaal. Now, this proposal for the concession of Swaziland was made by Mr. Rhodes and the Cape Government. This was a part of a large policy of the Cape Government to establish a great Customs Union throughout South Africa, which he was afraid would have the effect of placing a heavy burden on the import of English goods. It was clear that the Cape Government desired that Swaziland should be handed over to the Transvaal, because they hoped that the Transvaal would thereby be induced to enter into the Customs Union by which the importance of Cape Town would be maintained, as the great port for South Africa. But the result of such a Customs Union would be that the Import Duties upon British manufactures would be raised from the 5 per cent. at which they now stood to 12 per cent. His only hope was the strong objection which the Boers entertained against entering the Customs Union. However, before the Government agreed to the concession of Swaziland, they should see that the interests of the natives were safeguarded, and make sure that they were not placing a heavy burden on our exported goods to South Africa.

COMMANDER BETHELL explained that when he spoke about getting the assent of the people of Swaziland he meant that we were quite capable, through our officers, of getting the consent of every tribe if we chose.

SIR G. BADEN-POWELL appealed to the Government, before ratifying any Convention for the cession of the country, to consider the statesmanlike course of renewing the old Convention, continuing the present provisional state of things

until the British inhabitants of the Transvaal had obtained the franchise and asserted themselves.

MR. S. BUXTON regretted that, in consequence of the delays in negotiating the Convention, it was impossible to present Papers to the House. Had it been otherwise, they would have been spared some of the speeches of hon. Gentlemen who, speaking in the dark, had totally misrepresented the position of the Government and the results that they hoped would accrue if the Convention was ultimately signed. It was hardly right that the inhabitants of a friendly nation should be spoken of in the language that the hon. Member for Kingston (Sir R. Temple) had used. He dissented very strongly from the views which had been expressed by the hon. Member with reference to the Boers. Though it was possible that in the old days, before they became a civilised nation, the Boers might have practised considerable cruelty towards the natives, nevertheless he was certain that at the present time the Transvaal Boers were in a totally different position. The Transvaal was becoming year by year more English and less Dutch, and, therefore, he did not believe that there was now any foundation for any fears with regard to the natives. The Government were carrying out the pledges of the late Government when they authorised Sir Henry Loch to confer with President Krüger, with a view to carrying out, as far as might be, the wishes of the Transvaal Government in this matter. He denied altogether that we had any Protectorate over the territory, but admitted our moral obligations with regard to the natives; and, in any Convention that the Government might carry through, they would have very due regard indeed for those obligations. The independence of the Swazis had been recognised to this extent—that neither England nor the Transvaal could encroach upon it without the assent of the other party. The Convention proposed that we should withdraw the existing prohibition to the Transvaal entering into an organic agreement with the Swazi nation. As to the question of the assent of the Swazis being duly ascertained, the country was governed, not by a King, who was a minor, but by a Queen Regent and a Council of all the Chiefs, and, as far as was known,

this Council was very representative indeed of the Swazi nation, and any resolution they came to would be confirmed by the natives themselves. The Government were not going to hand them over altogether to what was called the tender mercies of the Boers. The Government would take care that proper provision was made for the protection of the natives in the management of their own internal affairs, their own laws and customs, and especially the laws of inheritance and succession, where such laws were not inconsistent with those of civilised nations; and, further, they would be protected in the continued use and occupation of land now in their possession, and all grazing and agricultural rights to which they were at present entitled. So far as the Government were concerned, they would see that the Swazis were not worse off after their arrangement with the Transvaal than before. In regard to the European rights, care would be taken that Europeans had protection and freedom in all their personal and proprietary rights, so long as they were legitimate rights; and arrangements would be made that they should become burghers of the South African Republic for all voting purposes. While Swaziland was absolutely useless to ourselves, the Convention might bring about a friendly arrangement with the South African Republic, which would be doing something for the ultimate federation of the races and Powers throughout South Africa. It would remove what had been, in the past, a source of friction between the Dutch and English elements, and would be of benefit to the Transvaal and England, and not detrimental to the Swazis. In answer to the hon. Member for Preston, he might say that the Customs Union question did not arise in this connection. Care would be taken also that the prohibition in regard to the sale of liquor to the natives would be continued.

*SIR R. TEMPLE asked whether we would retain any control in Swaziland, so that, in the event of any invasion of the rights of the natives of their lands, they would have an appeal to England?

MR. S. BUXTON said, he thought that when the Convention was presented to the House—and he hoped it would not be long before it was signed—the hon. Baronet would see that the Government

had protected the rights of the Swazis, and that they had taken care that this protection should be no mere paper protection.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

4. £32,400, to complete the sum for Subsidies to Telegraph Companies.

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1893-4.

5. £80,500, Educational Services.

*ADMIRAL FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne) said, he had received a letter that day from a very distinguished officer in the Service, in which he complained that a certain midshipman was about to be allowed to pass his examination for sub-lieutenant before he was 19 years of age. Such a favour was without precedent, except in the case of Royal Princes, or unless a midshipman desired to pass when he was sailing for foreign service, and in that case his seniority would only date from his 19th year. He also referred to the case of a very smart Marine officer who had obtained leave at his own expense, and had gone to Russia and had mastered the language. With a view to encourage the study of that language, Lord Wolseley had got the War Office to make grants to certain officers. The Marine officer and an officer in the Yorkshire Regiment passed the same examination; but while the Line officer received a bonus of £150, the Marine officer got nothing. He thought it was most important that sub-lieutenants should be trained in the handling of torpedo boats, and he also considered that there should be some competent persons to teach swimming.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) called attention to the system of examination at Greenwich, and said that the students who competed were not told in what respect their answers were wrong, which prevented them from learning anything from the examinations. He was opposed to the prominence given to higher mathematics and to the subject of fortification, contending, in respect of the last-named subject, that it was a mistake to divert the sailor's attention from sea fighting to land fighting. The subject of navigation and nautical astronomy were also referred to, it being shown that, while the navigation course was not obligatory on officers above the rank of sub-lieutenant, the course of mathematics

was, whereas the reverse should be the case. There was also a course of special lectures given, especially by Mr. Lawrence, who preached the greatest nonsense on the subject of International Law and who was the author of what was held to be an official text-book on the subject. For example, Mr. Lawrence said that no notice of hostilities was required, this doctrine being at variance with the teaching of other writers on International Law. If there was one nation more than another which required a text-book on the Law of Nations it was this country. Certainly a proper text-book to replace the book of Mr. Lawrence, and amplified as to the special necessities of seamen, would be a great advantage. It appeared that the horse marine had become an absolute reality, for he found there was a Vote for instruction in riding of officers of the Royal Marines. In order to complete the system of instruction it should be rendered less theoretical and more practical, and a practical school of tactics was absolutely needed, say, at Portsmouth.

*SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH said, he would be glad to receive the details of the cases of the two officers mentioned by the hon. and gallant Member for Eastbourne. He would take care that the subject of the importance of training sub-lieutenants in the use of the torpedo was mentioned in the proper quarter. The subject of teaching stokers swimming had been prominently before the Admiralty since the unfortunate disaster to the *Victoria*. Active measures had been taken to promote the teaching of swimming among stokers, particularly at Sheerness and at some of the other dockyards. No doubt much had still to be done, but that subject was receiving the careful attention of the Admiralty. With regard to the remarks of the hon. Member for King's Lynn in respect to the Royal Naval College, the points raised would receive careful consideration. If an officer of Marines had to be called upon to act on shore—and they frequently had to act on shore—it was desirable that he should be able to ride. Therefore, a beginning had been made to teach the officers of Marines to ride.

Vote agreed to.

6. £59,300, Scientific Services.

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ADMIRAL FIELD called attention to the inadequate recognition given to the Survey Service, as shown by the Hydrographer's Report. He particularly referred to the men. There was no encouragement given to them. Most of their work was done in boats, and they went back to their ships in the evening. It was a severe service, and the men did not receive even extra pay for their work.

MR. FORWOOD thought that if the right hon. Baronet had given the House the same information as was given in previous years — namely, a Return setting forth the expenditure of the different services of the Navy, similar to the Return given by the War Office as an Appendix to their Estimates, probably the speech of the hon. and gallant Gentleman (Admiral Field) would not have been made. In 1892-93 the expenditure in connection with the Hydrographer's Department amounted to £97,000. Practically £100,000 a year was spent on this work. At present many nations relied upon us to do surveying work which they ought to do themselves. He thought that some International agreement ought to be come to on the subject.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES considered that the men—he was not speaking of the officers—engaged in this particular service had some claim on the Admiralty, and some small extra allowance should be made to them in return for their extremely hard work. Our surveys were exceedingly good, and the charts issued by the Admiralty Board were deserving of every word said of them. The Admiralty charts were much superior to other charts issued by private publishers, and it was of the utmost importance that the ships of the Mercantile Marine should be encouraged to provide themselves with Admiralty charts instead of the inferior charts sold by ordinary salesmen. In order to bring about this result, he suggested that the price of the Admiralty charts should be reduced, as also that of *The Nautical Almanac*, which, he suggested, might be sold for 1s.

*SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH remarked that, considering the excellence of the works and the expenses involved in their production, the charts and *The Nautical Almanac* were sold at a very

cheap rate, so that he was afraid it would hardly be possible to make any further reduction. The right hon. Gentleman opposite did good service in drawing attention to the fact that £97,000 a year was spent on hydrographic work and surveying, and he mentioned that a Return was not presented this year. It was dropped by the Board of the Admiralty (of which the right hon. Gentleman was a member) last year, and was not presented to Parliament. It was prepared for the use of the Admiralty, but was never ordered by the Admiralty to be printed and presented as a Return, and the same course had been adopted this year. It was a useful document to refer to, but he was not quite sure whether it was worth the expense of printing it. He would consider the suggestion that extra pay should be given to men engaged in survey work. He could not forget, however, that if extra pay was granted in one quarter it was exceedingly difficult to refuse it in others, and therefore he could not undertake that the suggestion would be given effect to. Reference had been made to the discovery of rocks, and the more complete the surveys became the more rocks were discovered. He was afraid it would be impossible for any official survey to discover all these rocks in all parts of the world, but the Admiralty did their best in this direction, and it was satisfactory to find some rocks were discovered before disasters resulted. He would promise that all the matters mentioned should receive careful consideration.

COMMANDER BETHELL, who said he had had some years' experience in this particular branch of the Service, observed that the men engaged in surveying had the hardest work in the Naval Service, and that for many years it had been recognised that they ought to be given more pay. The same inducements as were formerly given, and which for some reason had been taken away, should be held out to officers to join this Department of the Service, which was a very important one, but which there had always been a difficulty in getting officers to join.

Vote agreed to.

7. £172,000, Royal Naval Reserves.

***LORD G. HAMILTON** (Middlesex, Ealing) said, he believed there was some understanding that they should, if possible, dispose of all the Votes that night, therefore he should curtail his observations on this and other Votes to the smallest possible compass, because he hoped the House of Commons would be able to get through that necessary work and then adjourn at a respectable hour. He wished to ask whether anything had been done towards the experiment of placing the firemen on the same footing as the men of the Naval Reserve, and whether the system of training the Naval Reserve had been changed? The period of training which the Naval Reserve had hitherto undergone was 28 days, and he understood that some alteration had recently been made or was proposed to be made.

SIR G. BADEN-POWELL brought forward certain complaints made by the firemen, the seamen, and the officers of the Royal Naval Reserve. The seamen, he said, were very anxious to be assimilated more and more to the Royal Navy, and he was glad to think that the Admiralty were, at all events, meeting them on some of the points, such as that of clothing. He should like to hear something on the question of pensions. The men of the Royal Naval Reserve had made great efforts to secure what to some men seemed rather a small concession, but which was a great one to them—namely, that the age of receiving pensions in their case should be assimilated to that of the men of the Royal Navy. In the case of the Royal Naval Reserve the age was 60; in the case of the Navy it was 50. It had been stated that the Admiralty were in doubt whether the Royal Naval Reserve should have pensions at all. If they were not to have pensions let the Admiralty say so at once. The firemen had grievances with regard to drill and to certificates of discharge, and he believed they wished also to have some sort of authority in the larger ports to whom they could apply to be registered. If those grievances were met he had no doubt there would be a great improvement in stokers and firemen. The grievance of the officers was with reference to precedence, and he was told

there had been several resignations in India in consequence of this grievance. It was a well-known grievance; and whereas the Royal Naval Reserve, by several Orders in Council, were given precedence after officers of the Royal Navy, suddenly, in 1891, the Indian Marine was brought to life again, and the officers were given seniority over the officers of the Royal Naval Reserve. It was perhaps a matter much of sentiment, but he hoped that the Admiralty would find some way out of the difficulty, perhaps by deciding that the officers of these two Services should be placed on a similar footing of seniority.

***ADMIRAL FIELD** greatly sympathised with the view put forward by the hon. Member who had last spoken. He himself considered that the Indian Marine had nothing to do with the old Indian Navy. They did not fly even a pennant in their ships. As to their qualifications, while the sub-lieutenants of the Royal Naval Reserve must have a master's certificate, the sub-lieutenants of the Indian Marine must have only a mate's certificate. Then there were only 170 officers in the Indian Marine, while there were 1,288 in the Royal Naval Reserve. The Indian Marine was not called on to serve out of India, but the Royal Naval Reserve had to serve anywhere and everywhere if wanted. He failed to see why the Indian Marines should be petted at the expense of the Naval Reserve. He supported the Naval Reserve officers in this matter. It was a grievance they felt strongly upon, and a grievance that ought to be settled to their satisfaction. They did not ask to be put before the Indian Marine, but they demanded that the Indian Marine should not be put before and made senior to them. The hon. and gallant Gentleman pointed to the fact that a great many of our seamen, after serving their term of 12 years in the Navy, left the Service altogether. He suggested some inducement should be offered to get them to join the Naval Reserve. If they were engaged to serve for 12 years, from the age of 18, they might, if they did not re-engage at the end of the 12 years, be required to serve five years in the Royal Naval Reserve.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES, speaking as a Royal Naval Reserve officer himself, did not think this grievance of his brother officers with regard to precedence was well-founded. It was not well-founded for this simple reason: The Indian Marine was a permanent service of the first line. The Royal Naval Reserve was not a permanent service; it was ancillary to the other and in the second line, and, therefore, its officers ought to come after the officers of the other Service. As regarded pensions to the Reserve men, he did not think the men had any great grievance; but he thought it would be advantageous if they could obtain pensions on their attaining 50 years instead of 60 years of age.

MR. E. ROBERTSON promised that the various suggestions which had been made by hon. Members should receive full consideration. As to the grievance of the Royal Naval Reserve officers as regarded the precedence allowed to officers of the Indian Marine, he might almost leave hon. Members who had spoken to answer each other, for they had effectively done so. The real fact was, as had been pointed out by the hon. Member for King's Lynn, the Indian Marine was a permanent service of naval men in the service of the Crown. [Admiral FIELD: Not naval men.] They were, at any rate, in the service of the Crown, and they ceased to be civilians. The other men were in a totally different position, and that was why the Admiralty had not been able to listen to the complaint of the officers of the Royal Naval Reserve. The officers of the Royal Naval Reserve had no vested right. It was really only a sentimental grievance, and the difference of the footing on which the officers of the two Services stood justified the Admiralty in the rule they laid down as to precedence. He could hold out no hope that the present Board of Admiralty would alter the rule in this matter laid down by a previous Board. As to the question with regard to pensions being paid at an early age, the matter should receive consideration. As to the query of the noble Lord who asked if the experiment with regard to the firemen had been successful, too short a period had yet elapsed to be able to deter-

mine. As to the training of the Royal Naval Reserves, the recommendations made by Sir George Tryon's Committee had been given effect to.

Vote agreed to.

8. £1,315,200, for Naval Armaments.

*MR. FORWOOD said, the Committee were probably aware that up to two or three years ago the Vote for Naval Armaments was entirely administered by the War Office. That was a highly inconvenient, and in the case of war a very dangerous, system. In consequence of the appointment of an inter-Departmental Committee of the War Office and the Admiralty, a complete change had been made in the custody of, and responsibility for, naval armaments, so far as regarded account keeping. But there was one important change recommended by that Committee which had not yet been carried out, and that was as regarded the purchase of naval armaments. Although the Admiralty obtained the money from this House, and were entirely responsible for the administration of this Vote, yet for a large portion of the material and supplies required they had to go to the War Office. He would point out that it had been recommended before now that the purchase of these stores should be made by the Admiralty itself—by its officers. It was manifest to anyone who had had any experience that it was impossible—at least that it was highly inconvenient—for one Department to act on behalf of another Department, or to communicate with another on the subject, without having a great deal of unnecessary correspondence. In time of emergency the existing system would not be found workable. He felt it would lead to great confusion. A transfer had already been made on the recommendation of a Committee with respect to the keeping of accounts; but the Committee, of which he (Mr. Forwood) was a Member, also recommended that the whole responsibility in regard to contracts for stores should be borne by the Admiralty. He could only give it as his opinion the change was necessary to prevent the delays and difficulties that must otherwise arise in time of emergency, which, as he said, might lead to serious disaster. One other point. The sum

estimated this year was less than would be required, unless the Government had been able to obtain armaments at a less cost than they were originally put down at in the original Estimate. He hoped the Government would give some information showing the reason for the increase.

COMMANDER BETHELL said, he had only one or two remarks to make. He wished to know whether the guns to be constructed during the present year were in anticipation of the vessels about to be laid down; and whether the experiments with wire guns were sufficiently satisfactory to indicate a chance of their being carried in the ships of the near future? He would also like to be informed whether experiments had lately been made with shells similar to the melanite shells in use in the French Navy?

MR. KEARLEY said, he would like to draw attention to the inconvenience to men in the Naval Ordnance Department of having the pay-day changed from Fridays to Saturdays. He hoped the old custom would be agreed to by the Government. There were certain privileges which the men used to enjoy, and which should be granted to them in the ordinary way.

MR. E. ROBERTSON said, the question of the inconvenience of the pay-day was being considered. The hon. Gentleman was understood to say that as to the privileges referred to full compensation was always made to the men who had lost them.

ADMIRAL FIELD said, he wished to know how it came that certain guns of the *Colossus* had been found unserviceable? He also wished to inquire as to the reserve guns at Malta, and to express his disapproval of the 12-pounder gun being fired from the top of the conning tower in the new torpedo-boat destroyers. He was opposed to the practice of discharging torpedoes from the bow, because of the danger of the vessel overtaking the torpedo. He would point out particularly that, if it had been resolved that the 12-pounder in the new torpedo catchers was to be fired from the top of the conning tower, it would be practically impossible for the officer in the tower to

perform his duties. Upon this question he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be able to give them some information.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES asked whether the reserve guns were in a reliable condition? With regard to the *Colossus*, three or four of the guns were found to be unserviceable. They had had other similar experiences, and he would like to know what were the patterns of the guns, and the condition in which they now were?

*SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH (Lancashire, Clitheroe) said, what had occurred in reference to the guns of the *Colossus* was simply ordinary wear and tear. With respect to the guns generally, the assurance he could give was that, instead of the ships waiting for guns, the guns would be waiting for the ships. They were well in advance with the supply of guns for new ships, and, although the battleships under the Naval Defence Act were being pushed forward, and would, he hoped, be finished this year, not one of these vessels would have to wait for her guns. With regard to the system of purchasing naval armaments by an officer of the War Department, there were two sides to the question. Care should be taken to guard against competition between one Public Department and another, and there should be no want of uniformity between the guns of one Department and those of another. Both guns and ammunition should be interchangeable between land and sea service. It was an administrative question of great importance, and would receive the attention of the Admiralty. The present system secured these objects, but he was not quite certain that a system could not be devised which would sufficiently secure them, and yet not be open to the objection urged to the present system.

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston) said, there were two or three questions remaining unanswered. He would like to hear whether any change had been made in the guns at Malta.

ADMIRAL FIELD said, perhaps the right hon. Gentleman would answer his question regarding torpedoes.

Mr. Forwood

*SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH was understood to say that these matters would have attention. The defective guns at Malta were coming home.

Vote agreed to.

9. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £380,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Expense of Works, Buildings, and Repairs, at Home and Abroad, including the cost of Superintendence, Purchase of Sites, Grants in Aid, and other Charges connected therewith, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894."

*SIR R. TEMPLE said, he desired to say a few words upon Gibraltar, which next after the Cape of Good Hope was the most important strategic position they had in the world. He had endeavoured to bring this question on before, but was told that it could not be done until this Vote was reached. He regretted the unavoidable absence—the absence through sudden illness—of the hon. Member for West Belfast (Mr. Arnold-Forster), who desired him to express his regret to the House on this account. In the absence of the hon. Gentleman, who was particularly well acquainted with this subject, he would endeavour to deal with it as well as he could. He would ask the Committee to consider for a moment what were the objects for which they retained Gibraltar, which was one of the most vital positions on earth for our Navy. They retained it, first, as a fortress commanding the Mediterranean; secondly, as a place from which a squadron could issue forth—on the pounce, as it were; thirdly, as a coaling station. These three purposes were answered. There was yet a fourth, which was not answered.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. ROBY): The Vote is for new works and improvements, and I do not think the hon. Baronet is entitled to raise this question upon it. This is a question of policy, and it is out of Order.

*SIR C. DILKE said, on a point of Order, he would remind the Chairman very respectfully that when the hon. Member for West Belfast spoke on this important subject of Gibraltar on a former occasion he was told by the Chairman of Committees (Mr. Mellor) that he would

be in Order in raising the question on this Vote.

*SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH said, the statement was that on the Vote for the New Mole some points in connection with Gibraltar could be brought forward, but it was not said that the hon. Member would be at liberty to go into the whole question of the Rock of Gibraltar and its strategical position.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES said, it seemed to him clear that they should be able to raise this question on the present Vote, which was for new works. The question he understood the hon. Baronet wished to raise was that of a repairing dock, which would come under the head of "new work." They had been debarred from discussing the question on a previous occasion. Surely they would not be debarred now? They had a right, if he might venture to say so with every respect to the Chair, to discuss this matter.

*MR. FORWOOD: Is not the New Mole part and parcel of the new dock, and made from its excavations?

MR. E. ROBERTSON: That is not so.

THE CHAIRMAN: If Mr. Mellor ruled that this discussion would be in Order on the present Vote I give way.

MR. E. ROBERTSON: What he ruled, Sir, was that the question of Works should come up on the Works Vote, and nothing else. He did not say that a general discussion concerning Gibraltar could come up on this Vote.

*SIR C. W. DILKE: My recollection is distinctly as I stated; but if there is any doubt on the matter, would not the hon. Member be in Order in raising the matter as a question of high policy on the salary of the First Lord of the Admiralty?

MR. JESSE COLLINGS: Whether it is the Mole or any other part of the works that is in question, can it be discussed other than on Gibraltar as a whole?

THE CHAIRMAN: It is clear that nothing can be discussed on this Vote that does not distinctly relate to the works that are to be effected under it—certainly not the question of the retention or the non-retention of Gibraltar.

SIR R. TEMPLE: I was mentioning this point as a proof—

THE CHAIRMAN (interrupting): The hon. Baronet will be good enough to confine himself strictly to the Vote.

*SIR C. W. DILKE: Cannot the question of policy be raised on Vote 12?

THE CHAIRMAN: I will deal with that matter when it arises.

LORD G. HAMILTON rose—

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! Sir Richard Temple.

*SIR R. TEMPLE: We are shut out from dealing with a most material point. The Government knew perfectly well that Mr. Mellor gave his ruling in favour of the raising of this question on the present Vote. [*Cries of "Order!"*] I desire to state the ruling. It was given whilst a speech was being made by the hon. Member for West Belfast regarding the provision of a dock at Gibraltar, to which we understood that this Mole was ancillary. I hold that I am entitled to urge on the Government the importance of providing a repairing dock as part of the works at Gibraltar. You say, Sir, that it is not competent on this Vote to urge that a repairing dock ought to be part of the new works; then I obey your ruling.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Baronet must confine himself strictly to the Mole.

*SIR R. TEMPLE: Then I must take some other opportunity of raising the more important question. As to the Mole, which certainly is in the Vote, I want to know—and I am speaking in the presence of naval authorities—what is the use of it unless it is followed by a dock? [*Cries of "Order!"*] The Government are to blame for shortening our privileges. This Mole is a distinct part of the dock, and I beg to point out to the House, and through the House to the country and to all persons who are interested in the well-being and security of our Navy, that the work upon this Mole, which is an essential preliminary and a subsidiary undertaking to the provision of a dock, is being carried out at a snail's pace. Look at the figures presented to us. This year £5,000 is put down, although in another column there is the figure of £54,000 as already spent,

and the total amount, we are informed, yet to be spent is £80,000. At this rate we shall be 10, 15, or 20 years before we complete the Mole. Yet this is an essential undertaking, for in the event of war with France, and a naval action being fought at Toulon, what would become of our wounded ships if they could not put into Gibraltar for repairs? What could they do? They would either have to go to Malta and run the gauntlet of Tunis, or go to Gibraltar and stop there without the possibility of being repaired. They could not be brought to England in the face of Brest and Cherbourg. Therefore, a repairing dock at Gibraltar is vital. I apologise to the Committee for having been obliged to treat this matter in such a fragmentary, cursory, and imperfect a manner, but the fault lies with the Rules of the House, which now and then prevent the proper discussion of matters of the highest importance to our naval supremacy. But we shall take other opportunities of urging this on the Government.

MR. KEARLEY was understood to ask whether the probationary period for labourers in the dockyards was to be abolished. In the case of carpenters and other mechanics at the Works Department, the rates of pay were altogether disproportionate to those which prevailed in the Trades Unions outside. The Union rate of pay for carpenters was 7½d. an hour, which worked out at 31s. 6d. per week, but in the Works Department the wages paid were as low as 25s. The Department frequently undertook work for other Departments, and though the scale of wages paid was only 25s. or 26s. a week the charge made to those other Departments was 7½d. an hour. The Works Department charged the dockyard when it did work for it a scale equal to the Trades Union rate of wages. If, therefore, the full rate of wage was charged it was only fair that the men should be paid an amount approximating to that. There was a great grievance felt in 1891 under the late Secretary to the Admiralty, and he need not say that since the new scheme had been in force and the mechanics had been left out of consideration altogether the feeling of discontent had become intensified. The

hon. Member (Mr. E. Robertson) in replying would perhaps say that the mechanical capacity of these men was inferior to that of the men employed in the dockyard. He had two arguments to meet that. He had to point out that many of the men had been employed at the dockyards, and when discharges had taken place had joined the Works Department, their characters being good and their capabilities satisfactory. His second argument was the character of the work these men were called upon to do. When the late Commander-in-Chief came to Devouport great alterations were made at his official residence—Mount Wise. Amongst other things, the ball-room was redecorated and the stables were altered in honour of the Duke of Edinburgh taking the command. It was evident that the workmanship must be of the highest quality. The men employed were from the Works Department—and he mentioned this to show that these mechanics were of equal ability to any employed in any other Government Department. He hoped that before the 1st of April, when the new scheme would come into force, the case of the mechanics would be considered, and that they would be put on a proper footing.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. MELLOR): This Vote is for works, and not wages.

*LORD G. HAMILTON said, he proposed to point out that the money taken in this Vote was inadequate, and he submitted that he would be in Order in taking that course. It would be impossible to discuss the question of adequacy or inadequacy without noticing the works which were deemed necessary. There was a reduction this year of £68,000 in the amounts allocated to these two most important stations. Less money was taken this year than last, when, in his opinion, there should have been an increase, and the Vote was really quite £100,000 less than it ought to be. He had analysed the figures, and found that there was this year a reduction of 20 per cent. in the case of all large works compared with the amount voted last year, and in respect of Malta and Gibraltar the amounts taken were 40 per cent. less than last year. Lately increased importance had been attached to Malta, and larger expense had been incurred

there, but it had been thought necessary also to extend the works at Gibraltar, and the construction of a mole had been decided on. The question of the mole and a new repairing dock being together, the dock would practically be cut out of the rock as an extension of the mole. Last year £5,000 only was taken for the extension of the mole, but the money was unfortunately not spent, and all that it was proposed to do this year was to re-vote that sum. Gibraltar was maintained simply as a naval station, but the whole of the defences there were under the control of the Army; and so long as that system continued, he did not believe there would ever be satisfactory results. The opinion prevailed in many important quarters that Gibraltar was the most strategical position we possessed, and that it was, therefore, essential to render it as perfect as possible for naval purposes. He admitted that there were difficulties in the way which had prevented the Government pushing on with the dock. Still, he thought that a more vigorous attempt should be made to extend the mole. But the War Office and the Colonial Office were of opinion that the population of Gibraltar should not be larger than it was; therefore, it was difficult to carry on the work. Notwithstanding that difficulty, the position of Gibraltar was so important that he thought the difficulty ought to be faced. He would, therefore, impress upon the Admiralty that the question of dockyard accommodation was a pressing one, and he hoped they would take it into their serious consideration. Attempts had been made to get this accommodation supplied through civilian intervention, but he doubted if that would be possible. Steps should be taken to bring the three Departments—the War Office, Admiralty, and Colonial Office—into agreement upon the matter. This question was even more important now than before, because the Admiralty were about to construct two gigantic cruisers, each costing £1,500,000, and the dock at Malta was the only one large enough to receive them. Was it worth while to construct ships if there was no dock at Gibraltar to accommodate them? To his mind, it was a matter of national policy to provide adequate accommodation for these vessels.

He hoped both sides of the House would join in pressing upon the Government the importance of getting on with the work at Gibraltar.

*SIR C. W. DILKE agreed with the noble Lord as to the importance of this question. At the moment when Russia was establishing naval stations in the Mediterranean, the importance of Gibraltar was increasing every day. There were two naval policies in the event of war—one was to hold the Mediterranean and the other was to retire to Gibraltar, but in either case we should require ample coaling and dockyard accommodation there.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, that the value of our trade which passed within reach of Gibraltar, either through the Mediterranean or down the West Coast of Africa, annually was £250,000,000. That was the value of our trade in that part of the world, and it was equally necessary that we should take measures at Gibraltar to protect it whichever of the two policies referred to by the right hon. Baronet we adopted—either that of holding the Mediterranean or retiring to Gibraltar. It was well-known to every great Power in Europe that if war were to break out between us and our great rival in the Mediterranean, our Fleet would, owing to its comparative weakness, have to fall back upon Gibraltar for reinforcements. That was a fact which it was no use attempting to conceal. In all probability the great naval action of the war would take place at or near that place. No doubt some of our ships would be seriously injured, and so long as we had no repairing dock at Gibraltar we should run the risk of having one or more of our ironclads, which cost £1,000,000 each, rendered useless or of losing them, for we should have to send them either to Malta or up the coast of Spain and through the Bay of Biscay to Portsmouth or Devonport, and either route would be beset by an active and powerful enemy. Such a state of things would be absurd. If the late Government had not been compelled to repair the deficiencies and weakness of the Fleet as they found it there was not the slightest doubt they would have undertaken that important work at Gibraltar. With regard to the

Lord G. Hamilton

mole at Gibraltar, in the opinion of naval authorities that was intimately connected with the question of the proposed dock. According to the evidence given before the Committee over which he had presided, if the dock were constructed it would give facilities, through the excavation of stone, for the construction of 360 additional feet of the mole. He had seen it reported in the papers that the Secretary to the Admiralty and the Financial Secretary were about to proceed to Gibraltar. If that was so, he hoped they would give the closest attention to the question of the site for a dock. He trusted that the Representatives of the Military Service would not allow sentimental objections to prevail against the adoption of this most valuable site. The Mole Parade was not absolutely necessary for the military, and by using that for a dock they would get an admirable site. No position at Gibraltar could be free from land fire, and there would always be a certain risk of that in the event of a war with Spain; but the position in the new Mole Parade was practically invulnerable to sea fire. He hoped, also, that the practicability of a secure mole would be considered for the sake of the comfort of our sailors—who, when lying at Gibraltar, would like to feel secure from torpedo attack—and for the sake of coaling. Coaling was at present carried on at Gibraltar by means of 40 or 50 hulks, which were all in private hands. In the event of war a couple of torpedo-boats could slip in in the dark and destroy all the coal hulks. If a mole were made available for coaling, a royalty of 6d. or 1s. a ton might be charged for coaling, and in this way £20,000 or £30,000 a year might be raised. That would be sufficient to pay the interest on a loan, by means of which the whole of the necessary works could be effected. That might be a too sanguine view of the matter; but, at any rate, it would go a long way towards it, the estimated cost of the mole and dock being £600,000. For this sum an invaluable dock could be obtained at Gibraltar and the port made practically free from torpedo attack—for about two-thirds the cost of one of our line of battleships. When these facts were taken into consideration the Committee, he thought, would agree that the

Government should lose no time in dealing with the matter. In 1890 some 560,000 tons of coal were transferred from the hulks or travelling colliers at Gibraltar to merchant vessels in addition to that supplied to Her Majesty's ships. This was the most pressing question of all in connection with the Navy at the present time, and he hoped the Government would give it immediate and thorough attention.

*SIR J. GOLDSMID said, that anyone who had been on board a ship in Gibraltar Harbour when she was endeavouring to coal in rough weather, as he had had the misfortune to be, would know how difficult an operation it was, and would be able to form an idea of the risk that one of Her Majesty's ships would have to face, when coaling, with an enemy outside. He was able, therefore, to speak as to the importance of the construction of the mole, and also as to the necessity of dock accommodation. The one thing depended upon the other, and the sooner the mole was completed the sooner would it be possible to provide dock accommodation. He would join in the appeal to the Government to be a little more liberal in their supplies for expenditure in these works. Works quickly executed always in the end cost less than those which dragged their slow length along.

MR. E. ROBERTSON said, that with regard to what had fallen from the hon. Member for Devonport, who asked whether the probationary period for unskilled labour would be abolished, there were difficulties in the way of his making a statement just now. The hon. Member, however, would be able to form an idea of the nature of his reply from what he had said on a previous occasion. As to the workmen on the Works Department, he proposed to take the course which had been taken in the case of the dockyard men. Nothing had been further from the intention of the Government than to prevent the discussion of a question so important as that of the Gibraltar dockyards; but, of course, the Regulation of Order in the Committee was the work of the Chair. He was not concerned to deny anything that had been said about the desirability—and he might go so far as to say the necessity—of building dock-

yards at Gibraltar. The First Lord of the Admiralty (Earl Spencer) had expressed the views of the Government on this question in another place, and by those views the Admiralty were, of course, bound. One reason why nothing appeared in the Estimates with reference to the dock at Gibraltar was that there were a great many other things which had to be done. A great dock had just been finished at Malta, and two other docks were in progress at Portsmouth, whilst there were pending at Devonport questions of dock-building policy which had to be taken into consideration. The supposition that the mole and the dock were necessarily bound up together in the way suggested by some hon. Members was refuted by the history of the mole itself. The mole had been there 10 years, while the dock was not there yet. The Admiralty had found that they had to strike the balance of advantages this year, and the balance they struck excluded from the Estimates the Gibraltar docks. Some of the hon. Members who had spoken had had the great advantage of having seen Gibraltar, and he hoped to have that pleasure before very long if the Debate was not unduly prolonged.

ADMIRAL FIELD said, he thought some of his friends on both sides of the House would some day have a rude awakening on the subject of the dock at Gibraltar.

Question put, and agreed to.

10. £160,100, Miscellaneous Effective Services, agreed to.

11. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £231,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Expenses of the Admiralty Office, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894."

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, that there had lately been cruising round the Eastern Mediterranean a French Squadron which was as large and as strong as the whole of our Mediterranean Fleet, and there was, in addition, a large squadron of reserves at Toulon. At the same time, the whole of Europe was interested by the fact that the Russian Fleet was about to visit the French at Toulon. It was also stated that arrangements were being made to

establish a Russian Squadron permanently in the Mediterranean with a permanent port or naval harbour. In spite of these important facts, the present Board of Admiralty had allowed our Navy to be depleted by the loss of a first-class battleship without taking any steps to make up for that loss. He regarded this as a failure of policy which was deplorable. He made a strong protest against the Admiralty allowing our Fleet to be weakened by the loss of a great battleship at a time when our naval strength was, in the opinion of many high authorities, below what it should be, when other Powers were slowly increasing their naval strength, and when France, Russia, Italy, and Germany were spending more in proportion to their previous strength in construction than we were spending this year.

*SIR C. W. DILKE wished to know whether the Government had put on record in any form the reasons which had induced them to refuse to adopt the Report of the Commission on Civil Establishments with regard to the abolition of the position of the Civil Lord of the Admiralty? Of course, nobody would wish to abolish the present occupant of the office; but the view the Commission took was that the administrative work done by the Civil Lord might be performed by permanent officials, and that more Parliamentary work might be discharged by the Secretary to the Admiralty. He wished, further, to know whether fresh instructions were given each year to the naval officers employed on the coast of Newfoundland, or whether copies of the same Instructions were sent out year by year?

*SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: I am not aware that any new Orders have been issued to the officers on the Newfoundland station differing from those it has been customary to issue, nor am I aware that the Admiralty have put on record any new opinion with regard to the retention of the office of Civil Lord; if so, it was done during the time of the late Board of Admiralty.

*SIR C. W. DILKE: The Commission on Civil Establishments condemned the retention of the office, and the reasons for the adoption by the Government of the contrary opinion ought, I think, to be put on record.

Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett

*SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: I will look into the matter, and if my right hon. Friend likes to question me further on the subject, I shall be pleased to answer him. As to what my right hon. Friend says about the possibility of having much of the work done by my hon. Friend the Civil Lord (Mr. E. Robertson) and myself transferred to permanent officials, I heartily agree. An amount of administrative work falls upon us which is quite exceptional in the Public Service. I have really entered so fully on previous occasions into the questions raised by the hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett) that I must ask to be excused from repeating what I have said. I have told the House that the fact that the strength of the Navy has been reduced by the loss of the *Victoria* has been taken into account, and will be considered with the programme for future shipbuilding. We have not thought it our duty to come at once to the House of Commons to ask for a Supplementary Estimate. Of course, we bear the responsibility of not having done so, but I can assure the House and the country that we are not blind to the facts of the case.

ADMIRAL FIELD inquired whether the defects that must have been brought to light by the experiments tried in the Summer Manœuvres would be remedied, and particularly whether anything would be done to get rid of the deficiency in the signalling staffs of torpedo-catchers and smaller ships?

THE CHAIRMAN: That hardly comes under this Vote.

ADMIRAL FIELD inquired whether the Admiralty would consider the desirability of appointing a Departmental Committee to consider the grievances of the coastguards, warrant officers, and chief boatmen, and the chief officers of the coastguard and the stokers?

MR. KEARLEY (Devonport) said, he wished to move a reduction in the salary of the Secretary to the Admiralty (Sir U. Kay-Shuttleworth).

THE CHAIRMAN: It is out of Order to move to reduce the salary of the Financial Secretary or the Secretary to the Admiralty for the purpose of bringing forward any questions.

MR. KEARLEY said, in that case he would be pleased to transfer the reduction to the salary of the First Lord of the Admiralty.

THE CHAIRMAN: Will the hon. Gentleman state what his ground is?

MR. KEARLEY said, his ground was the evasive answers given to questions put by him in the House about the absence of the Commander-in-Chief of Devonport, His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh. The question he put was whether the Secretary to the Admiralty could state the total number of days on which His Royal Highness was absent from his duties on leave or otherwise during each of the three years he was at Devonport. The question was met with a point-blank refusal by the right hon. Gentleman (Sir U. Kay-Shuttleworth), who, however, made some interesting statements which were deserving of consideration. The right hon. Gentleman said the movements of the Commander-in-Chief were governed by the exigencies of the services and by the reasonable requirements of officers; that the Admiralty were responsible for the leave granted to the Duke of Edinburgh, and that the amount of leave granted did not interfere with the efficient performance of his duties by the Commander-in-Chief. He was justified in refusing to accept such a reply as had been given him. He asked for specific information, and he thought he ought to receive it. In the absence of the information which the Government could supply, he had private information of his own—not drawn from official sources, but drawn in the ordinary way from public journals, where the absences of His Royal Highness were noted as they occurred as matters of passing interest. The facts were reliable. His Royal Highness had been appointed for three years, and he held the appointment for two years and 10 months. In 1890 he was absent for 59 days, in 1891 for 116 days, in 1892 for 145 days, and during the time he held the command in 1893 he was absent 49 days, making a total of 369 days. No account was taken in this enumeration of local absences, such as visits to various seats in the neighbourhood, which were described as being within the boundaries of the port.

THE CHAIRMAN: I did not quite catch the last date.

MR. KEARLEY said, the last absences were in June, 1893. He was well aware that there were certain ways in which these absences could be explained. He must, however, press for information as to the number of days of the Duke's absence—the official record. He thought he was entitled to a better answer than he had yet succeeded in obtaining. There must be some reason for withholding the information. In his opinion, the precedent was dangerous and hurtful, and he would express his sense of disapproval by moving the reduction of the Secretary's salary by £100.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member cannot do that.

MR. KEARLEY: The Secretary to the Admiralty's salary, Sir? Then I move to reduce the First Lord's salary by £100.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That Item A. Salaries, be reduced by the sum of £100, in respect of the Salary of the First Lord of the Admiralty."—(*Mr. Kearley.*)

*LORD G. HAMILTON (Middlesex, Ealing) said, he was responsible for the appointment of the Duke of Edinburgh to the command to which the hon. Member had referred. The hon. Member had a right, of course, to pass criticism, but any Member of the Government had a right in the exercise of his discretion to decline to answer him. [*Cries of "Oh, oh!"*] The hon. Member seemed to have obtained his information as to His Royal Highness's leave from a certain Plymouth paper.

MR. KEARLEY: That is not my only source of information. It is a matter of public notoriety.

*LORD G. HAMILTON said, all he could say was that if the paper was not more accurate on this question than it was in its remarks about the late Board of Admiralty no truthful man would attach any importance to it. The Duke of Edinburgh was appointed to the Devonport command by him (Lord G. Hamilton), and everyone knew he was a singularly able officer; and no one

could deny that during the time he was Commander-in-Chief his command was in a most efficient condition. The Duke of Edinburgh was an able administrator, and everytime that he himself, as First Lord of the Admiralty, visited Devonport he found the Fleet in the most admirable order. He could not state how many days the Duke of Edinburgh had been absent from Devonport, but he could say that when he accepted the appointment His Royal Highness informed him that he had duties to discharge as personal Aide-de-Camp to the Queen, which might necessitate his absence at certain times from the port. The Admiralty thought that a legitimate cause of absence. During the time the Duke of Edinburgh held the command at Devonport several visits were paid by Royal and Imperial personages to this country, and on these occasions it was natural that the highest personage in the realm should be anxious to have associated with those exalted personages so distinguished an officer as her son had proved himself to be, and who could take part in the many State ceremonies. It was quite new to him that the Duke of Edinburgh was unduly absent during the time he held the command, and his (Lord G. Hamilton's) strong impression was that, if the facts were accurately known, it would be found that these occasional absences were due to the Duke's position as personal Aide-de-Camp to the Queen, and the ordinary two months' leave, which an Admiral was entitled to, formed the greater portion, if not the entire time His Royal Highness was absent. It did appear to him to be an abuse of the Forms of the House to move the reduction of salary of the First Lord of the Admiralty, because an hon. Member thought he had not been adequately informed as to the number of days on which a certain Admiral was absent from his command.

*MR. A. C. MORTON said, Ministers were paid to answer questions—they might refuse to answer questions, but it would be at their peril—and hon. Members were entitled to the information they asked for. The noble Lord opposite had given the Committee information which the Secretary to the Admiralty might have given in answer to his hon. Friend's question.

Lord G. Hamilton

LORD G. HAMILTON : I was personally responsible for the appointment.

*MR. A. C. MORTON said, there was no justification for refusing the information. He wondered what position the Navy would be in if every Admiral were absent from his command for 369 days in two years and 10 months. It was a very serious thing when members of the Royal Family were shown favouritism; and he held that when a member of the Royal Family accepted an appointment, the country had a right to claim that he should do the work attached to it. No complaint was made against the Duke for want of efficiency. The complaint was that he was not at his post when there was work to do. He was elsewhere instead of discharging the duties of his office. There was a very strong feeling outside with regard to the favouritism shown in such cases as this. The noble Lord had a right to say what he liked, but he was not now in Office; and it was the duty of the Government to give answers to questions put, and not to defy the House and refuse information. He hoped the necessary information would now be forthcoming.

*SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH said, he was sorry the hon. Member for Devonport should think that on any occasion he had given an evasive answer. He was always ready to give any information that it lay in his power to give, and he believed his answers were always straightforward. There were certain Rules in the Naval Service as to these matters, and he understood, from his close relations with those at the head of the Service, that it would be a grave departure from what had always been considered the practice to give details of the amount of leave granted to officers holding such positions as that of Commander-in-Chief. Comparisons between one efficient officer and another would be invidious, and it would be improper for the Board of Admiralty to give such information as had been asked for. In his question his hon. Friend had suggested

that there was some want of attention on the part of the Duke of Edinburgh to his duties.

MR. KEARLEY: I made no suggestion of that kind.

SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH said, his hon. Friend said that His Royal Highness was away more than he ought to have been; but this was a question that did not arise for the House of Commons unless there was a departure from the usual Regulations or the public interest suffered. It was his duty, as representing the Admiralty in the House of Commons, to protect any efficient officer from the suggestion that he had done something or left something undone to the detriment of the Public Service. He could assure the hon. Member that he had endeavoured to treat the case of His Royal Highness exactly as he would treat the case of any other Commander-in-Chief. He came now to the Amendment, and he would point out that the leave granted to His Royal Highness since Lord Spencer took Office as First Lord was a small amount. His hon. Friend would see that the First Lord was only responsible for that small amount. He hoped the Amendment would not, in these circumstances, be pressed.

MR. KEARLEY said, he regretted that he could not withdraw. He could not see why a different attitude should be taken upon these questions when the right hon. Gentleman was in Office from that taken when in Opposition. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to think that he did him some wrong. If he submitted the question to a Committee of a few Members of the House he would guarantee to prove every word he had said—and more.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 19; Noes 95.—(Division List, No. 308.)

Original Question put, and agreed to.

The following Votes were agreed to:—

12. £768,700, Half-Pay, Reserved, and Retired Pay.

VOL. XVII. [FOURTH SERIES.]

13. £956,400, Naval and Marine Pensions, Gratuities, and Compassionate Allowances.

14. £312,200, Civil Pensions and Gratuities.

15. £60,300, Additional Naval Force for Service in Australasian Waters.

REVENUE DEPARTMENTS.

16. £535,022, to complete the sum for Post Office Packet Service.

17. £1,724,010, to complete the sum for Post Office Telegraphs.

18. £5,140,575, to complete the sum for Post Office.

Resolutions to be reported To-morrow.

SUPPLY.—REPORT.

Resolutions 16th September reported and agreed to.—[See page 1409.]

EXPIRING LAWS CONTINUANCE BILL. (No. 451.)

COMMITTEE.

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said, he objected to the renewal of the Peace Preservation Act, a measure of coercion which was unnecessary to the Government in carrying out their policy, especially as they had dispensed with the Criminal Law Procedure Act.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. J. MORLEY, Newcastle-upon-Tyne): My only answer to the hon. Gentleman is that the Peace Preservation Act has been in force for many years. I do not regard the Act as a measure of coercion, but essentially as a measure of police regulation, and it is from that point of view that I desire to see it renewed.

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE (Rochester) proposed to amend the first Schedule by omitting the re-enactment of the Welsh Intermediate Education Act. So long as no difficulty arose in the administration of an Act, and the intentions of the Parliament which passed it were carried out, there could be no objection to its re-enactment in the Expiring Laws Continuance Bill. But in regard to the

Welsh Intermediate Education Act, the Government had adopted a principle which was utterly at variance with the intentions of Parliament when the Act was passed, for it was being administered practically for the endowment of the Nonconformists of Wales, and therefore the Committee had a right to say to the Government that they would not grant the re-enactment of this Act unless guarantees were given that in the future it would be administered in accordance with the intentions of those who passed it. He could understand objection being raised to any religious teaching being permitted in schools supported by State aid. But that was not the policy of the Act. It allowed what was called undenominational religious teaching in the schools. But the most rigid denominational religious teaching was carried on in these State-aided schools; and, therefore, as he had said, the Act was an endowment of the Nonconformists of Wales. Again, if the Act were passed in its present form it would prevent the Local Authorities from having a free hand in regard to the regulation of endowed schools which had been set up by the Charity Commissioners, and which gave parents of day scholars or board scholars the right to demand instruction for their children in denominational education. When the Welsh Education Act was passed, it was agreed that the Cowper-Temple Scheme should always be applied; but now this was set aside by a clause it was proposed to insert in the present Bill. No doubt hon. Members opposite would attempt to rest their defence of the clause on the Endowed Schools Act. [*Cries of "Divide!"*] No doubt hon. Members wished to get home to bed. So did he; but he wished to point out that if the Bill were passed as proposed a great injustice would be done to the people belonging to the Church of England in Wales; but no doubt that would be in accordance with the policy of the present Government. But the clause went on in a most remarkable manner—

"Provided that the person in charge of a boarding-house, if the County Governing Body so allow, and subject to any regulations they may make on the subject, may separately from such general religious teaching, if any, give, either by himself or by deputy, religious instruction of a denominational character."

Viscount Cranborne

That was subject to the control of the County Governing Bodies. He did not think a more extraordinary provision was ever put into a scheme. The Governing Body, as everyone knew, belonged, in a large majority, to the Nonconformist side, and, consequently, children, whose parents desired they should have Church of England teaching, were compelled to have it subject to the majority of the Nonconformist Body in the Church of England School. [*"Hear, hear!"*] An hon. Member approved that, and imagined the County Governing Body would, with impartiality, have the teaching the parent required. He (Lord Cranborne) was not of that opinion, and those with whom he acted and who had taken an interest in Welsh local politics were not of that opinion either. He thought the religious teaching of children who desired Church of England teaching ought not to be subject to the control of County Governing Bodies, consisting of the strong partisan Nonconformists, which the Principality produced. [*Cries of "Divide!"*] He apologised most humbly to the Committee for detaining them, but he had not had an opportunity of bringing this matter forward before. The history of the religious clauses in the English Education Act were very peculiar. As the Bill was originally introduced into Parliament, it had a clause such as met the views of the Nonconformist Members for Wales, which was imposed on boarding and day scholars alike. That was the same policy that revealed itself in the schemes for Wales. He only quoted the Merioneth scheme, but the policy revealed in that was the same as was found in the Intermediate Education Bill as originally drawn. That Bill went through various modifications, and he held in his hand the Debate in which the Amendment he was going to deal with was introduced. The Member for Dartford, the late Vice President (Sir W. Hart Dyke), introduced a number of Amendments, and his right hon. Friend authorised him to say that the change in the Bill by the adoption of the Cowper-Temple Clause as to boarders was done with the full concurrence of, and after conference with, the Welsh Nonconformist Members. He himself took part in that Debate, and did his best to

support the then Vice President, and the attitude taken up. For that he was severely denounced by gentlemen who thought he had done his best to spoil the Bill. Now they were asked to re-enact the Intermediate Education Act, and they believed that the present Government, like their predecessors, were bound to administer the Act in the same spirit in which the late Government administered it, and because hon. Gentlemen opposite were in power they had no right to alter what was the plain intention of Parliament, as shown in Debate at that time, and introduce by a side-wind, by a scheme introduced into Parliament, general words giving power to the Governing Body to make schemes which might be for the advantage of the children, or some general words of that kind. By so doing a breach had been made in the practice of the former Government, and action had been taken directly contrary to the spirit and intention of Parliament. He claimed that he had made out a case for moving an Amendment on the Expiring Laws Continuance Bill. [*Cries of "Divide!"*] Really he thought this was most unseemly, because if the Government were once more to set this machinery in motion they were bound to give a pledge they would administer it in the spirit in which it was passed.

Schedule 1.

Amendment proposed, in page 6, line 6, to leave out "No. 35 (Welsh Intermediate Education)."—(*Viscount Cranborne.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Schedule."

THE PARLIAMENTARY CHARITY COMMISSIONER (Mr. T. E. ELLIS, Merionethshire) said, the noble Lord had brought forward a charge against the present Government of having made some great change in policy in dealing with these schemes, and the noble Lord, he thought, based most of his argument on that assumption. He would like to point out to the Committee that every one of the schemes that contained this alleged objectionable religious

clause was finished, so far as the Charity Commissioners were concerned, before the present Government came into Office; not a single scheme had passed from the Charity Commissioners with any change whatsoever since the present Government came into Office. The Conscience Clause was in every one of them. Among these were schemes for the Counties of Carnarvon, Merioneth, Pembroke, Flint, Denbigh, and Montgomery. There had been no change whatever either in the policy of the Commissioners or the Government.

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE asked if the hon. Gentleman asserted these clauses received the assent of Her Majesty's late advisers, because his right hon. Friend assured them to the contrary.

MR. T. E. ELLIS said, that so far as Carnarvon was concerned, he thought the Education Department sanctioned the scheme. At the instance of Lord Knutsford, strongly supported by the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council in the late Government, the Address to that scheme was adopted unanimously in another place, and no one ventured to bring forward an Address in that House to reject that scheme. With regard to the Merioneth scheme, the clause as it stood was a compromise that was effected by the Education Department, as between the clause adopted by the Charity Commission and the Joint Education Committee of Merioneth. The scheme of the Charity Commissioners was adopted with a minor alteration. The noble Lord said most of the schemes touched schools belonging to a particular denomination. In all the 16 schemes ever drawn up in Wales and Monmouthshire there was not a single school belonging to any denomination touched or affected by this scheme. In the case of Carnarvon a complaint was made that one school, Fryer's, was a Church of England School. Lord Knutsford, speaking on behalf of the late Government, took objection to that, and said the inclusion of Fryer's was quite in conformity with the Act of 1889. How did the Nonconformist majority propose to deal with the

religious instruction in boarding schools? So far as the day schools were concerned, the noble Lord admitted it was included in the Welsh Act of 1889, but how did it deal with the religious education? He should like to read to the Committee the provision made for religious instruction in boarding schools. The first provision was this—

"In the hostel, or boarding house, or school, scholars shall be allowed to attend such places of worship, and have reasonable facilities for religious instruction from such religious teachers, as their parents may choose for them."

He ventured to think no more liberal provision could be adopted than the provision introduced in that scheme. The second provision, as to family worship, was—

"Christian family worship shall be held daily in the hostel or boarding house, but in the family worship so held the formularies of any particular denomination shall not be used."

The noble Lord made objection to that provision, but that was the very provision which was passed unanimously in the House of Lords.

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE: I have nothing to do with the House of Lords.

MR. T. E. ELLIS said, if the noble Lord had so little interest in the doings of the House of Lords, why did he not himself move an Address to Her Majesty to reject this clause, and take the opinion of the House of Commons upon it? Neither he nor his hon. Friend took any step whatsoever to challenge the opinion of that House. The last provision ran thus—

"In the course of any general Christian religious teaching given in the hostel or boarding-house, the formularies of any particular denomination shall not be used, nor shall the distinctive tenets of any particular denomination be taught, provided that the person in charge of a boarding-house, if the County Governing Body so allow, and subject to any regulations they may make on the subject, may separately from such general religious teaching (if any), give, either by himself or deputy, religious instruction of a denominational character, but only to those scholars whose parents in writing expressed a wish for such instruction."

That gave a free hand to the Local Authority—the very provision which the noble Lord wanted. He ventured to submit that in these counties, where the Nonconformists were in an enormous

majority, this provision was as liberal a provision as could be devised. If the clause were not re-enacted the result would be that many schemes which were now in progress could not be proceeded with. He trusted the Committee would not accept the Amendment of the noble Lord.

*MR. J. G. TALBOT (Oxford University) who spoke amid cries of "Divide!" supported the Amendment of the noble Lord. They objected, and challenged the continuance of this Welsh Intermediate Act, because they said it had been worked in a manner in which it was never intended to be worked. He would remind the hon. Gentleman who had last spoken, of the Debate on the Welsh Intermediate Act which took place in July 1889, when the very power which was now sought to be introduced into this scheme was sought for by the hon. Gentleman and his friends, and was deliberately refused in this House. The Member for Montgomeryshire (Mr. Stuart Rendel), on the occasion of the Debate of 1889, moved to omit the word "day" before scholars, and he said—

"The question of boarders is one about which the feeling is very strong in Wales."

Mr. Osborne Morgan supported the Amendment, and then the following discussion ensued:—

"Sir W. HART DYKE: I appreciate the point which has been raised, but I cannot accept any Amendment virtually tending to widen the clause, which already extends the Cowper-Temple Clause to day-schools."

MR. T. E. ELLIS: May I appeal to the right hon. Gentleman? I think it would be rather hard if a Nonconformist child were a boarder in a school in Wales, and were compelled to attend lessons on any religious subject in connection with some other religious denomination.

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE hoped the change would not be made.

MR. MUNDELLA: I think this clause should be allowed to extend to board scholars as well as day scholars."

Why had he quoted all this? Because he wanted to show that this point was distinctly raised in 1889, and was distinctly refused; therefore, when the hon. Gentleman sought now to apply to boarders the provision which the Act only applied to day scholars, he was

Mr. T. E. Ellis

doing that which the Act of Parliament did not allow him to do. In the Report of the Endowed Schools Inquiry Commission, 1867, on which the Endowed Schools Act was founded, it was stated—

"Parents of day scholars ought to be allowed to withdraw their children from the religious instruction if they think fit, and also to appeal against any unfair inculcation of religious doctrines in the course of the secular instruction."

Then the Report went on to say—

"Boarders must stand on a different footing. A master who has boarders in his house is not merely a teacher; he has for the time the full responsibility of a parent."

He would not trouble the Committee with the whole extract. He merely quoted this to show that the matter had been very deliberately regulated by Parliament, and that a distinction had been always drawn between day scholars and boarders. Whilst, on the one hand, day scholars had been given that provision for undenominational teaching under these schemes of the Endowed School Acts, enlarged by the Welsh Intermediate Education Act, the matter with regard to boarders had been distinctly put on a different footing, and what they said was that the present Government had materially altered the foundations on which that was done. The words of the Merionethshire scheme—

"If the County Governing Body so allow, and subject to any regulations they may make on the subject"—

were deliberately put in against the scheme which the Charity Commissioners had framed. The scheme, as submitted by the Charity Commissioners, had left discretion in the hands of the master, and the Education Department, acting on the advice of the Charity Commissioners, put in these words, taking away the option of the master to demand liberty of religious teaching and giving it to a Governing Body. His noble Friend was not saying too much when he said that the County Governing Body in a Welsh county was a hostile body which might make and force hostile regulations upon the people. What they asked was that this Act should be administered in the spirit in which it was passed, and they maintained it was not so administered. They did not stand alone on the Merionethshire Scheme, because they had the Cardiganshire Scheme, which actually

went to this extent in illiberality—that they excluded from the benefits of Cardiganshire Scholarships boys attending a certain school, notoriously one of the best in the county, because it happened to be a denominational school. [Mr. ACLAND: It is under private management.] That was a perversion of language: the school was, to all intents and purposes, a public school, and it had the public confidence to a remarkable degree. The Carnarvonshire scheme, though sufficiently undenominational to please most people, had not been challenged in either House of Parliament; but there was another scheme for Denbighshire, which dealt with the ancient school of Ruthin, long connected with the Church.

Mr. T. E. ELLIS said, there had been no change in the Denbighshire scheme during the last 18 months.

Mr. TALBOT said, he knew the scheme had created great alarm, and he hoped it would not be pressed aggressively. He regretted once more that these matters could not be brought before the House on a more suitable occasion. It was the fault of the system under which they laboured; they had not had the ordinary opportunities of bringing forward their grievances. All they asked was that the "denominational conscience," as it was called, should be respected [Laughter]. He supposed there was no harm in doing that? Their demand was, he thought, a very simple one. If the Church in Wales was in a minority, he thought they should have the privilege of a minority, and be protected in all these matters.

Question put, and agreed to.

Other Schedules agreed to.

Bill reported, without Amendment; read the third time, and passed.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the Service of the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894, the sum of £26,449,307 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom. —(Sir J. T. Hilbert.)

Resolution to be reported To-morrow.

SAVINGS BANKS BILL.—(No. 292.)

As amended, considered.

A Clause (Proof that bank is a post office savings bank.)—(*Mr. A. Morley*,)—brought up, and read the first and second time, and added.

An Amendment made.

Bill read the third time, and passed.

LABOUR DISPUTES (ARBITRATION)
BILL.—(No. 308.)

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

CONSPIRACY AND BREACH OF THE
PEACE BILL.—(No. 208.)

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

VACCINATION BILL.—(No. 356.)

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

REGISTRATION OF ELECTORS AMEND-
MENT BILL.—(No. 215.)

Order for Committee read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

REGISTRATION OF VOTERS (SCOTLAND)
AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 216.)

Order for resuming Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [26th April] read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

ESTABLISHED CHURCH (WALES) BILL.
(No. 225.)

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC (LOCAL CONTROL)
BILL.—(No. 233.)

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

POLLING DISTRICTS (LANCASHIRE).

Copy presented,—of Order made by the County Council for the County Palatine of Lancaster re-dividing the Heywood Parliamentary Division into Polling Districts [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

PRISONS (IRELAND).

Copy presented,—of Fifteenth Report of the General Prisons Board (Ireland), 1892-3 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ARMY (ROYAL MILITARY ACADEMY,
WOOLWICH).

Copy presented,—of Report of the Board of Visitors for 1893 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ARMY (ROYAL MILITARY COLLEGE,
SANDHURST).

Copy presented,—of Report of the Board of Visitors for 1893 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ARMY MEDICAL STAFF (EFFECTIVE
AND NON-EFFECTIVE VOTES).

Return presented,—relative thereto [Address 5th September; *Mr. Bartley*]; to lie upon the Table.

NAVY (LOSS OF H.M.S. "VICTORIA").

Copy presented,—of Minutes of Proceedings at a Court-Martial, held on board H.M.S. *Hibernia*, at Malta, between the 17th and 27th July 1893, relative to the loss of H.M.S. *Victoria* [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRANSMISSION OF SEAMEN'S WAGES.

Copy presented,—of Report of the Committee appointed to consider the question of the extension, to Ports Abroad within Home Trade limits, of the arrangements now in force in the United Kingdom for the transmission of Seamen's Wages; together with Minutes of Evidence, Appendices, and Index [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made, and Question, "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Mr. Marjoribanks*,)—put, and agreed to.

House adjourned at ten minutes after Two o'clock.



HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 19th September 1893.

LIGHT RAILWAYS (IRELAND) BILL.
(No. 269.)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (The Earl of KIMBERLEY), in moving the Second Reading, said, this was a Money Bill, and very urgent.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."
—(*The Earl of Kimberley*.)

Motion agreed to; Bill read 2^a accordingly; Committee negatived; then (Standing Order No. XXXIX. having been dispensed with) Bill read 3^a, and passed.

CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES.

Moved, "That the Lord President (*E. Kimberley*) do take the Chair in Committee of the Whole House this day, in the absence of the Earl of Morley."—(*The Lord Rosebery (E. Rosebery)*); agreed to.

MERCHANT SHIPPING BILL.

Message from the Commons That they have come to the following Resolution, viz., "That it is expedient that the Merchant Shipping Bill be committed to a Joint Committee of Lords and Commons," and to desire their Lordships concurrence thereto: The said Message to be taken into consideration on Friday next.

LAW OF COMMONS AMENDMENT BILL
[H.L.].—(No. 238.)

Returned from the Commons agreed to.

MADRAS AND BOMBAY ARMIES BILL
[H.L.].—(No. 66.)

Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments.

VOL. XVII. [FOURTH SERIES.]

PUBLIC AUTHORITIES PROTECTION
BILL [H.L.].

Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments.

SALE OF GOODS BILL [H.L.].

Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments.

FERTILISERS AND FEEDING STUFFS
BILL.—(No. 263.)

Returned from the Commons with the Amendments agreed to, with Amendments: The said Amendments considered (on Motion), and agreed to.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Moved, "That Standing Order No. XXXIX. be considered in order to its being dispensed with for this day's Sitting."—(*The Lord President (E. Kimberley)*); agreed to.

METROPOLIS MANAGEMENT (PLUMSTEAD AND HACKNEY) BILL.

House in Committee (according to Order): Bill reported without Amendment: Standing Committee negatived: Then (Standing Order No. XXXIX. having been dispensed with) Bill read 3^a, and passed.

EXPIRING LAWS CONTINUANCE BILL.

Read 1^a: Then (Standing Order No. XXXIX. having been dispensed with) Bill read 2^a; Committee negatived; Bill read 3^a, and passed.

SAVINGS BANKS BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1^a, and to be printed.—(No. 272.)

SEA FISHERIES REGULATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1^a, and to be printed.—(No. 273.)

House adjourned at twenty minutes past
Three o'clock, to Friday next,
Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 19th September 1893.

INDIAN CANTONMENTS.

MR. STANSFELD (Halifax): With your permission, Sir, I should like to put a question as to the order of our Proceedings. I have been proposing to move the Adjournment of the House to-night, in order to call attention to a definite matter of urgent public importance—namely, the immediate duty of Her Majesty's Government with regard to certain practices in Indian Cantonments, as being in my view contrary to the Resolution of the House of Commons of June 15, 1888. I notice to day for the first time—having been absent from town—that there appears on the Paper a Notice of Motion by the hon. Baronet the Member for the Kingston Division (Sir R. Temple), who proposes to draw attention more or less, though not entirely so, to the same subject, but without assigning any definite occasion or date. I wish to ask you, Sir, whether I shall be in Order in making the Motion I had proposed?

*MR. SPEAKER: I also noticed the Motion which stands in the name of the hon. Baronet, and it would clearly act as a block upon the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman if the latter had proposed to move his Resolution to-day. Unless the hon. Baronet removes that block, it will not be competent for the right hon. Gentleman to move the Adjournment, even to-morrow. If there be a legitimate occasion on which the right hon. Gentleman may take that course, it will be on the Question that I leave the Chair on going into Committee on the Indian Budget. That is the state of the case.

MR. WALTER M'LAREN (Cheshire, Crewe): Would it be possible for the House to discuss this question on the Indian Budget without a Motion?

*MR. SPEAKER: No; I do not think that would be in Order. The right hon. Gentleman asked me whether the fact that no day had been given for the discussion of the Motion by the hon. Baronet precluded the bringing forward

of his own proposition. It is constantly held that a Motion which is down on the Paper, but for which no day has been fixed, acts as a block on the discussion of the question with which it deals before the date at which it is ultimately proposed to take the Motion on the Paper.

MR. WALTER M'LAREN: If the hon. Baronet would withdraw his Motion at the end of Question time, I presume the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax could go on with his Motion?

*MR. SPEAKER: The Motion of the hon. Baronet cannot be moved to-day. It would come on to-morrow, on the Motion that I leave the Chair.

SIR J. GORST (Cambridge University): As this is a matter connected with the administration of the Indian Budget, would it not be in Order to make speeches upon it, and to discuss it when the Indian Budget is under consideration without any definite Motion?

*MR. SPEAKER: That would be anticipating the discussion to which the Notice on the Paper relates.

MR. STANSFELD: I do not quite understand whether I should have been in Order in moving the Adjournment of the House for the purpose I intended if the hon. Member for Kingston had not put a Notice on the Paper.

*MR. SPEAKER: That raises another part of the question. I think that as a legitimate opportunity for the right hon. Gentleman to take occurs on the Question that I now leave the Chair, it would not be permissible for him to raise the question on the Motion for an Adjournment of the House, the more especially as only a short time—only a few hours—will elapse before the subject can be legitimately discussed in the ordinary way.

MR. J. STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I beg to give notice that next Session I will call attention to the Report laid on the Table of this House by the Departmental Committee respecting cantonments in India, and move a Resolution.

QUESTIONS.

ANTHRAX.

MR. THORNTON (Clapham) (for Mr. MACDONA, Southwark, Rotherhithe): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether

he is aware that a boy in Webb's Horse Hair Bedding Factory, Worcester, died about a fortnight since from anthrax, caught in handling horse hair which was imported from Russia through Antwerp; and whether he can take any steps to guard against the danger thus shown to exist?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. H. H. FOWLER, Wolverhampton, E.): The report of the proceedings at the inquest on the case in question has been brought under my attention. The verdict of the jury was that the death was from anthrax. It appeared from the evidence that the bales of horsehair, unopened and whole, were thrown into tanks and boiled for three or four hours; and, according to the evidence of one of the owners of the works, further means of disinfection are proposed. The jury suggested that representations should be made in favour of some means of disinfecting the bales before sending them to England, but I am advised that no reliance could be placed on such means of disinfection as would be practised at the ports of Eastern Europe, &c., whence the hair is mostly exported. If such processes superseded the precautions now taken there would be greater danger than is now the case.

VACCINATION.

MR. HOPWOOD (Lancashire, S.E., Middleton): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Local Government Board whether he is aware of the distribution of a pamphlet, entitled *Facts Concerning Vaccination for Heads of Families*, which bears upon the first page the words "Revised by the Local Government Board, and issued with their sanction"; and whether it was revised and sanctioned as stated; and, if not, whether the Board will request the publishers of the *Facts*, &c., to drop the statement of the sanction and revision by the Board?

*THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Sir W. FOSTER, Derby, Ilkeston): I find that about nine years ago the pamphlet referred to was forwarded to the Local Government Board by the National Health Society, and that at that time a few corrections and additions were suggested on behalf of the Board. The Board have

no information as to the present distribution of the pamphlet.

MR. HOPWOOD: I asked whether it is sanctioned and revised by the Local Government Board in the shape in which my hon. Friend has seen it?

*SIR W. FOSTER: The only thing that was done was to make corrections and additions, which were made in the Office by one of the officials of the Local Government Board. There is no sanction and no revision by the Board as a Board.

MR. HOPWOOD: Although it is so stated on the face of it?

[No answer.]

MR. HOPWOOD: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Local Government Board whether he will produce the Report of Dr. Ballard on the case of Emily Maud Child, of Leeds, an infant who was found by a verdict of a Coroner's Jury, on medical evidence, to have died of syphilis inoculated by vaccination; has his attention been called to the fact that Dr. Ballard's Report denied the fact, and left it to be inferred that the syphilis came from her parents, but that, on further inquiry by a medical authority sent down by the Royal Commission, it was found that there was no foundation for the imputation on the parents; and will he explain why Dr. Ballard did not attend and give evidence before the Royal Commission on Vaccination, as promised by the late President of the Local Government Board?

*SIR W. FOSTER: As was stated in the House by the late President of the Local Government Board, the Reports of the Inspectors of the Department in cases such as the one referred to are regarded as confidential, and it would be contrary to the practice of the Board to give publicity to them. The Report of Dr. Ballard was submitted to the Royal Commission on Vaccination, and, as the Board understand, it has been considered by them, and the case has been the subject of further inquiry by examination of witnesses and otherwise. The Board are not aware of the conclusions which have been arrived at by the Commission on the subject. Dr. Ballard did not arrive in Leeds until after the child had been buried. The medical men who attended the child were of opinion that she had

died of syphilis, and Dr. Ballard accepted provisionally their judgment in the matter. His attention was first directed to ascertaining whether syphilis had been conveyed to the child in the process of vaccination, but he could find no evidence that this was the case. In this way it may be considered that it was left to be inferred that the syphilis of the child, if syphilis it was, had been congenital. A member of the Royal Commission who is accepted in scientific circles as the highest authority on the subject arrived at the conclusion which he has published—that the death was not attributable to syphilis, and that the child was entirely free from that disease. The case will no doubt be referred to in the Report of the Commission, and the conclusion at which they arrive with regard to it stated. Dr. Ballard has been most anxious to give evidence before the Commission, but unfortunately, owing to a most serious illness, he has been unable to leave his house in Chester for many months.

MR. HOPWOOD: Has Dr. Ballard been ill for the last two years?

SIR W. FOSTER: He has been ill, I know, for many months past.

MR. HOPWOOD: Perhaps the hon. Gentleman will answer me one more question. He says these Reports are confidential. Is he aware that the answer given by Mr. Ritchie in this House conveyed an imputation on the parents that they had suffered from syphilis, and does not that, in my hon. Friend's judgment, release him from considering this Report as confidential?

SIR W. FOSTER: I cannot take the view my hon. Friend does. I regard the Report as confidential.

THE CHOLERA.

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if, having regard to the great loss and inconvenience entailed on the shipping interest, seamen, ocean passengers, and all connected therewith, by reason of exaggerated Press rumours respecting the prevalence of cholera in Great Britain and consequent unnecessary quarantine restrictions on British ships in foreign ports, he is in a position to inform the House officially whether there is any foundation for imputing a general epi-

demic of Asiatic cholera in any part of the United Kingdom, and particularly at the Port of Southampton; and if his medical advisers consider that there is the slightest danger of infection from cholera in England on board a ship with a clean bill of health in that regard 14 days at sea from Great Britain?

MR. H. H. FOWLER: With the exception of three or four ports on the Eastern coast, all the ports of Great Britain have been throughout the year absolutely free from cholera, and the Local Government Board do not consider that there is any foundation for imputing a general epidemic of Asiatic cholera in any part of the United Kingdom. We are not aware of any case of cholera at the Port of Southampton. The medical advisers of the Board are clearly of opinion that there is no danger of infection from cholera on board a ship which has, since leaving a British port, been at sea for 14 days, and has been free from cholera and choleraic diarrhoea.

COMPULSORY RE-VACCINATION.

MR. HOPWOOD: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Local Government Board whether any, and, if so, what, statutory power is given by the Vaccination Acts to Boards of Guardians, Superintendents of Lunatic Asylums, Governors of Gaols, the Local Government Board, or any other Authority, to compulsorily re-vaccinate paupers temporarily under their control when such paupers do not apply for re-vaccination; and whether the cost of re-vaccinating pauper lunatics who do not apply for re-vaccination can be lawfully charged against the poor rates of the district in which the lunatic asylum, in which they are detained, may happen to be situated?

MR. PIERPOINT (Warrington): Perhaps the hon. Gentleman will also inform the House whether he believes that an opinion against vaccination given by a lunatic is of any value?

SIR W. FOSTER: The Vaccination Acts contain no provision as to compulsory re-vaccination. If a pauper lunatic is re-vaccinated by the Public Vaccinator in whose district he is resident, and such re-vaccination is performed in accordance with the provisions of the Vaccination Acts and the Orders as to the duties of Public Vaccinators, the Public Vaccinator

Sir W. Foster

would be entitled to a fee for the operation if successful, and such fee would be payable out of the poor rate. I do not think that the supplementary question requires any reply.

MR. HOPWOOD: Do I understand the hon. Gentleman to say there is no power to compel re-vaccination at all?

SIR W. FOSTER: No statutory power.

TRALEE AND DINGLE RAILWAY.

SIR T. ESMONDE (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he will state what answer has been received from the Irish Board of Works to the communications he has addressed to them upon the subject of the Tralee and Dingle Railway; and whether the Board of Works have as yet appointed anyone to conduct the promised inquiry; if so, whether he can give the name of the gentleman selected to conduct the inquiry, and his qualifications, and state when the investigation will take place?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Sir J. T. HIBBERT, Oldham): The Board of Works have made a most careful and valuable Report on the subject of the Tralee and Dingle Railway, and, on the Board's recommendation, the Treasury have authorised the appointment of Mr. James Barton, M.I.C.E., to conduct the inquiry, and have asked that it may be undertaken with as little delay as possible.

CARDIFF SAVINGS BANK.

MR. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he can inform the House if the liquidation as regards the Cardiff Savings Bank is completed; whether the last and final dividend is paid, or when it is to be paid to the depositors; whether the offer of the Marquess of Bute was accepted to contribute enough to repay all deposits to Friendly and Charitable Societies; and, if so, have the amounts been paid; and whether he can state to the House the total cost of the liquidation, inclusive of the Law costs, and what amount of the latter has been paid by the Treasury?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby): I am informed by the solicitors to the liquidator that the liquidation cannot be completed until after the Long Vaca-

tion. It is anticipated by the liquidator that, subject to the approval of the Court, the final dividend may be paid some time in November. The liquidator states that he has obtained the sanction of the Court to accept, and has accepted, the offer made by the Marquess of Bute. The amount payable will be sent to the liquidator for distribution at the proper time. The approximate cost of the liquidation up to the present date is £8,300. During the earlier part of the proceedings legal costs to the amount of £2,447 10s. 3d were paid by the Treasury Solicitor.

COLLECTORSHIPS OF CUSTOMS.

MR. THEOBALD (Essex, Romford): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will state how far the recommendation contained in the Treasury Minute of 24th March, 1891, authorising an extension of the system previously prevailing of appointing surveyors to Collectorships of Customs, has been acted upon, and whether the number so promoted will bear comparison with the number of similar promotions for a like period prior to the issue of the said Minute?

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: The recommendation contained in the Treasury Minute will not be lost sight of, but no suitable opportunity has occurred since that Minute was published which, in the opinion of the Board of Customs, would have warranted the selection of a surveyor in preference to a collector in the ordinary line of promotion.

CONTEMPT OF COURT IN IRELAND.

MR. MAGUIRE (Clare, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he would state how long has Michael Fetherstone, of Ballintobber, County Roscommon, been confined in Sligo for contempt of Court for retaking possession of his holding; whether a settlement has been come to in respect to the holding in consequence of the dispute regarding which the imprisonment took place; and whether, under these circumstances, there is any reason for his further detention?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. J. MORLEY, Newcastle-upon-Tyne): Fetherstone has been detained in prison for contempt of Court since May 3 last, and I understand it is

true that within the last few days a settlement has been arrived at in respect of the holding for the retaking possession of which he is now detained in custody. The discharge of prisoners in contempt cases—which is not a matter in which the Executive can interfere—is always dealt with by the Judge who makes the order of committal, and I have no doubt the Receiver who arranged the settlement in the present case will consider it his duty to bring the matter under the notice of the Judge.

CHOLERA AND THE IMPORTATION OF RAGS.

MR. THORNTON (for Mr. MACDONA): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to a letter in *The Morning Post* of the 15th instant, signed F. Taylor Simson, physician, a specialist upon microbes, in which he states that, from personal knowledge of other disease germs, he is of opinion that rags might occasion cholera, and is sure may convey other loathsome diseases; and whether he will take steps to ascertain the opinion held by medical men in England upon this subject, so that it can be seen whether English medical opinion is in harmony with that expressed by the Dresden Conference upon this important matter?

MR. H. H. FOWLER: I have seen the letter in *The Morning Post* to which the hon. Member refers. I can only, in reply, say what I have said on several previous occasions, that in all matters connected with the encroachment of cholera in this country the Local Government Board act, and intend to continue to act, on the advice of the Medical Officers of the Board; and if any medical man has any doubts concerning the action of the Board, I would suggest that he should write direct to the Local Government Board, where his communication will receive the most careful attention. It is not for me to differ from the expert advice that has been given to the Department, especially as that advice is concurred in by my Colleague, the Secretary to the Local Government Board, whose authority on questions of public health is widely recognised.

Mr. J. Morley

ARMY EXAMINATIONS.

MR. WICKHAM (Hants, Petersfield) (for Mr. JEFFREYS, Hants, Basingstoke): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the Committee recently appointed to inquire into the examinations held for admission to the Army have made their Report; whether he can now state the details of the future examinations for the Army; and whether, for the convenience of candidates, he will make these details publicly known as soon as possible?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. WOODALL, Hanley): The Committee appointed to inquire into examinations for admission to the Army has not yet reported. Regulations concerning the examinations for the future are, as I stated last night, in the hands of the printer, and will shortly be issued.

MR. WICKHAM (for Mr. JEFFREYS): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that some of the candidates for the Army at present in Sandhurst College habitually use eyeglasses; whether some medical examiners offer candidates the use of glasses when testing their sight; whether in the recent case of the rejection of G. M. Nicholson for the Army on account of a slight defect in one eye the medical examiner had refused to test his eyesight by means of a glass; and what are the instructions under which the medical examiners conduct these examinations?

MR. WOODALL: It is probable that some gentlemen at Sandhurst do wear eyeglasses. In some cases it is necessary to use glasses in testing candidates, in order to determine the nature and degree of defective vision. The Regulations require that a candidate shall be able to go through certain tests of eyesight without glasses, and in these Mr. Nicholson failed. The examination is conducted under instructions laid down in the Medical Regulations, Paragraphs 777 to 780.

THE COLLIERY RIOTS.

MR. DODD (Essex, Maldon): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he has considered the effect of the verdict given at Castleford by the Coroner's Jury in respect of the death of a miner, James Gibbs, who was shot by

the soldiers sent down into that district during the strike; whether, in future, he will, in such cases where possible, send additional police instead of soldiers; if he can state what number of police were employed at Doncaster in consequence of the races, and what number on the race-course itself; whether it is any cheaper for the districts to employ Her Majesty's Forces to keep order than to employ additional police, and how far, in each case, the locality bears the expense; whether any official inquiry into the recent unfortunate occurrences at Castleford will be held; whether, if he should be satisfied that the deceased, or any of those killed or injured, were innocent of rioting, he would take steps to procure as compensation to those dependent on them in the case of the killed, and as compensation to themselves in the case of the wounded, a money payment from the national resources; if he will consider the propriety of, in all cases where life is in this country destroyed by the military forces or by the police, holding as a matter of course by some official of his Department an official inquiry into the circumstances; and if he would consider the possibility of issuing general instructions for the use of the authorities as to riots or expected riots, and the duty of such authorities in the case thereof?

MR. NUSSEY: I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he is in a position to inform the House as to the truth of the allegation that the men who lost their lives in the recent occurrences at Featherstone were themselves wholly innocent of any share in the disturbances; and whether he can now state what decision he has come to with regard to holding an inquiry into the whole matter?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. ASQUITH, Fife, E.): In answer to the first part of the question, I have to say that the verdicts and the evidence at the inquests upon both men who met their deaths on the occasion in question are at present under my consideration. With regard to the second paragraph, the Secretary of State, when appealed to, always advises Local Authorities to employ extra police from neighbouring districts, if possible, in preference to soldiers, and in case of great necessity he lends detachments of Metropolitan

Police. But there are occasions when, from the suddenness of the emergency, or the character of the disturbance, it is either necessary or preferable to employ troops. In reply to the third paragraph, I understand that on September 5, 207 West Riding constables were employed at Doncaster, and on the 6th, 267. The majority of these were apparently on the racecourse, or on the different approaches to it. Their employment was in pursuance of a long-standing practice, and the Chief Constable informs me that he had no reason to apprehend a disturbance, and least of all places at Featherstone. (4) The whole cost of extra police is paid by the locality. When the military are employed, the statutory or regulated charges for travelling, billeting, and feeding are charged to Army funds, and any extra expense is paid by the locality. (6) If the circumstances were such as to justify the reading of the Proclamation under the Riot Act, all persons present were after the Proclamation under a legal duty to disperse. But I cannot go into this question until I have considered all the evidence. (5 and 7) The question whether there should be a further inquiry is engaging my serious attention. It does not seem to be generally known that, except under the provisions of an Act of Parliament, no Government Department has the power to compel the attendance of witnesses or to take evidence on oath. (8) I am considering this question. But it is to be observed that the difficulty in such cases is not in apprehending the law, but in applying it with promptitude and discretion to particular facts.

***SIR C. W. DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean):** I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that, except under an Act of Parliament, the Government has no power to secure the attendance of witnesses. Is it not the fact that Commissions of Inquiry are frequently held under the Home Office in the case of riot without Acts of Parliament?

MR. ASQUITH: There have been cases in which Departmental inquiries have been held. My statement is perfectly accurate.

***SIR C. W. DILKE:** I do not question the accuracy of the right hon. Gentleman. I really wish for information.

MR. ASQUITH: I have given the information. If a Departmental Inquiry

is held without an Act of Parliament that would give the body special powers. No witness who declines to attend can be compelled to be present, and none of the evidence to be taken can be taken on oath.

*MR. DODD: Can the right. hon. Gentleman give us any idea of the relative cost to the district of the police and soldiers, or how much cheaper it may be to have soldiers rather than police?

MR. ASQUITH: No, Sir. I have no information of that kind.

AFFAIRS AT RIO.

MR. VICARY GIBBS (Herts, St. Albans) (for Mr. BANBURY, Camberwell, Peckham): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if proper steps are being taken to protect the interests of British subjects at Rio at the present critical juncture; and, if so, what steps; and whether the mail steamers are allowed to leave as usual with letters, &c.?

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall): I beg to ask the hon. Gentleman whether he can give the House information as to the state of affairs at Rio de Janeiro, and as to what steps are being taken by Her Majesty's Government to protect British interests there?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir E. GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): There is nothing to add to what was stated in the House yesterday. There can be no doubt that British interests are being protected as far as it is possible to do so by Her Majesty's Minister, the Vice Consul, and the Commanders of Her Majesty's ships on the spot. Mr. Wyndham reported by telegraph on the 10th instant that mails and passengers on British vessels would be embarked and disembarked by Her Majesty's ships. I can give no information as to the motives of the revolutionists or as to the definite progress of the revolution.

THE COLOMBO WATER SUPPLY.

MR. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that the Labugarma main water pipe, which conveys water to the City of Colombo, is insufficiently large for the

needs of the inhabitants of that port; that the Ceylon Government constructed the Colombo Waterworks, and by its Ordinance of 1886 enacted that the Ceylon Government should furnish a continuance supply of drinking water fit for human consumption; is he aware that the Ceylon Government further enacted in Section 10 that, for this construction and maintenance, the Colombo Municipality should pay annually for 35 years a sum of Rs.130,000 and have the right to levy a water rate; and will Her Majesty's Government now insist that the Ceylon Government should fulfil its contract and lay down any additional piping necessary to furnish Colombo with a sufficient supply of water?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. S. BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): Proposals for improving the water supply are now under the consideration of the Secretary of State and the Colonial Government, and will no doubt be shortly carried out.

BOY ENLISTMENT.

MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the fact, as stated in *The Star* of the 7th instant, that George Kine, a boy who is now 13 years of age, was in March of last year charged at the Stratford Petty Sessions with playing truant, and sentenced to be detained for four years in the industrial training ship *Shaftesbury*; that after being so detained for 12 months he was, without the knowledge of his parents or friends, drafted into the band of the First Royal Warwickshire Regiment; that the boy has since written several letters to his friends complaining of the way in which he was entrapped into the Army, and begging of them to buy him out; whether he will state what the Rule is in regard to the transference of boys from industrial schools into the Army; whether, if boys of tender age consent to enter the Army, such consent has to be given in the presence of their parents, guardians, or friends; and whether bandmasters or any other person receive a gratuity or fee for boys they get transferred from industrial schools into the Army?

Mr. Asquith

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.) : Before the Home Secretary answers, I should like to ask him whether or not he is aware that the boy in question was 14 and not 13, that he was not charged with playing truant, but with stealing, and that the Managers of these schools have the power of sending boys to the Army without reference to the parents ?

MR. ASQUITH : From inquiries I have made on this subject it appears that the boy referred to was committed for frequenting the company of reputed thieves after a previous conviction for begging. Before his period of detention had expired he was enlisted, at his own request, in the band of the Warwickshire Regiment at Aldershot. This was done under the provisions of the Act 54 and 55 Vict., c. 23, by which the Managers of a certified reformatory or industrial school may in the case of an offender or child detained therein, with his own consent, dispose of him in any trade, calling, or service, and such disposition shall be as valid as if the Managers were his parents. I have no knowledge of any letters written by the boy complaining of the way in which he was entrapped into the Army, and begging to be bought out. If he has written such letters he appears to have written what was not true. The transfer of boys from industrial schools into trades or callings (including the Army) is regulated by the Act above referred to. The Act contains no reference to the age at which an offender may give his own consent, nor does it require the presence of the parents. In my opinion, it should not be put in force in the case of children of tender age. I am making further inquiries as to the age of the boy. I am informed that the bandmaster receives a fee of 10s. for each boy placed in a military or naval band. I confess I think this practice open to grave objection, and I will see if it cannot be modified.

MR. CREMER : I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman if he will be willing to receive evidence from the boy's father to the effect that the boy was bothered with questions from two or three officials to such an extent that he really did not know what they wanted him to do ; that they promised him a week's holiday if he answered yes ; that it was under the influence of that promise he

so answered, and that he has bitterly complained since of having been so entrapped into the Army ?

MR. ASQUITH : Yes, Sir ; I will receive and consider any statement properly authenticated which my hon. Friend likes to submit to me.

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS.

MR. CREMER : I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will direct inquiries to be made concerning the allegations made by the Painters' Society at Windsor that the wages which are being paid by the contractor of the Windsor Barracks is not in accordance with the Resolution passed by the House of Commons, 13th February, 1891 ; and whether, in such inquiry, evidence from the Painters' Society, concerning the local rate of wages, will be considered ?

MR. WOODALL (who replied) said, the views of the Painters' Society are before the War Office Authorities, and inquiry is being made into their allegations.

MR. CREMER : The hon. Gentleman has stated that there is to be an inquiry. Will the members of the Painters' Society have an opportunity of giving evidence as well as the contractors ?

MR. WOODALL : Yes, Sir ; we shall welcome information just as much from the Painters' Society as from the contractors.

THE MAGISTRACY.

MR. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough) : I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether being a subscriber to the United Kingdom Alliance disqualifies a Magistrate from sitting and acting on the Licensing Bench at Brewster Sessions ; and whether subscriptions to other Temperance Associations, or membership of such Associations, disqualifies a Magistrate from sitting and acting on the Licensing Bench ?

MR. ASQUITH : The answer to both questions is in the negative.

A QUESTION AS TO AN ARREST.

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR (Dumbartonshire) : I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether Abraham Mitchell, recently tried at Dumbarton, who was arrested in England upon a warrant issued in Scotland at the instance of the

Procurator Fiscal and not endorsed by the English authorities, was accordingly brought to Dumbarton, bailed out and remanded for trial, before any authority or sanction for these proceedings was received from him or from the Crown Office; and whether such proceedings were regular and usual; and, if not, whether he will take steps to prevent the recurrence of such irregularities?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Sir G. TREVELYAN, Glasgow, Bridgeton): This question rather falls to my right hon. Friend the Lord Advocate. He has sent to Scotland for information, and may be able to answer the question on Thursday.

MASHONALAND.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the communications between the Cape Colony and Mashonaland are free and undisturbed; and whether the authorities in Mashonaland have recently received any message from King Lo Bengula? Perhaps the hon. Gentleman will also state whether there is any confirmation of the telegram in *The Standard* of this morning which states that Matabele impis are slowly advancing towards Mashonaland, and that Lo Bengula himself is taking up a strong position midway between his kraal and the boundary near the Matoppo Hills, a range of granite kops about 30 miles east of Butuwayo?

MR. S. BUXTON: We have no confirmation at present of that statement; but I hope there has been some exaggeration in connection with it. As to the question on the Paper, the communications between Cape Colony and Mashonaland are, as far as we are aware, still free and undisturbed. The authorities of Mashonaland have not, as far as we are aware, received any message from Lo Bengula. We are expecting a message to the Queen from Lo Bengula, which I suppose we shall soon receive.

THE COAL MINES REGULATION ACT.

MR. D. CRAWFORD (Lanark, N.E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to complaints that unfair and illegal deductions from the weight of coal have been imposed at two coal pits at Orbiston, in Lanarkshire,

subsequent to the appointment of checkweighers at those pits; and whether he will inquire into these complaints, and, if they are well founded, take steps to enforce the provisions of the Coal Mines Regulation Act?

MR. ASQUITH: The Inspector has been communicated with, and the matter is at present engaging his attention.

SECONDARY EDUCATION IN SCOTLAND.

MR. D. CRAWFORD: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether the objections to the Scheme for the Distribution of the Secondary Education Grant in Lanarkshire, submitted by the School Boards of Shotts and Clarkston, will be referred to the County Committee for their consideration, and whether they will also be carefully investigated and considered by the Education Department before the Scheme is finally approved?

SIR G. TREVELYAN: The objections to the Scheme for the distribution of the Secondary Education Grant in Lanarkshire, submitted by the School Boards of Shotts and Clarkston, have already been referred to the County Committee, and will be carefully investigated and considered by the Department before the Scheme is finally approved.

MR. HOZIER (Lanarkshire, S.): Will the right hon. Gentleman also bear in mind any objection to the Scheme?

SIR G. TREVELYAN: All the objections will be looked into.

CIVIL SERVICE APPOINTMENTS.

MR. A. C. MORTON: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether it is the fact that the Treasury has quite recently sanctioned the appointment of a clerk, who is not a Second Division clerk, to a staff post in the Science and Art Department, a post which had been specially reserved for the Second Division clerks of that Department; and whether the Rule that a staff post may be filled either from within or without an office, referred to in a letter dated 27th July last from the Treasury to the Department of Science and Art, is to be regarded as applying to posts which have been specially set apart for clerks of the Second Division?

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: No staff post can be specially reserved to any class irrespective of the question whether there is any member of the class in the De-

partment who is qualified for appointment to the post. In the present case the Science and Art Department represented to the Treasury that there was no Second Division clerk whom they could recommend for the appointment in accordance with the conditions laid down, and in these circumstances the Treasury could not, in the interests of the Public Service, refuse to sanction an exception to the usual rule.

JUDGES' ALLOWANCES.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) (for **MR. HANBURY**, Preston): I beg to ask the Attorney General since when it has been the practice to pay to Judges on Circuit a daily allowance of £7 10s. each, and on what authority it is granted, and whether it is also paid to Commissioners; whether lodgings and travelling expenses are provided at either local or public cost; and what is the special ground upon which such extra allowance is granted, and in consideration of what extra expense incurred by the Judges?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir C. RUSSELL, Hackney, S.): The practice has existed since 1884, and the allowance is fixed by Treasury Minute. The same allowance is made to Commissioners going Circuit. The reasons for the arrangement were the increase in the number of Circuits and the desire to make uniform the remuneration of the Common Law and Chancery Judges. A part of the cost of the allowance is met by the Judges having given up their claim to the services of second clerks.

THE WAR OFFICE AND CAB PROPRIETORS.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that there is a telephone connecting the canteen of the camp at Colchester with the office of a cab proprietor, thus giving him an exclusive privilege, against which the other cab proprietors have appealed to the War Office, and obtained a promise that the use of the telephone should be allowed them; whether the Telephone Company have refused to make the connections; and, if so, whether he will take the steps necessary to carry out the promise, and put all the cab proprietors of the town on an equal footing so far as the camp is concerned?

MR. WOODALL: In 1889 the South of England Telephone Company applied for permission to carry a wire on War Department land in order to establish communication between the camp and the Cups Hotel at Colchester. On the recommendation of the General Officer Commanding that the line would be a convenience to the camp, the Secretary of State for War granted the request of the Company. In 1892 several cab proprietors objected that this concession constituted a monopoly in favour of the Cups Hotel, and on the authority of the Company they were informed that on subscribing to a central exchange they would be supplied with similar advantages. It appears that sufficient subscriptions have not yet been promised, and therefore a central exchange has not yet been opened. The War Department has made no promise in the matter, and those who are anxious for the establishment of a central exchange should communicate with the Telephone Company. The War Department will then give further consideration to the subject.

THE ASSIZES RELIEF ACT, 1889.

MR. POWELL WILLIAMS (Birmingham, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can make any further statement to the House respecting the difficulties which have arisen in relation to procedure under "The Assizes Relief Act, 1889," and as to any steps which may have been taken by the Lord Chancellor to obviate those difficulties?

MR. ASQUITH: I am in communication with the Lord Chancellor with regard to this matter, but am not at present in a position to make a statement.

VENTRY HARBOUR.

SIR T. ESMONDE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland why the Congested Districts Board Inspector on the occasion of his recent visit to Ventry Harbour did not inspect the site on which the inhabitants of Ventry, the Dingle Ratepayers' Association, and the fishermen of the Maix fishing fleet have repeatedly petitioned the Congested Districts Board to construct a pier; whether the Congested Districts Board Inspectors have ever inspected this site; if he is aware that the Congested Districts Board have had the

question of this pier before them for the past nine months ; and whether there is any probability of the application of the people of Ventry receiving attention from the Congested Districts Board ?

MR. J. MORLEY : Two members of the Congested Districts Board recently visited Ventry Harbour. They inspected the site of the proposed pier. My hon. Friend may rest assured the matter is receiving the careful attention of the Board. The Memorial from the Manx fishermen was not received by the Board until the end of June, so that it is not very old.

THE CARRICK-ON-SUIR PETTY SESSIONS.

MR. MANDEVILLE (Tipperary, S.) : I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland is he aware that on Thursday last the usual fortnightly Petty Sessions should have been held in Carrick-on-Suir, but no Magistrate attended, and, after waiting the requisite 60 minutes, Mr. Kennedy, Clerk of Petty Sessions, had to make the necessary proclamation that the Court was adjourned for another fortnight ; that there were 68 cases entered for hearing, all of special interest to the parties concerned, and many of considerable importance to the public ; that plaintiffs and defendants, witnesses, prisoners for trial, policemen, lawyers, and others were put to much useless expense and loss of valuable time on this occasion ; that there is not even one Magistrate in the whole town of Carrick-on-Suir ; that on Thursday last the usual Petty Sessions were held in the town of Tipperary, and only one Magistrate attended there ; that there are only a few Magistrates available for the Petty Sessions towns of Ardfinnan, Ballyporeen, Bausha, Cahir, Clogheen, Cappawhite, Dundrum, Golden, &c. ; and will the Lord Chancellor of Ireland appoint Magistrates who will attend Petty Sessions, and will he give the people of the County Tipperary a fair representation on its Magisterial Bench ?

MR. J. MORLEY : The hon. Member has been good enough to send me a newspaper report containing statements to the effect mentioned in the question. The question, however, only appeared on the Paper for the first time to-day, and I have not yet had time to ascertain the

Sir T. Esmonde

facts. The matter shall have my immediate attention. Ten gentlemen have been appointed to the Commission of the Peace in the County of Tipperary since August, 1892, and the Lord Chancellor will be glad to consider the names of any other gentlemen brought before him who may prove suitable for the Commission.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—REPORT.

Resolutions [18th September] reported.

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS, 1893-4.

CLASS V.

Resolutions read a second time. ✕

Resolutions 1 and 2 agreed to.

Resolution 3.

“ That a sum, not exceeding £84,066, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894, for sundry Colonial Services, including Expenses incurred under ‘The Pacific Islanders’ Protection Act, 1873,’ and certain Charges connected with South Africa.”

*MR. PAUL (Edinburgh, S.) moved a reduction of the Vote by £100. He was, he said, reluctant to trouble the House on this occasion ; but there was a matter connected with this Vote, and was recorded in the Blue Book issued the previous day on South Africa, which directly concerned the interests and the honour of this country. He wished to explain how he connected the matter with the Vote before the House. The case to which he desired to call the attention of the House was the conduct of an officer in the employment of the British South Africa Company. His conduct had come under the notice of the High Commissioner, Sir Henry Loch. The High Commissioner, whose salary was on this Vote, had expressed his opinion on this conduct, but had not taken any action, as he (Mr. Paul) contended he ought to have done ; therefore, he submitted the subject was material to the Vote. He would tell the House in a few words what were the facts. It appeared that some time in the Spring of last year there were some thefts committed on a farm of Mr.

Bennett, in Mashonaland. Bennett suspected that these thefts had been committed by the inmates of a kraal of a native Chief called N'Gomo. He remonstrated, and demanded his property back, but was roughly treated by the natives. His property was not restored, and he appeared to have been assaulted, but not seriously injured. Thereupon, Captain Lendy, of the Royal Artillery, who was in the employment of the British South Africa Company, issued a Proclamation calling upon this Chief, N'Gomo, to surrender himself before sunset in order to be taken to Salisbury. There was no evidence that that Proclamation was ever brought to the notice of N'Gomo. On the contrary, Captain Lendy was told that N'Gomo was absent in the fields; but without further preliminaries Captain Lendy proceeded to the kraal with a seven-pounder and a Maxim gun, opened fire upon the kraal, killed the Chief, his son, and 21 other natives, and carried off 47 head of cattle. There were several accounts of this transaction in the Blue Book, but he thought the clearest and most impartial was that contained in a Despatch written from the Colonial Office, by the direction of Lord Knutsford, to the Directors of the British South Africa Company. If the House would permit him to read the Despatch they would be placed in possession of all the material facts. The Despatch, which was signed Edward Fairfield, was as follows:—

"I am directed by Lord Knutsford to inform you that he has received from the High Commissioner for South Africa copies of correspondence relating to an attack made by a party of the British South Africa Company's police and certain volunteers under Captain Lendy, upon the kraal of a native Chief named N'Gomo. It appears from the Reports embodied in this correspondence that certain natives belonging to N'Gomo's kraal were accused of stealing from the farm of a Mr. Bennett, and of assaulting him and his boy, that after an unsuccessful attempt to induce Manguendi, to whom N'Gomo is tributary, to send the latter into Salisbury for trial as responsible for these offences, Captain Lendy sent two messengers to N'Gomo directing him to surrender himself to be taken to Salisbury: that the messengers returned reporting that N'Gomo was away in the fields, and that Captain Lendy left word that the Chief was to come to Bennett's farm by sundown, and that if he did not do so he, Captain Lendy, would look upon it as a direct defiance of the white man, and that N'Gomo might draw his own conclusion from that. N'Gomo not appearing to surrender himself, it is

reported that a force of police and volunteers were organised and proceeded with a seven-pounder and a Maxim gun to surprise N'Gomo's kraal. That after disposing his party for attack Captain Lendy opened fire upon N'Gomo's kraal without further summons or warning, and that after a short bombardment with shell and general firing the kraal was cleared, the Chief, his son, and 21 natives being killed. Sir Henry Loch, on receipt of the first Report of this affair, pointed out to the Secretary of the British South Africa Company at Cape Town the importance of keeping within the law in all dealings with the natives, and expressed his opinion that the punishment inflicted in this case was utterly disproportionate to the original offence. The full Report by Captain Lendy, subsequently received and forwarded, would, in Lord Knutsford's opinion, have justified much stronger terms of remonstrance than were used by the High Commissioner. There is nothing in the information now before his Lordship which affords any justification of Captain Lendy's proceedings, and, after making full allowance for the difficulties attending the establishment of a European Administration in a country such as Mashonaland, Lord Knutsford cannot avoid the conclusion that Captain Lendy acted in this matter with recklessness and unbecoming harshness. It appears to his Lordship that proceedings of this character are likely to do incalculable injury to the British South Africa Company in public estimation in this country, and he would suggest that stringent instructions should be addressed to the company's administration in Mashonaland as to the steps to be taken for the prosecution and arrest of natives charged with offences in respect of which the Territorial Magistrates have jurisdiction."

It appeared that Lord Knutsford had been approached on the question of the censure with the object of showing him that he was wrong, but he declined altogether to modify his opinion. Nothing had been done in consequence of that opinion; and when Lord Knutsford said circumstances would have justified Sir Henry Loch in speaking more strongly than he did, he (Mr. Paul) thought the House of Commons might feel inclined to say the circumstances would have justified Lord Knutsford in using stronger language than he did. The Report of Captain Lendy showed clearly that there was no danger, and that he made no serious attempt to arrest this man. The offence which Captain Lendy took it upon himself to punish was that of theft, and what did he do himself? He stole 47 cattle. These were not his property, nor the property of the South Africa Company which was alleged to have been stolen. He thought it was time that something more than a mere censure or protest should be directed against proceedings

of this kind. The mild censure of Sir Henry Loch was far too strong for the superior officers of the company, and Dr. Jameson made an able defence of Captain Lendy's proceedings. It was stated that the punishment inflicted had no reference to the original offence. A more extraordinary statement he had never heard in his life than that this cold-blooded slaughter had no reference to the offence committed. Dr. Jameson, the Administrator of the company, issued a circular, the substance of which was that the natives might cut each other's throats as much as they liked, but it was only when a white man was attacked that the company were to interfere. He hoped they should have from the Under Secretary some stronger and fuller information than had yet been given as to the view Her Majesty's Government took of this transaction. He did not know whether there could be an insurrection against the Queen in Mashonaland. He did not know that the Mashonas were subjects of the Queen. But, in any case, nothing occurred which could be dignified with that name. The people who were shot down by Captain Lendy were not the warlike Matabeles, but the peaceful Mashonas. But the question had a legal aspect. Captain Lendy, he supposed, was subject to British law, and he supposed if that officer killed people who had done nothing to deserve it he committed some sort of crime. The blood of these people called not for vengeance, but for justice. Captain Lendy should be put upon his trial before a jury of his countrymen, and then they should authoritatively know whether these things could or could not be done under the shelter of the British Flag, and whether it was or was not a capital offence to be suspected of stealing from a farm in Mashonaland, or of not obeying the orders of a Captain of Artillery. A more serious state of things he could not imagine. He hoped that in every part of the Queen's dominions, and in every part of the world where this country had obligations to meet, there remained unrestricted and unimpaired as the last restraint of the powerful and the last refuge of the oppressed the sanctity of British justice and the supremacy of Imperial law. He moved to reduce the Vote by £100.

Mr. Paul

Amendment proposed, to leave out "£84,066," in order to insert "£83,966."—(*Mr. Paul.*)

Question proposed, "That '£84,066' stand part of the said Resolution."

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall) said, he would not follow the hon. Member into the details of the case he had brought forward. The hon. Member belonged to a class of Radicals who took delight in seeking to attribute some evil conduct or malicious motives to British Administrators when they were placed in a perilous position. At this moment Captain Lendy was in very high command in Mashonaland, and upon his courage and skill largely depended the safety of 1,500 of our fellow-countrymen who were colonists in that country. Surely this was not an opportune time for the delivery of so bitter an attack on Captain Lendy and others who were guarding British interests. The situation in Mashonaland was becoming graver every day. Only that day the following news from Cape Town had appeared in *The Standard* :—

"Mr. Colenbrander has received serious news regarding the movements of Lo Bengula's forces in Matabeleland, and has left Palapye to obtain further information. He has, however, already reported to Dr. Jameson, the Chartered Company's Administrator, that the Matabele impi are slowly advancing, and that Lo Bengula himself is taking up a strong position near the Matoppo hills."

The British authorities in Mashonaland were under orders from the Government not to make an attack upon Lo Bengula without first consulting Her Majesty's Ministers. The whole country was, therefore, exposed for the present to these Matabele raids, and all the property of the colonists was in jeopardy. What was being done by the Government? The Under Secretary for the Colonies (Mr. S. Buxton) said the other day that they did not wish to be rushed again into a South African War.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. S. BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar) : Not rushed.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, the hon. Gentleman could substitute any synonym he liked. Such statements were to be deprecated. Ministers gave replies in the House for the purpose of pleasing the peace-at-any-price Party, but

it was not to be forgotten that disastrous consequences might result from answers of this description when they were repeated to foreign, perhaps savage, potentates. If at the beginning of these troubles the Government had only given a firm reply there would be no prospect of war. This country was committed to the protection of British interests and British colonists in South Africa, and they could not go behind their past policy. He had received letters which showed the deep anxiety felt by the colonists in Mashonaland as to the position of affairs. He was not going to express an opinion whether a successful movement could be directed against the Matabele; but until the Government made themselves distinctly responsible for the safety of the colonists in Mashonaland, they had no right to tie the hands of our officers and administrators there, and tell them they should not make an offensive movement against Lo Bengula without first obtaining permission from Her Majesty's Government. The action of the Government was without precedent, and unjust to the interests of the colonists and the Empire. Either the Government must allow the representatives of the Chartered Company to attack Lo Bengula if they thought it necessary, or they must protect them in carrying out the purely protective policy which was forced upon them by Her Majesty's Government. If Lo Bengula was to be allowed to advance so as to be able to strike, the loss of life and property would fall upon Her Majesty's Government. There were 1,500 colonists out there; and he had received a great number of letters lately from persons who had relatives in Mashonaland, expressing the greatest anxiety respecting the present condition of affairs. The Under Secretary for the Colonies, in one of his statements, had rather led the House to think that the raids of Lo Bengula and the Matabele impis had ceased, or almost ceased, during the last few months. But it was not so; for as recently as July 19 the chaplain at Victoria found his church and parsonage surrounded by a Matabele impi who were massacring and mutilating the natives of the locality without mercy from a mere lust for blood. Were they to stand this?—were they to allow it to go on? What were the Government to do to provide for the in-

terests of the Empire and the country? The Government had one of two courses before them. Either they could give the representatives of the Chartered Company and the officers in command of our armed Volunteers a free hand and attack Lo Bengula, if they thought it necessary to do so, or they must undertake to protect them in carrying out a purely defensive policy. If the present policy was continued, and Lo Bengula was allowed to advance closer to Mashonaland, and to seize a favourable moment for attacking and destroying the settlement, the responsibility for the loss of life and property that would ensue must fall on Her Majesty's Government. If our colony in Mashonaland were maintained in its strength, it was certain to become the centre of a vast region of civilisation. The countries to the North and West of Mashonaland were amongst the richest and most fertile in the world, and trade with them ought to be protected; for no one could say that the opportunities for developing British trade nowadays were too numerous. He trusted, at all events, that in the circumstances the Government would not refrain from making a clear and definite statement on the matter, which, considering the progress that had been already made in the country, the great prospects of future development in regard alike to commerce and civilisation, and the important interests at stake, was one of Imperial importance.

*MR. WEBB (Waterford, W.) said, he had had some experience years ago of the way in which we treated savage tribes with which we came into contact, but he had never heard or read of a more outrageous case of cruelty than that which had been brought before the House by the hon. Member for South Edinburgh in relation to Captain Lendy. If they took simply the facts of the case as stated by the acting Secretary of the British South Africa Company, and as given in the Report of Captain Lendy himself, it was impossible to come to any other conclusion than that a shameful act of butchery had been committed in the name of the United Kingdom. From whatever point of view they looked at the matter, it was unfortunate and humiliating, and the act was ill calculated to advance our interests in the country. He hoped the Govern-

ment would take steps to mark their sense of indignation at what had occurred. The hon. Member for Sheffield rode off on what people of his political opinions were so fond of riding off on—namely, an attempt to show that the Radical Party desired to disintegrate the Empire. The Radical Party did not want to do anything of the kind. They did not wish to support the Government in anything more than that which was well done. They certainly did not wish to support them when they were wrong. He thanked the hon. Member for having brought the subject forward. When he read the Report his blood had boiled, and he submitted that it would be to the eternal disgrace of this country if we did not attempt to put down these things.

MR. MAGUIRE (Clare, W.) said, that as he had been directly challenged in regard to the matter, he felt bound to say that while he regretted the loss of life that took place at N'Gomo's kraal, yet it should be remembered that Dr. Jameson was bound to take some such measure as he did to try to restore order in Mashonaland. The hon. Member who introduced the subject had read to them a letter from the Colonial Office, which was written before they were in possession of the incidents which led up to the attack on N'Gomo's kraal, and, with the permission of the House, he would read some extracts from the letter of the Company's Administrator of Mashonaland and the comments made on that letter by the Secretary to the High Commissioner. On page 32 of the Blue Book Dr. Jameson wrote that—

"I would ask you to explain to His Excellency that the punishment inflicted had no reference to the original offence."

The hon. Member seemed to think that that was an extraordinary circumstance, but the punishment was inflicted for resistance to the law as exercised in Mashonaland, and he believed that Mashonaland was not the only country in which resistance to the law was punished. Dr. Jameson's words were—

"The much-to-be-regretted loss of 23 lives occurred in consequence of the armed resistance to the law on the part of the natives."

He would suggest that it was no answer to say that the law would be considered unreasonable and unnecessary in England. But the circumstances of life in Ma-

Mr. Webb

shonaland were very little in advance of those in Cape Colony in 1837, at the time the Cape Statutes Ordinance was passed by the Cape Parliament, and the hon. Member seemed not to be aware that the Cape Statutes to a considerable extent, and including the Ordinance, were in force in Mashonaland. It would, therefore, be found that the statement of the law by the Administrator was correct. Dr. Jameson went on to point out that the first serious trouble was in the neighbourhood of M'Gwendi's and N'Gomo's kraal, where a coloured driver of one of the Company's waggons was killed, and a full Report of this murder would be found in the Blue Book—

"The next disturbance reported was from the Victoria district, where, on the death of a Chief, his successor refused to acknowledge the white man's authority, and raided another friendly Chief, killing some of his people."

He maintained that Dr. Jameson was bound to take into account the general disorderly state of the country and to consider what steps should be taken to meet resistance to the law. The Despatch he had quoted went on to describe the unruly state of the natives in the neighbourhood of N'Gomo's kraal after the murder of the Company's driver, but for which Dr. Jameson was unable to bring anyone to account. A party was sent to investigate, and Captain Lendy visited the paramount Chief M'Gwendi to try to insure a peaceful legal investigation of the charge. Captain Lendy conveyed to N'Gomo a message from Dr. Jameson that his safety would be guaranteed, and that after investigation only the culprit, white or black, would be punished. Dr. Jameson further pointed out that the death of the natives was due to their armed resistance to the carrying out of the law; Captain Lendy was warned that N'Gomo intended to fight, and Captain Lendy, Captain Williams, and Major Browne certified that the kraal was in such a strong position that to attempt to enter it in the face of a force of armed natives prepared to fire, and who did fire, would have been to court certain casualty. Dr. Jameson said—

"Therefore, I think that His Excellency will agree that the course taken by Captain Lendy was the only one open to him."

Dr. Jameson added—

"I may say that I consider the relations at present existing between the white population and the natives in the country to be in a most satisfactory state."

That was the authoritative statement of these transactions by the Administrator of Mashonaland. He would read the reply to this Report by the Acting Imperial Secretary under the command of the High Commissioner. Writing on July 4, 1892, Mr. H. L. Sapte said—

“I am directed by His Excellency the High Commissioner to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 30th ultimo, enclosing a Report from Dr. Jameson upon the causes leading to the loss of life at the late N'Gomo insurrection. His Excellency, after carefully perusing the Report and the previous Papers with which you have furnished him, is of opinion that, having due regard to the difficulties inherent to the occupation of a new country, and to the necessity for promptly checking any act on the part of the natives that might, if disregarded, lead to further trouble, the explanation by Dr. Jameson of the course adopted appears satisfactory, though it is much to be regretted that measures entailing a serious loss of life were unavoidable. His Excellency still entertains doubt as to whether the fire of Captain Lendy's force was not maintained much longer than was absolutely necessary, for, from the description of the engagement supplied to His Excellency, there seems good reason to suppose that Captain Lendy must have been early aware that the resistance offered by the natives was feeble in the extreme.”

Though he was not prepared to support every detail of Captain Lendy's conduct, he drew the attention of the House to the fact that Captain Lendy, though he may not have acted on every point in a judicious manner, was still carrying out the orders of his superior officer the Administrator, and that those orders were, in the circumstances, in the opinion of the High Commissioner, unavoidable.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) considered it a humiliating spectacle that an Irish Nationalist Member should stand up in that House to defend the action of Captain Lendy, when Sir Henry Loch, on receiving the first Report of this affair, disapproved of it. On receipt of a full Report it was thought that the circumstances justified the use of stronger terms of remonstrance than were used by the High Commissioner. He felt that the hon. Member who had just sat down had not represented the views of his constituents.

MR. S. BUXTON said, he did not deny, and he never had denied, that the position in Mashonaland was very grave, and day after day it was probably becoming graver. The hon. Member said that the speeches of the Under Secretary for the Colonies in the House were,

and would be, reported to Lo Bengula, and that probably they would aggravate the circumstances by encouraging the Chief to resist. He thought it was much more probable that the speeches of the hon. Member were reported at Fort Victoria and Fort Salisbury, and the warlike speech which he had delivered that afternoon was calculated to further excite people on the spot who were already excited. Every hon. Member deeply sympathised with those who, situated as they were, were either suffering in body or in property; and the position was no doubt a grave and serious one for them. But if the position was a grave and serious one for these persons, it was still more necessary for the House of Commons to take care that no inciting action of theirs—no prospective action—should involve them and the House in what might be a very serious and dangerous war. The Government had said that the Chartered Company were responsible for law and order and for the protection of the colonists in Mashonaland. They had never repudiated the obligation, and they were ready to accept it; but they had also said that no precipitate and aggressive action should be taken without the assent of the High Commissioner. They had said that they did not believe that an aggressive war would have been in any sense justifiable, and they were pretty certain that it would not have been successful. The Government could not take the risk, in regard to Bechuanaland and other possessions, of allowing those on the spot, naturally excited and in a state of irritation, to rush them into a war. That was the position which the Government had taken up. They were prepared to undertake any responsibility which devolved upon them in consequence of that action; and their anxious desire was, if possible, to tide over the present state of tension, so that they might bring about a peaceful state of affairs. Lo Bengula himself was certainly in no sense anxious to go to war, and in present circumstances a war would not be successful on his part. The Company had now taken considerable trouble to make their position infinitely stronger than before. They had sent up forces of men, and now they had a force in that territory which was certainly

capable of defensive action, and, if necessary, of offensive action. There was no doubt that if Lo Bengula chose to attack the Company's forts and to take aggressive action, the Company would be perfectly justified and right in making an offensive movement against his forces; but they must not do this without being morally certain of success in any action they might take. The House, he was sure, would feel that it was too serious a risk for them and this country to run not to be quite certain that in any operations undertaken this country should have success on its side, and he should certainly like to feel that it had justification also on its side for any aggressive action. He had more than once endeavoured to lay down the position they had taken up, and the House, he hoped, would feel satisfied that the object of the Government was, if possible, to maintain peace, but if they went to war to be certain of success. With reference to the case of Captain Lendy, it had been said that this was an unfortunate moment to raise the question; but he did not agree with that, seeing that Captain Lendy was in command at Fort Victoria. While, to a large extent, the safety of the inhabitants at Fort Victoria depended on that officer's courage and skill, the question also of peace and war would largely depend upon his tact and discretion. He was sorry to say that one of their difficulties at the present time was lest those on the spot who were not so discreet as the Government should desire might unwittingly or wittingly get this country into war before the people here knew how they stood in the matter. As to Captain Lendy and the slaughter of the Mashonas, he, for one, should wish that that class of Radicals to whom reference had been made were more numerous. The hon. Member sneered at those Radicals because they wished to limit and reduce our Imperial interests. He could not conceive that because Radicals desired that a man in the exercise of great authority intrusted to him should carry out his duties with humanity, and with an absence of cruelty, they should be sneered at as endeavouring to reduce our Imperial interests. He was glad his hon. Friend had brought forward this question, because he thought that, in such a case as this—no doubt there had

been cruelty, and there had been murder in connection with the attack by the Chartered Company's troops, commanded by a British officer, against the natives—publicity ought to be brought to bear in regard to those matters, because he believed that publicity did a great deal to diminish and prevent them. This particular case far exceeded the bounds of any possible discretion that ought to be placed in the hands of an officer in such a country as this, and the punishment was out of proportion to the offence for which it was inflicted. He was not going to re-state the case. He was bound to say that he did not agree in the attempt which had been made by the hon. Member for Clare to whitewash Captain Lendy. He thought it was quite clear that this action was a wanton attack on a native tribe. There was no question of assault upon or murder of white men—

An hon. MEMBER: How about the unpunished murder?

MR. S. BUXTON: That could not justify the slaughter of a Chief and 22 of his men. Captain Lendy was probably justified in going to this man's kraal and endeavouring to secure his person. What was desired was the person of the Chief, in order that he might be tried for theft; but Captain Lendy went with an armed force and Maxim guns and seven-pounders to the kraal.

An hon. MEMBER: There was armed resistance.

MR. S. BUXTON: At the last moment no summons was given. The evidence went to show that there was no fresh summoning. At the last moment they did not even read the native Riot Act. Captain Lendy had been censured, and in that censure he (Mr. S. Buxton) entirely and cordially concurred. The censure passed on him was the mildest that ought to have been passed. But when he was asked what further action was to be taken he replied that these events had occurred 18 months ago, and could not now be re-opened, as all the circumstances were considered at the time. He thought this Debate and the censure which had been inflicted would be of great value, and would prevent a similar thing occurring again. He knew that if he had to deal with such an offence again mere censure would not be considered sufficient.

Mr. S. Buxton

MR. G. BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale) thought the late Government had acted wisely in what they had done. But he did not think this was an opportune moment for re-opening the question. But he wished to ask the Government if they had taken due steps for preserving the peace of the country in case the Company failed to do so? He thought they were under a moral obligation to the natives of the country, just as much as they were towards the white men who had settled there. He also thought they should have an explanation, before Parliament rose, whether the Government were adopting sufficient means for the preservation of peace. They had, in the conduct of Captain Lendy, an example of what might occur, and he thought it was necessary that all precautions should be taken to prevent an outbreak of hostilities. He would like to hear if the Government were contemplating sending an armed force into Bechuanaland to meet the present necessity there. He knew from personal experience that African potentates were very much interested by what took place in that House, and any statement made by the Government even now would have a far-reaching influence.

COMMANDER BETHELL (York, E.R., Holderness) said, he protested against the treatment of Captain Lendy in this discussion, and especially against the charges of cruelty and murder brought against him. He did not for a moment wish to defend Captain Lendy for what had actually occurred. Action of the kind described was very much to be reprobated, and, so far as censure went of what actually took place, he certainly agreed with the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. S. Buxton) and his predecessor; but cruelty there was not, and murder there was not. He knew what took place on these occasions. The kraal was surrounded; there was an outbreak, and then, without realising what was about to occur, an order was given to fire, and, to the surprise and dismay of the officer in command, there were found to be more men inside than was expected. He admitted the justice of the censure, but he did not think anything had been proved which would justify hon. Members in bringing such serious charges as cruelty and murder.

MR. LITTLE (Whitehaven) remarked that, in his opinion, if the facts had been correctly stated, Captain Lendy could be found guilty of murder or manslaughter. He was as satisfied of this as of the fact that he was standing in the House of Commons. If anyone would read the life of General Picton, he would see that an officer who acted contrary to the law when he was abroad was not beyond the reach of the law when he returned to England. Justice must be done to our officers or representatives if they transgressed the law, and no British officer should assume for a moment that he had a right to go and murder 21 persons. He used the word "murder" deliberately in its legal sense, after reading the papers and forming such an opinion as a barrister of 20 years' standing could form. The fact that the Government had censured Captain Lendy did not necessarily end the matter. Proceedings might still be taken against him on his return home. He (Mr. Little) only stated this view of the case, because he wanted to impress upon the House that, in his opinion, the language used by hon. Members who attempted to mitigate and almost excuse the action of this officer was, to his mind, exceedingly ill-advised. If there was anything which would induce the people of England to insist upon the prosecution of this officer, it would be the fact that any great number of Members of the House had attempted to excuse his conduct.

MR. R. G. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.) said, that no one who had looked at the morning papers could fail to see that matters in Matabeleland and Mashonaland were of a somewhat serious character. There were 20,000 fairly armed warriors of good physique in the Matabele tribe, and there were only a few thousand British settlers scattered about Mashonaland. It seemed to him that it would be very advisable for Her Majesty's Government to arrange for a massing of troops at Frieburgh, or some other accessible point, so that should an emergency arise, which the Chartered Company were unable to deal with, we should not have to deplore a repetition of the disaster that took place some years ago at Khartoum. Such steps certainly ought to be taken as would place beyond doubt the safety and security of British subjects in Mashonaland.

MR. S. BUXTON : The hon. Member for Liverpool asked what we had done in regard to Bechuanaland. In order to be quite safe as regards our defences there, we have sent up a considerable number of reliefs, and have authorised Sir Henry Loch to increase the Police Force by 100 men. I may say, in reference to some remarks that have fallen from gentlemen opposite, that I did not use the word "murder" with regard to Captain Lendy, but I said that gentleman's action showed a palpable disregard for human life which was deserving of great censure.

MR. GOSCHEN (St. George's, Hanover Square) : Will a Supplementary Estimate be necessary for the extra 100 police? I know that the police of Bechuanaland is extremely expensive.

MR. S. BUXTON : The Police Force of Mashonaland is very expensive indeed, and until the House allows us to have our railway it will continue to be expensive. The money will have to be provided in the form of Supplementary Estimates, or it may be possible to utilise savings from this year's Vote, and to include it in the Vote for next year.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

*MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston) said, that last night he had asked the Under Secretary for the Colonies whether the Swaziland Convention would be laid upon the Table of the House before it was signed, so that Members might have an opportunity of considering the nature of the obligations we were liable to incur, and he received a very laconic reply. If the negative answer he received was to be regarded as the final decision of the Government, he protested against any Convention being entered into with regard to Swaziland until it had been submitted to the judgment of the House. Conventions and Treaties had been made in past years without Parliament having been consulted, and when difficulties arose Governments interfered, and justified the interference, by saying that they were bound to do so by the conditions of the Treaty. That was the way in which many of our little wars had been entered upon. The chances were that we should be landed before many years in a similar difficulty in South Africa, and the House had a right to know what obligations this country was about to incur

there. The present Government were pacifically disposed, but they would not always remain in Office. At some time or other a less pacific Government might be in power and inclined to the opinions just expressed by the hon. Member for Sheffield. He hoped, however, that the Lord would deliver us from a Government entertaining the selfish, warlike views of the hon. Member.

MR. S. BUXTON : I hope my hon. Friend did not think I wanted to be uncivil in giving him a short answer on this point last night. I am afraid the only answer I can give now is that, under the present Constitution, the Government must take the responsibility on themselves of making such a Convention. If my hon. Friend wants to upset that system he must upset the Constitution, and not the Government. We have no power to alter it. It is for the House generally to decide whether this is the most convenient course for carrying such a Convention through.

Resolution agreed to.

Resolution 4 agreed to. +

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1893-4.

Resolutions 5 to 7 agreed to.

Resolution 8.

"That a sum, not exceeding £1,315,200, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Expense of Naval Commands, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894."

Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

MR. BRODRICK (Surrey, Guildford) said, he wished to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty a question with regard to an answer he gave some time ago respecting projectiles. The right hon. Gentleman then stated that an order had been given to a foreign firm for projectiles for the Navy. He (Mr. Brodrick) asked whether firms had been invited to tender for those projectiles, and what was the difference in the tenders as between British and foreign firms? The right hon. Gentleman said in effect that it was not desirable, in the interests of the Public Service, that such particulars should be given.

*SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH : What I said was that it was not considered desirable to give the names of the firm, or the other particulars asked for in the question, and that I could only

repeat that the foreign tender was more than 30 per cent. below that of any English firm.

MR. BRODRICK said, that of course a good deal would depend upon what English firms were invited to tender. He thought that, having regard to the information which had been readily given to Parliament in past years, it was somewhat straining a point to keep secret the names of the firms or the prices. It was the falsest economy to depend upon foreign firms for supplying projectiles of which we ought to have a constant power of supply in this country. The late Government found themselves in a great difficulty in this respect, because they experienced a total paralysis of the trade in 1885 and 1886, when sudden demands were made upon it, and it was found impossible to obtain the necessary supplies because the machinery was not laid down, and there was no staff capable of making the projectiles. The policy of the late First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord G. Hamilton) was to build up the trade and endeavour to spread the orders over a number of years, so that a certain number of workmen might be employed, and that there should be a power of expansion. It was perfectly obvious that if our supplies were obtained from Germany and any contingency arose, we should be unable to obtain the projectiles we needed for the country. If the right hon. Gentleman went to Germany for these projectiles, we should not be able to draw supplies from that country if she was engaged in war. They had found a Sheffield firm able to supply these projectiles quickly, the only difficulty being that the Department were not able to give a sufficiently large order to keep the staff employed. If the right hon. Gentleman said that he could not get the supplies at home, no doubt he would be acting wisely in getting them from abroad. But a gain of 30 per cent. was infinitesimally small compared with the enormous extra charge we should have to pay if, in case of war, we should have to obtain these projectiles in a hurry from our own firms. The present was obviously not a time at which to get these projectiles from abroad. Just now there were large discharges taking place at Woolwich, and there were still more coming on. To get arms from abroad was bad policy at

present; it would be absolutely suicidal in time of war. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman what it was besides price which induced the Government to throw over the policy of their predecessors, who aimed at building up a trade within these Islands for providing warlike supplies.

*SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH said, he was very glad the hon. Member had brought forward this question, though he thought he had some right to complain that he received no notice of the fact till 20 minutes past 5.

MR. BRODRICK said, a notice on the subject had been on the Paper for four months.

SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH said, that passing from that matter, he would claim for Her Majesty's Government the right to go to whatever market might be the best market and cheapest market for the purposes of buying what they wanted in the Navy. He thought also he might assert, as a general principle, that the question of price must be considered in buying munitions of war, or any other articles which were needed for the Naval Service. Some prices were prohibitive, and in this case the foreign tender was 33 per cent. below that of any English firm. Such a difference in the price was a matter which could not be left out of sight, although he should presently admit that there were other points which they were bound to consider in connection with armour-piercing projectiles. There was another point even more important than price, and that was quality. He wished to say as little as he possibly could, and he hoped he should not in this Debate be driven to say more in respect of the quality of English armour-piercing projectiles. There was a special kind of steel required for the projectiles in the production of which the foreign makers, especially the French, had been much more successful than English manufacturers. It was of paramount importance to obtain projectiles which would pierce thick armour, and for a shell to explode inside the enemy's ship instead of outside. On the general question of quality and price he would quote an authority which he thought the hon. Gentleman would respect—

"If the supply could be got in England without an increase in cost, it ought to be done, but it was not easy to get supplies. He hoped the Committee would support the Government, not because he wished to see an extension of the system of buying abroad, but because he thought the best supply ought to be got. The country could not afford to spend £400,000 or £500,000 a year more in buying at home, though if all things were equal the home producer should have the advantage."

He was quoting from words spoken by the hon. Gentleman himself in Committee of Supply. Those were principles upon which the Government had acted in this case. The hon. Gentleman was then speaking of supplies of meat to the Army and Navy. He (Sir U. Kay-Shuttleworth) was now referring to supplies of munitions of war. He admitted that another argument came in. He admitted it was of importance that we should in this country be able to produce those munitions of war, whatever they might be, of which we might have to get increased supplies in time of war. He admitted in such cases some sacrifice of additional outlay might be made if we got the full quality we required. But then the question arose—first, were the quantities required large? Because, if they were not large, then our stores would not need constant replenishment. If they were laying in a small stock which would not need replenishment in time of peace, a store of something which would only be needed in time of war, the question he had just mentioned did not arise. What were the facts in the case of armour-piercing projectiles? The quantity was small, for this reason—they were only supplied to battleships and first-class cruisers. In addition, these projectiles were never used in practice or in times of peace. They were simply stored up for use in time of war. It was extremely unlikely that any of these stores, unless in the event of a very long war, would need replenishing; therefore there was no waste going on, as in the case with other projectiles. Then came another question as to whether it was worth while for English firms, or for the Arsenal at Woolwich, to lay down plant for the production of some article of which only a comparatively small quantity was needed. Their experience was, it was very difficult to get contractors to lay down plant; and that it was very bad economy to lay down a quantity of plant at Woolwich for the production of an article of

which only a small quantity was needed, and which Woolwich would not go on manufacturing from year to year. Those were his answers to the points raised. There had been the greatest anxiety on the part of the Admiralty, as much as on the part of the War Office, to encourage English manufacturers. Orders for armour-piercing projectiles had been given to English manufacturers for the purpose of encouraging them to try and enter into competition with foreigners, and produce what was wanted. But he was sorry to say that the experience of the Admiralty had not been perfectly encouraging. On that subject, as he had said, he did not wish to be driven into a statement on the subject of quality; he did not wish to say anything which might injure English manufactures in comparison with the products of foreign countries. Therefore, he refrained from entering upon that. He wished the House, however, distinctly to understand, and to remember, that the Government were not guided in this matter solely by the question of price. The question of quality had a great deal to do with the decision come to. Acting on the principle which he had just laid down, and desiring to encourage British manufacturers, if possible, to get munitions of war manufactured at home, the Admiralty had taken such steps as were in their power to assist their friends at Sheffield to produce these projectiles.

AN hon. MEMBER: Were English firms invited to compete?

SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: The hon. Gentleman asked whether English firms were invited to compete. Certainly they were—not only one, but more than one—and the very firms with which they had had experience, and who had to some extent produced armour-piercing projectiles—

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: How many?

*SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH said, to the best of his recollection, there were two or three, perhaps even more. He did not think it was good policy to publish to the world the names of firms who had been unsuccessful in a competition. It was not his intention to inflict an injury upon any of their friends, with whom they hoped to have relations in the future, in consequence of their not

Sir U. Kay-Shuttleworth

being able to produce what was wanted at the present moment. As to the name of the French firm who supplied the projectiles, it was important the name of a particular firm carrying out an order from the British Government should not be found out by any answer he might give in the House of Commons. Their experience was that if a Foreign Government discovered, on official authority, that a particular firm was supplying projectiles or munitions of war to this country pressure might be put upon them. Our interests at home might thereby suffer, and he would consequently refrain from giving the name of the foreign firm.

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT : It is perfectly well known.

*SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH said, he dared say such might now be the case, but he was not going to give the name officially. As to the efforts which had been made by the President of the Board of Admiralty to assist their friends in producing these munitions of war, the firm who failed to get this order because the French tender was 33 per cent. below their tenders was no doubt very much disappointed at failing to secure the order. He arranged that a special interview should be held with that firm, and the Director of Naval Ordnance gave to that firm, as he was prepared to give to any other firm in the United Kingdom, the fullest information that they could require on any point on which they needed information, and which would enable them to compete with foreign firms. He was present at the interview, and the fullest information was afforded. He was not aware that an interview of that kind had been held before. At all events, he could say this for the Admiralty, that every sort of information would be thus open. He thought it was fully understood at Sheffield that any British manufacturer would receive every information he wished. The hon. Member (Mr. Brodrick) was a Member of the late Government. What did they do? He had in his hand a long list, which he could read to the House, of orders given year by year through the Department in which the hon. Member was Financial Secretary to foreigners for these very armour-piercing projectiles. In the year 1887 an order for £11,900 worth was given to a foreign firm. And

he could give other cases of large orders to foreigners in several succeeding years. In all these cases there was not a difference of 33 per cent., or anything like so much, in the tenders of the foreign and the British firms. He thought, after that, he would leave the question to the judgment of the House. In conclusion, he might say that in this matter they had made no new departure, except in the pains he had personally taken on behalf of the Board of Admiralty to ensure the fullest information being given to British manufacturers, so that, if possible, they might have British firms capable of producing these munitions.

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) said, the reply of the Secretary to the Admiralty to his hon. Friend (Mr. Brodrick) was of so unsatisfactory a character that he felt absolutely compelled to move a reduction of the Vote by £100. The right hon. Gentleman had gone into the history of the order from a French firm of shell which ought to have been given to Sheffield manufacturers, and he had expressed great anxiety to assist "our friends in Sheffield." But the right hon. Gentleman had taken a most peculiar way of assisting "our friends in Sheffield" when he pointed out publicly in the House that the opinion of himself and his colleagues was that French firms were capable of making much better shells than the houses in Sheffield, who had devoted so much capital and experience to the work. The right hon. Gentleman stated that a special kind of steel was required for the shells that were ordered from the French firms. But shortly afterwards the right hon. Gentleman stated that two or three Sheffield firms had been invited to tender. If they had not been capable of making this special kind of shell, why were they invited to tender? It was clear that the firms who were invited to tender were capable of producing the kind of shells required. Specifications were sent to them, and the firms themselves thought they were capable of producing quite as good shells as the French firms. He would call attention to the fact that upon the express invitation of the Government Sheffield firms had spent hundreds of thousands of pounds in preparing plant for the production of armour-plate, shells, and other apparatus required by the Government, and this was the way in which

their efforts to fulfil the requirements of the country were treated. They were invited to tender, and because the tender of a French firm was slightly lower than that of the English firms, and that mainly because of the rate of wages to be paid, the Government ignored altogether the home producer, and in this time of great distress gave the order to a foreign firm. The right hon. Gentleman said it was absolutely necessary to obtain these supplies from France. Where should we be if our relations with Foreign Powers were to change? Where should we be in time of war if we relied for our armaments and munitions of war upon France, Germany, and other Continental countries? Home manufacturers must be encouraged to produce what was required for the defence of the country, and for the independence of the flag in all parts of the Empire. The right hon. Gentleman himself admitted this to be the case, because he said if it were known to the French Government that a French firm had obtained this contract pressure would be put by the Government on the firm—pressure to do what? To make the munitions of an inferior quality, or to omit some details in the shells which would prevent them when firing from achieving their purpose. That was the pressure to be put by the French Government upon the French firm. The right hon. Gentleman thought he could conceal the name of the firm. He (Colonel Howard Vincent) knew the name, but as the right hon. Gentleman had said that it was absolutely necessary in the interests of the Public Service not to mention it, he would refrain from doing so; but the name was perfectly well-known to every manufacturer in the country interested in the question, and it was perfectly well known to the French Government. He happened to be in Paris a few days ago, and he ascertained the name from the French authorities themselves. The Customs House invoice alone would show it, if there had been any difficulty whatever in the matter. The right hon. Gentleman prided himself upon the reduction of orders given to foreigners in recent years. A late Member of the House, Mr. Peter Macdonald, had moved for a Return of contracts given to foreigners in the seven years, 1879-85, inclusive. That Return

Colonel Howard Vincent

showed the annual amount was £130,000. By the efforts of the late Government the amount was reduced to an average of something like £30,000 a year, but the moment the right hon. Gentleman's Party came into power they found the orders given to manufacturers outside the United Kingdom were precisely double the amount given by their predecessors. The Admiralty gave orders last year to foreigners amounting to £29,552, and the War Office gave similar contracts to the amount of £30,000.

*SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH asked the hon. Member to state the figures for 1892.

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT said, he had not got them.

SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: The Admiralty orders for 1892 were £25,880. I got that figure from the Return for which the hon. Member himself moved.

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT said, he would point out that the amount last year was considerably more than the preceding year. He had spoken of the whole Government, and the Return showed that, taking the Government as a whole, the amount given to foreign contractors was quite double what it had been in the preceding year. But a far greater question hinged upon the matter than appeared at first sight. The contract for these shells was given to a foreign firm, and the agents of the firm came to the arsenals and to the shooting grounds of this country, and the shells were tested in their presence, so that they had the advantage of seeing the progress which we had made in armaments of war up to date. Every facility and every advantage was given to them, facilities and advantages which were denied to the representatives of the home firms. It was all very well for the right hon. Gentleman to say that he was anxious to encourage their Sheffield friends and home producers. What they wanted was not mere sentiment, but actual practice. Why had the right hon. Gentleman given this contract to a French firm? It was because he was influenced entirely by the question of price, because he could get these shells a little cheaper in France than in Sheffield, that he said—"We will go over the heads of the Sheffield firms; we will ignore the distress and want of

work that prevails at the present time at Sheffield; and we will, in order to make a little saving in our Estimates, give this advantage to a foreigner, and take it away from our own countrymen." It was this act on the part of the Government, and many other like proceedings, which brought upon the Government today the very urgent and very pressing question of the unemployed. He intended to persevere in his Motion for the reduction of the Vote, in order to mark his sense and that of his friends of the action of the Government in taking advantage of this particular time to place a contract outside the Kingdom, more especially when the article was of such a character as that in question.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT thought the House would agree that his hon. Friend the late Financial Secretary to the War Office had done good service in bringing this question forward. The policy of the late Government was to reduce as much as possible the amount of work given to foreigners by the Government Departments. That policy was early avowed and consistently carried out, and if a comparative examination of the amounts in value of work given to foreign contractors by the Government of 1880, and the Government which followed it, were made, it would be found that the amount actually given by the Conservative Government was much less than the amount given by their predecessors. The Secretary to the Admiralty seemed to pride himself on the fact that the amount of work given to foreigners by the Admiralty this year was only £29,000, as compared with £25,000 last year. He seemed to make little of this difference of £4,000.

MR. MUNDELLA: Hear, hear!

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT observed that one of the Members for Sheffield encouraged the Financial Secretary to the Admiralty in that view. The right hon. Gentleman might be very brave on that subject in the House, but he should like to see him before an audience in Brightside upon it. The Financial Secretary seemed to make little difference between the two amounts, but it was precisely the sum which the Government asserted that they saved by giving this contract to the foreign firm. Now, what was this contract which had been given away? It was not for an

ordinary manufacture. These shells were the most important projectiles that were made for the Navy. The right hon. Gentleman had laid great stress upon the fact that it was absolutely essential that we should have these armour-pierced projectiles in order that the shells fired from battleships and first-class cruisers, which were the vital strength of our Navy, should be able to penetrate the enormous armour and burst inside the ship. Did the right hon. Gentleman really mean that £19,000 worth of projectiles of this kind was sufficient for the Navy in time of war? He used as one of his principal arguments in justification for giving the order abroad that the amount was small, but did he really think that this amount would suffice in time of war?

*SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: Certainly not. The Conservative Board of Admiralty, of which the hon. Member was a member, ordered a vast number.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT denied that the expression vast amount was justified. At the beginning of the term of Office of the late Government, and before the manufacture of armour-piercing projectiles was understood in this country, certain orders were given abroad. It was necessary; and one reason was that the projectiles might be tested, and that the process of manufacture might be found out; but the amount of the orders was not vast. But the point of importance of these orders was this consideration: These were most important projectiles for the armament of our battleships and cruisers, and according to the statement of the right hon. Gentleman—a most unfortunate state of affairs if correct—the French are more successful in making these projectiles than our manufacturers are, and according to his further argument it was almost impossible to induce our manufacturers to put down fresh plant for the production. The sending this order of £19,000 abroad would probably make a difference of £5,000, the cost of fresh machinery, but if this order of £19,000 had been given to an English firm they might thereby have been enabled so to improve their machinery that in the future they could produce projectiles equal to those manufactured in France. That was a very serious consideration when the House remembered that in case of

war the necessity for these projectiles would be doubled, trebled, and very likely increased tenfold. The right hon. Gentleman made a very curious statement indeed, to the effect that the Admiralty were at full liberty to buy in the cheapest market at home or abroad. Had he in mind when he made the statement that the price of labour was involved in the cheapness of production? The question of labour was an important consideration in connection with this manufacture, and there was in operation a Resolution of the House with reference to the payment of labour in the execution of Government contracts. So that the Government, in giving these orders abroad for these projectiles, when they could be produced in this country, practically attempted to go behind the abstract Resolution of the House. To this point he wanted the attention of all Members representing manufacturing constituencies. He did not think there was any desire to press the present Board of Admiralty to make any revelation that would be injurious to British interests or to British manufacturers. If, in the opinion of the Board of Admiralty, these armour-piercing projectiles could not be made in this country, then it was of the utmost importance that the Board of Admiralty should give British firms every possible help, not only by way of advice, but even by paying a little more for these projectiles, so that manufacturers might be encouraged to lay down fresh plant. This was of the utmost importance, because his hon. Friend pointed out if to-morrow or next year we found ourselves faced by a naval war, or a war with France, we should be in this position, that our supply of projectiles would be cut off. Now was the time to encourage British firms to make these projectiles. This was a time of peace—it was to be hoped a time of prolonged peace—but all omens abroad were not peaceful, and by giving this order to an English firm it would have enabled the Sheffield firm to perfect its means of manufacturing these essential projectiles in England, and then, when we were faced by the dire contingency of war, our supply would not fail.

MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE (Hereford) said, he did not generally agree with his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Central Sheffield. He entirely dis-

agreed with his general protective policy. He was of opinion that they ought to buy in the cheapest market. But there was another kind of protection which the Financial Secretary to the Admiralty seemed wholly to have forgotten, and that was the protection of British shores, the protection of British commerce, and the protection of the British Empire. Why should we have to depend for these projectiles on some foreign firm? There were some matters on which the Financial Secretary to the Admiralty ought to have given the House information. He ought to have told them in what particulars foreign manufacturers excelled English manufacturers. The hon. Gentleman ought to tell the English manufacturers where they were deficient, in order to enable them to produce these projectiles which were so essential to the Naval Service. How could English manufacturers be expected to lay down the plant for these projectiles when the Government on which they had to depend for custom gave them no encouragement and support?

MR. MUNDELLA: As two Sheffield Members have spoken in this Debate, the House will, I am sure, allow a few words from a third Sheffield Representative. I am sorry, in the interest of Sheffield, this matter should have been discussed. It would have been better in the interest of Sheffield if it had been left alone, and I know that that is the opinion of the best contractors of Sheffield.

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT: No.

MR. MUNDELLA: I am speaking from their own lips.

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT: So am I.

MR. MUNDELLA: No one has taken greater interest in the production of steel projectiles in Sheffield than I have. It was due to my action that the manufacture of steel at Woolwich was stopped. Nothing could be more absurd than what we found in 1884. Lord Hartington, then Secretary for War, came to me and said, "I find that Woolwich is laying down an enormous plant at enormous cost for the production of steel, for they say Sheffield cannot make decent steel." Imagine a state of things like that, that Sheffield, close to the coal-fields, with a reputation for the excellence

of its manufactures, could not produce steel to meet the requirements of the Admiralty and the War Office. In the result, the manufacture at Woolwich was brought to a stand. What was the next point that arose? Before the late Government went into Office Lord Hartington and Mr. Brand, then head of the Ordnance Department, went to Sheffield, with Representatives of the War Office and the Admiralty, and arranged with Sheffield manufacturers to produce so many thousand tons of steel a year.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT : That is not the point.

MR. MUNDELLA : The hon. Gentleman will find it is to the point if he will give me his attention. The hon. Gentleman made an attack upon my hon. Friend for giving orders for projectiles abroad because they were 33 per cent. lower in price than projectiles from Sheffield, whereas, when he and his friends were in Office in 1891, they gave orders abroad when the difference was only 10 per cent. or 15 per cent. between the Sheffield and foreign prices.

MR. BRODRICK : Can the right hon. Gentleman give us the instance?

MR. MUNDELLA : I know what I am saying.

MR. BRODRICK : But can the right hon. Gentleman give us the facts?

MR. MUNDELLA : I can if at liberty to do so. In 1890 there was a competition for certain steel projectiles, the amount of the order being £13,080. There were two competitors from France, and there were some from Sheffield. The order was given to a foreign firm, although the difference was that between £109 and £120. How can the hon. Member, therefore, decently make an attack on my hon. Friend because he had given an order abroad when the difference in price was more than 33 per cent.? Now, the facts are these. It has been felt at the Admiralty and the War Office that in the past they have given no assistance to English manufacturers. I have myself constantly complained of this. They have not given the required information, and the trials had not been fair towards the English manufacturer. He was asked to compete, not being told precisely the specific hardness of the article against which his projectile was to be directed, and then his projectile was condemned, and he was told that his pro-

duction was not equal to the foreign production. This occurred again and again. Quite recently the late First Lord of the Admiralty told me that my constituents were not equal to the production—that they had not the technical knowledge. Over and over again I have heard this said.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT : When?

MR. MUNDELLA : Recently.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT : Was this a private or a public conversation?

*MR. SPEAKER : Order, order ! The right hon. Gentlemen will proceed if he does not give way.

MR. MUNDELLA : I have heard this said repeatedly. It was the same at the War Office, where there was the greatest difficulty in convincing permanent officials and others. The hon. Gentleman knows that I was constantly using my influence with them to convince them that Sheffield could produce as good steel as foreigners, as good steel as the War Office required, and we were in correspondence about it. I am thankful to say that we have at last got the officials to believe that Sheffield can, if its manufacturers have a fair chance, produce just as good projectiles, just as good steel, as any foreign country. But the difficulty was to convince the permanent officials and experts that the manufacturers of this country could do that. It has been made matter of reproach against the Government that they have in the year spent £60,000 in encouraging foreign trade, whereas the year before the late Government only spent something like £40,000. What was the reason for the difference? The hon. Gentleman opposite ought to know that last year the Government bought walnut butts for rifles to the extent of £30,000, and this timber grows in Roumelia and Spain, and the wood is necessary for rifle butt ends, but the late Government let the supply run low.

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT : The Return shows there was a purchase in 1892 under this head.

MR. MUNDELLA : Yes, there was, for £18,000 less than this year, and that was the real difference. The Government had to lay in butts and fore-ends to the amount of £18,000 more than the year before. With respect to projectiles,

I have watched with the greatest possible interest the progress of steel manufacture for the last 25 years in connection with past supplies from Sheffield. What has been the result? The Government have recognised the importance of producing all war material at home, if possible, and have decided that the English contractor should have the chance of fair information, should know what he has to compete with, the specific hardness of the armour he is required to pierce. There is great conflict between the powers of attack and defence, and if we keep the manufacturer of projectiles in ignorance of the strength of the defence his missiles are to pierce, then his productions are brought into disrepute. I must say that it was a very unworthy thing to try to make political capital out of such paltry questions as this. The difference on this order of £19,000 is said to be due to difference in wages. Nothing of the kind. I sincerely hope that the steps taken by my right hon. Friend this year will have the effect that all manufacturers, and not the manufacturers of Sheffield alone, will be in a position to make Government independent of foreign supplies for armour and other raw material. I must complain again that an attempt should be made to make this a Party matter. The hon. Member for Ecclesall said, immediately the present Government came in, they began to spend more money abroad to the detriment of English trade. That is an untrue statement. Nothing of the kind has been done. We have diminished so far as we could the amount of supplies drawn from abroad, seeking to make the Services independent of foreigners in respect to armaments. The arguments used about the expenditure of £60,000 abroad are absurd. What a small amount this is out of an expenditure of 30 odd millions which we spend on the Navy and Army! The matter is almost beneath contempt. But I sincerely trust that we will take courage and develop supplies from our own people, so that in future we will not be dependent upon foreigners for either armaments or projectiles.

MR. BRODRICK said, as a matter of personal explanation he might say that the question of foreign supplies was never raised when he was at the War Office.

Mr. Mundella

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said, he did not think the constituents of the right hon. Gentleman would be wholly satisfied with him. He told them that the men of Sheffield could make just as good projectiles as the foreigners, whereas the Secretary to the Admiralty said they could not.

MR. MUNDELLA: I knew nothing about the matter till I saw the Return, and then I made inquiries.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said, the Secretary to the Admiralty also told him that he claimed for the Government the right to buy in the cheapest market, but they were also told that they were not to sweat the labourer, and what he wanted to know was whether the Government were not buying sweated shells? If it was the principle of the Government to buy in the cheapest market they could get sailors, and Admirals, and Ministers of State abroad a great deal cheaper than they got them here. He, for his part, would be ready to pay a great deal more for our stores in order to keep them in the hands of the people of this country. He did not care which Party practised this system, but he was perfectly convinced that it was a dangerous thing to rely on foreign countries for the supply of their war material. The right hon. Gentleman said that not one of these armour-piercing projectiles was used in the course of ordinary practice on a man-of-war. Surely that was extremely dangerous. It was a rule of the Service that four rounds should be fired from every gun every six weeks. The object of that, of course, was to make the men acquainted with their guns and projectiles, yet it appeared that in the case of these projectiles that rule was abrogated. The Secretary to the Admiralty made a great affectation of secrecy in this matter, and said he would not disclose the name of the firm from whom these projectiles were ordered. It seemed to him a *secret de polichinelle*. They had been told yesterday by the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean (Sir C. W. Dilke) that the whole of the Cabinet secrets had been for years disclosed to the French Government. Why should they not know this one? For his own part, he was not content to think in the case of war England would send forth British sailors fed on American beef and

armed with German cutlasses, and firing French shells. These shells were said to be 33 per cent. cheaper than the British; but he held that it was important they in England should know how to manufacture such shells, and how were they to know how if they did not have the opportunity? They could not rely on France in time of trouble—which might be with France itself—and he hoped the question would be considered with a view to their having justice done to the British workmen in these Departments.

MR. H. S. FOSTER (Suffolk, Lowestoft) said, there was one part of the speech of the President of the Board of Trade which should not escape attention. The right hon. Gentleman had practically admitted that English manufacturers had not had fair trials. That was an admission which practically had been dragged from the right hon. Gentleman. The probability was that if the right hon. Gentleman had not sat for a Sheffield constituency he would not have made that admission that evening. The right hon. Gentleman laid the blame on the permanent officials. He (Mr. Foster) hoped that this would be taken note of by hon. Members who had been saying all along that great reforms were needed both at the Admiralty and the War Office—that the permanent officials had too much power in their hands. If that discussion had done no other good, it was of value for this admission on the part of the right hon. Gentleman. He (Mr. Foster) had held the opinion for a considerable time that it was a libel on the English manufacturer whenever a Member of the responsible Government of this country stood up and told not only this House and this country, but our competitors abroad, that foreign manufacturers were more competent to manufacture war material than our own manufacturers. Such a statement not only implied an injustice to the British manufacturer in the sending of orders abroad by the English Government, but it hindered British manufacturers in competing for orders from foreign Governments. He was reminded that on one occasion a great injustice was done in this respect by Lord Hartington (now the Duke of Devonshire), of course, quite unintentionally. His Lordship made a statement that our manufacturers could not do

something which foreign manufacturers were doing. The foreign manufacturers at once seized upon the statement, and used it to obtain orders, to the prejudice of the British manufacturers. Such conduct was, of course, to be deprecated, whichever Party was in power. The utmost encouragement should be given to British manufacturers. He begged to move a reduction of the Vote by £100.

*MR. SPEAKER said, that could not be done, as the Question had already been put, "That the House agree with the Committee's Resolution."

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes 123 ; Noes 20.—(Division List, No. 309.)

Resolutions 9 and 10 agreed to.

Resolution 11.

"That a sum, not exceeding £231,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Expenses of the Admiralty Office which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894."

*MR. A. C. MORTON moved to reduce the Vote by £100 in order to call attention to the appointment to the office of Naval Adviser to the Inspector General of Fortifications. This office was held by Prince Louis of Battenberg, and he desired to know what the duties were, and whether that gentleman was properly qualified to fulfil them? It was admitted that there had been favouritism in a previous appointment, and on that ground he took objection to this one. He objected entirely to foreigners being appointed to British offices, and he was astonished that military and naval officers in that House should coolly agree to such appointments. He did not know Prince Louis, but it was a fact, he believed, that other competent English officers had been passed over in his interest, and he thought they had, therefore, a right to inquire whether he was a competent person for this position. Unless the Government proved to his satisfaction that we had no officers capable of performing these duties they would have no excuse of appointing a foreigner. Englishmen, Scotchmen, Irishmen, and Welshmen had a right to be first considered with regard to these appointments. In his opinion, we had plenty of naval officers in this

country who were better qualified in every way than foreigners possibly could be for filling such a position. In order to emphasise his opinion in regard to this matter, he begged to move to reduce the Vote by £700, the salary attached to this post.

Amendment proposed, to leave out "£231,000," in order to insert "£230,300."
—(*Mr. A. C. Morton.*)

Question proposed, "That £231,000 stand part of the said Resolution."

*SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH said, he really need not detain the House for more than a very few minutes on this matter. This appointment was made in the ordinary course. The office, which was one of considerable value, though not of the highest rank or importance, was filled by a junior Captain, and the First Lord of the Admiralty, after considering the claims of different junior Captains for this office and their qualifications, came to the conclusion that Prince Louis of Battenberg, who had served with much credit in various stations and various ships during the course of his naval career, was, on the whole, the fittest person for the office, to which he was accordingly appointed. His hon. Friend put forward the argument that Prince Louis was a foreigner. The hon. Member was mistaken, because since the year 1868 Prince Louis had been a naturalised Englishman, and he entered the Navy shortly after his naturalisation. He served on the *Britannia* as a boy, doing exceedingly well, and he served with credit as a Lieutenant. In all his earlier career, when he proved himself to be an efficient officer of the Navy, he was no near relative of the Queen.

MR. A. C. MORTON : I said nothing about the Queen.

*SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH said, he might as well explain this fact, because some people might think it was by some special favouritism that Prince Louis of Battenberg had obtained the position he now held. He could only say, in common with everyone else at the Admiralty, that they had found him a most efficient officer, and peculiarly well qualified to fill the office. There was absolutely no favouritism in the appointment, Prince Louis having been

Mr. A. C. Morton

selected simply on account of his high merit as an officer. His hon. Friend had asked what the duties of the office were. He had already explained that it was always filled by a junior Captain ; therefore, it would be seen that it was not an office of the highest importance. Generally, an officer was chosen who had lately been employed on sea service, and that qualification Prince Louis possessed. The tenure of the office was usually for two years, and the duty of the officer who held it was to represent naval interests on the Defence Committee with special reference to commercial ports and coaling stations. This was an office which enabled touch to be kept between the Admiralty and the War Office on very important matters which necessitated the freest communication, and that a junior Captain should be employed in this way was exceedingly useful, and prevented any friction or any want of complete understanding between the War Office and the Admiralty. The appointment had proved of great benefit to the relations between the two Departments, and had facilitated the solution of questions between them, especially with reference to the important question of combined action in the preparations for war. There was no subject connected with the Admiralty or the War Office on which it was more essential there should be complete harmony between the two Departments than on that of combined action in, and preparation for, war. Those were the duties attaching to the post of Adviser to the Inspector of Fortifications which Prince Louis now held.

MR. A. C. MORTON : Does this junior Captain represent the Government in connection with war ?

*SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH replied, no ; but there were junior officers in the Navy who were capable of rendering service in the consideration of questions of this sort. Of course, the important decisions were taken by the Board of Admiralty and the Secretary of State ; but where any junior officer, who was an efficient man, made valuable suggestions, he hoped and believed they would receive quite as much consideration as if they came from an Admiral or a Field Marshal. He had again to say that the office under discussion was a useful

one, and was admirably filled by Prince Louis.

Question put, and agreed to.

Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

MAJOR RASCH wished to call the attention of the House to the continued injustice perpetrated on the sailors and fishermen of Kent and Essex, caused by the direct orders of the First Lord of the Admiralty. So great was this grievance and injustice that he proposed to divide the House on the question if he could get anyone to tell with him. For the last 18 months the Admiralty had been dredging the channel from Chatham to Sheerness in order that they might be able to bring ships of war down the Medway. The Admiralty took the deposit of mud which they dredged from the Medway, and they threw it broadcast on the fishing grounds of the Kent and Essex fishermen. The defence which the Financial Secretary to the Admiralty had always made was that the channel must be dredged, and the mud put somewhere. That defence was absolutely futile. Of course the channel must be dredged, but to say that the mud must be deposited on the fishing ground was about as sensible and reasonable as it would be to say it ought to be deposited in Old Palace Yard. The Admiralty had no defence, and they ought to shoot this mud where other contractors were obliged to shoot it—that was in deep water some 10 or 12 miles on the other side of the Nore Light. In consequence of the conduct of the Admiralty in acting in the way of which he complained, the fishing grounds were covered with *débris*, the fish were driven away, the men's nets were torn and broken, and practically these sailors and fishermen were being driven off the coast, which meant that some of the finest class of men were being driven out of employment and out of the country. The Admiralty had not the slightest excuse or reason for carrying on this practice. Under the Fishery Acts which were passed whilst the right hon. Member for Bristol (Sir M. Hicks-Beach) was at the Board of Trade, fishery districts were empowered to prosecute anybody who deposited refuse or *débris* on these

grounds, and if any Public Body or Corporation shot mud on the fishing grounds they were very properly had up and heavily fined. Even such an august Body as the London County Council had to take its two sludge boats right out to sea and deposit the mud in deep water. But the Board of Admiralty, in defiance of all remonstrances and petitions, and flying in the face of the law, continued to take mud on to these fishing grounds, the excuse for their conduct, he supposed, being that they were a Public Department under the Crown, who were, therefore, above the law, and could do precisely as they liked. The matter had frequently been brought under the notice of the Admiralty. In June of last year he moved a reduction of the Vote for the purpose of calling attention to this very practice, and Memorials and Petitions had been sent in to the Board. Some little time ago a deputation waited on Lord Spencer, who promised a Committee of Inquiry. The gentlemen composing this Committee of Inquiry went to a place called the Lea; they sat for three hours, and, although they came with their minds made up against the fishermen, he believed they had drawn up a Report which was so hostile to the action of the Admiralty in this matter, that the right hon. Gentleman opposite had not dared to lay the Report on the Table of the House. Afterwards, when he (Major Rasch) called attention to the matter, the Secretary to the Admiralty treated him with a kind of accentuated harshness which was very much to be deprecated, and then moved the Closure in order, he imagined, to prevent him (Major Rasch) replying and defending himself. In order to bring the matter home to the right hon. Gentleman, and in the hope of relieving his own constituents of this nuisance for the future, he begged to move the reduction of the Vote by £1,000.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. and gallant Gentleman cannot move a reduction—that has already been done—but he can divide against the whole Vote.

MAJOR RASCH said, he would adopt the latter course.

MR. E. ROBERTSON said that, as this concerned the Works Department of the Admiralty, he might be permitted to reply, although the only answer he

could give to the hon. and gallant Member would be a repetition of former answers on the point. The hon. and gallant Gentleman was doing an injustice to the gentlemen who were sent down to inquire into this matter when he said they went down with closed minds. He had read their Report—which was a confidential one, and could not, therefore, be placed on the Table of the House—and it was not so conclusive as the hon. Gentleman seemed to think. They did report that a certain amount of damage was done to the fishing ground, though nothing like the amount alleged by the hon. and gallant Gentleman and his supporters. The real answer was this, and he had given it before: This work of dredging the channel of the Medway was, according to naval advisers of the Admiralty, absolutely necessary, and it could not be discontinued. They must have the channel placed in such a position as to allow the passage of the largest ships in the Navy. But once the work was completed, as it would be in a short time, arrangements would be made whereby future dredging operations would be carried on in a manner that would obviate any possible objection on the part of the hon. and gallant Member and his constituents.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES said, the Civil Lord of the Admiralty had given a most complete and satisfactory answer to everything the hon. and gallant Gentleman did not say, but no answer to anything he did say. Nobody ever disputed the necessity for this dredging, but what they did say was that it was not necessary and right to shoot all the refuse dredged from this channel on to the fishing ground of these poor people. It was surprising how easily and quickly a fishing ground might be ruined by such means, for the *débris* tore and cut the nets of the fishermen, and drove away or killed the fish, and thus the means of livelihood of many hardworking fishermen on the coast in question were being seriously interfered with by the action of the Admiralty. No answer had been given or attempted to be given by the Government, and under these circumstances he had no alternative but to vote with his hon. and gallant Friend.

Mr. E. Robertson

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes 90 ; Noes 33.—(Division List, No. 310.)

Resolution agreed to.

Resolution 12 agreed to.

Resolution 13.

“That a sum, not exceeding £956,400, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Expense of Naval and Marine Pensions, Gratuities, and Compassionate Allowances, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894.”

MR. KEARLEY (Devonport) said, he wished to call attention to the pension arrangements and the manner in which the dependent relatives of those who were lost in such catastrophes as that of the *Victoria* were provided for. When the *Victoria* went down he endeavoured to get the Government to undertake the responsibility of providing for those who suffered by the loss. Unfortunately he did not succeed. He desired again to express the opinion that this obligation should be undertaken by the country. Whenever there was a great naval catastrophe the public responded very liberally, but there was a general desire among naval men to have an Insurance Fund, towards which the men might themselves make some voluntary contribution. The desire was that the fund should be an Insurance Fund for the widows and families when the men died even outside the Service. The feeling of naval men was that the country should give an assurance that in the event of any mishap overtaking seamen those who were left behind should be adequately provided for. To this might be added the funds now administered by various bodies, such as the Commissioners of the Royal Patriotic Fund. The naval men suggested that the Government should appoint a Committee to investigate the position of the various funds in existence, many of which were being administered by the Commissioners of the Patriotic Fund. There were the funds connected with the *Captain*, £10,000; the *Eurydice*, £4,000; the *Atalanta*, £2,000; the Naval Exhibition Fund, and the *Victoria* Fund, from which latter it was estimated they would have a balance of £25,000. The feeling was that these funds administered by the Patriotic Fund Commissioners were not being adminis-

tered in the way they should be. There was a sum of £42,000 available from these funds for the nucleus of such a fund as he suggested, and therefore he asked the Admiralty to seriously consider whether it was not possible to appoint a Committee. He would not impute any negligence to the Patriotic Fund, but it was not a popular body. It was too official, and out of touch with the spirit of the people for whom these funds were collected. Naval men were very strongly of opinion that the balances that had accrued should form the nucleus of this Naval Insurance Fund. He had an idea that at the time of the loss of the *Victoria* Earl Spencer was considering the advisability of appointing a Committee on the subject. There was also the question of meeting the claims of men who were within a few months of completing 20 years' service. He had also formally to call attention to the anomalous position of the chief petty officers in regard to pensions, and also to the question of allotment letters left behind by men on foreign service for the benefit of wives and families. The chief petty officers were in the position that, though promoted in rank, they had no advantage as to pension. This was a very great grievance, and one that ought to be remedied, he thought, without delay. These men should not be asked to assume greater responsibility than they otherwise would have without allowing them to have a corresponding advantage. On the other question—that of allotments—he thought it was known to most Members who were interested in the dockyards that the system as it existed at present was a serious one leading to great evil and mischief. He hoped that upon this matter the Government would take the right course, and throw over those official obstacles which had stood in the way of reform for so many years.

*SIR A. ROLLIT said, it was a mistake to say that the Naval Exhibition Fund was administered by the Commissioners of the Patriotic Fund. It was at first proposed that the Naval Exhibition Fund of £40,000 would be administered by them, but that course was not adopted.

MR. KEARLEY said, he was quite aware of that, and he had not stated that it was.

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SIR A. ROLLIT said, he certainly gathered the opposite from the words used.

MR. CLOUGH (Portsmouth) said, he wished to support the observations of the hon. Member for Devonport as to the institution of an Insurance Fund for naval men, and he also wished to urge the claims of men to a pension who had not reached the maximum of their service of 20 years. There were many men who, having served 19 and 19½ years, ought to be entitled to consideration. As to the chief petty officers, he agreed that they suffered great hardship, and he hoped the question would be kept in view. A sergeant in the Army got £36 per annum, but these men got only £33, although the conditions of service were equal. He hoped that, at any rate, this matter would be looked into, and that the Army sergeant and the chief petty officer of whom he spoke would be placed upon an equal footing. This would be but fair and equitable. He agreed also with regard to what had been said on the question of allotments.

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (MR. E. ROBERTSON, Dundee) said, that the hon. Member would not expect from him any intimation of a policy in regard to an Insurance Fund. All that he could do now was to express his entire sympathy with the object, and his hope that something might come of the suggestion. He was glad to have the assurance that the men in the Navy were anxious that such a fund should be established, and he was sure that the sympathy of his Colleagues would be no less warm than his own with such a meritorious proposal. He would not enter into the question of the administration of existing funds, or into the system of the Patriotic Fund. The Admiralty had no official control over these matters; but, so far as the First Lord of the Admiralty was concerned, the suggestions he had made were in the same direction as that indicated by the hon. Member. Earl Spencer had distinctly kept open the possibility of the appointment of a Committee which should have for its specific purpose the gathering into one fund of all the dispersed balances that now existed for naval charitable objects. He had no doubt that the suggestion would bear fruit, and he hoped that it would be at no distant day. The experiment of admitting direct representatives of the men to the administration of

the *Victoria* Fund had turned out extremely well. The Admiralty Fund had been distributed. Seventy-two claims had been made for pensions for widows, and 67 had been already paid. In 81 cases of dependent relatives 65 had received the maximum, so that practically all that the Admiralty could do with the Navy Vote and the Greenwich Hospital Fund had been done. Happily there remained the large sum given by the public, and which he hoped would be applied in eking out the somewhat slender assistance granted by the State.

MR. BAKER (Portsmouth) said, if a man served 15 years and then renewed for 15 more he appeared to get no credit for his first term of service.

MR. CLOUGH rose, but—

MR. SPEAKER said, he had already spoken, and could not speak again, the House not being in Committee.

MR. CLOUGH begged pardon. He had forgotten at the moment.

MR. KEARLEY said, his point with regard to the pensions had not been replied to.

*THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Sir U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH, Lancashire, Clitheroe) was understood to say he had taken a great interest in the question, and he wished that it might be possible to devise some system that would be satisfactory.

Resolution agreed to.

Resolutions 14 and 15 agreed to.

REVENUE DEPARTMENTS.

Resolution 16 agreed to.

Resolution 17.

"That a sum, not exceeding £1,724,010, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894, for the Salaries and Working Expenses of the Post Office Telegraph Service."

*MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) said, this was a convenient time for calling attention to the subject of telephones, and endeavouring to ascertain the policy of the Government on the question. It would be in the recollection of hon. Members that up to the period of the death of Mr. Raikes the Telegraph Department showed a considerable growth of revenue, even with 6d. telegrams. From that time, however, the revenue

began to fall off. The Postal Authorities attributed the falling off to the increasing popularity of telephones, and in order to cope with what they seemed to have regarded as an evil, the House of Commons, at the fag-end of last Session, was persuaded to allow the Postmaster General £1,000,000 to buy up the trunk lines between town and town, leaving to the Telephone Companies the local exchanges in the cities and towns. Now it was plain that a grosser blunder was never perpetrated. It was a good illustration of the old story of dividing the oyster, the Government taking the shell and leaving the oyster to the Companies. What could be more foolish than for the Government to construct for itself a trunk line from London to Canterbury, leaving both Canterbury and London to be supplied by the Companies? It was clear that the Government had taken over the costly and unprofitable, and left the inexpensive and remunerative system to the Companies. What he would like to know was this: Had the Government ascertained what was the proportion of profits derived from trunk lines from town to town, to the profits realised in our towns and cities? The answer was that 500 local messages would be sent to one trunk line message. All the patents, or nearly all the patents, were exhausted, and there was a great opportunity for the Government to obtain control over them. On the other hand, he was informed that the National Telephone Company were extending their operations on such a scale that it would soon be impossible to buy them out. With respect to the cost of the Service, there was much to complain of. He was informed that the cost of telephone communication in Australia was £6 per house; in Sweden only £4 per house, but in England £20 per house. He would now direct attention to the administration of the Telegraph Department. He had laid it down as a principle that every person in the United Kingdom, whether near to or distant from a great centre of population, should be placed on an equality with the richest of his fellow-countrymen in the towns as regarded the enjoyment of postal and telegraphic facilities and payment for them. He thought people should not be punished for living in the country; and that the Post Office Authorities, with a surplus exceeding £3,000,000, and full command of the railways, should no longer punish a man

Mr. E. Robertson

with petty fines, under the name of "portage," for the remoteness of his residence, thus adding yet another incentive to the migration of the rural population into the towns. Further, he contended that subsidies, or guarantees towards the cost of maintaining local telegraph offices, should cease to be exacted from private persons, such as farmers and shopkeepers, in sparsely-peopled parishes, and that in future all telegrams, like all letters, should be delivered free, irrespective of distance. On the subject of guarantees, he had received the following letter from Mr. W. J. Myatt, of Myatt's Hextable Horticultural Company, Swanley, Kent:—

"March 9th, 1893.

"May I, however, suggest as an addition that the present practice of making gentlemen who guarantee telegraph lines and offices liable for any deficit in a given year, notwithstanding the G.P.O. may have made profits in previous years, should be amended by taking in account the previous profits. I, with others, guarantee the Post Office an income of £28 a year on a short telegraph line from Swanley Junction to this place, which has, for two years, turned out profitably, but if from any unforeseen occurrence there should be a loss, it would be very hard upon us. The guarantee extends over seven years from the commencement, and the Department would not put up the line unless we subscribed these onerous terms."

This shabby and rapacious system only brought in £19,000 a year to the Post Office. Although the Post Office realised such an enormous surplus, it was extremely sharp in small bargains with persons who could not help themselves. Mr. G. F. Chambers, of Northfield Grange, Eastbourne, wrote—

"You are not perhaps aware of the extremely shabby trick of the G.P.O. in calculating how a telegraph guarantee is to be satisfied. They only allow outgoing telegrams to reckon, ignoring the fact that incoming telegrams yield earnings which would not be realised but for the existence of the telegraph office which is the subject of the guarantee. . . . Consequent upon the opening in his village of a guaranteed telegraph office, a Liverpool ship-owner established the practice of having telegraphed to him rather for his satisfaction and pleasure, so to speak, a large amount of shipping news, which under the circumstances required neither reply nor acknowledgment. In virtue of this, his clerks at Liverpool spent on his behalf, in telegrams to his residence, which was in Herefordshire, many pounds, while the gentleman in Herefordshire spent only shillings at the rural office. It seems to me grossly unfair that only the local shillings for messages sent outwards should count in relief of the guarantors, and the Liverpool pounds for incoming messages be wholly ignored."

He had questioned the Postmaster General upon this subject, and the right hon. Gentleman had argued that it would be unfair to count the revenue accruing at another place. It appeared, however, to be a clear case for applying the doctrine of "betterment," so much in favour with the right hon. Gentleman's Party. If the establishment of the guaranteed office improved the revenue at other points, surely that fact should be taken into account; just as, it was contended, the cutting of a new thoroughfare should be taken into account in rating the shopkeepers along the line of it. At all events, this keenness in small bargains contrasted strangely with the wasting of tens of thousands on such contracts as those with Messrs. De La Rue, with the Railway Companies (respecting "service" messages), and for the Calais-Brindisi service. Another subject of frequent complaint appeared to be the levying of excessive "portage" charges for telegrams when the addressee lived outside a certain radius. In some country districts, peopled by farmers, this charge amounted to a denial of the privilege of telegraphic communication with markets, and the outer world generally. It had been proved that a boy would often earn for the Government perhaps 10s. for "portage" in a morning, while his weekly wage only amounted to 5s. In the following case, however, the writer was a town resident:—

"A5, Exchange Buildings,
"Liverpool.

"Dear Sir,—From the enclosed correspondence you will see that my residence is between two and three miles from the G.P.O. The message in question was delivered by a messenger who travelled by omnibus (fare 2d. each way, as I was informed by the messenger), and I was charged 1s. 6d. for this delivery; so it appears the P.O. made a clear profit of 1s. 2d. on the delivery, besides the charges paid by the sender for the transmission of the message.

"Yours truly,
"D. LE ROUGETEL."

Mr. Thomas Heald, solicitor, of Greenfield House, Billinge, near Wigan, said—

"I am glad you are taking action with regard to telegraph messages to villages. I live in the Local Board district of Billinge, of which I am Chairman, and for every telegram received from Orrell, three miles away, we pay 1s. 6d. for portage. We have only one delivery of letters, and none on Sunday. Take

another district, Parbold, near here, the same portorage is charged; and as to letters, postmen will not deliver them even 20 yards out of their beat unless paid extra for doing so."

The following letter referred to the same subject. It was from Mr. Alfred Blomfield, of Orange Hall, Gasfield, near Halstead, Essex:—

"I have the misfortune to live a few yards over three miles (by road) from the nearest telegraph office; and although it is little more than half an hour's walk by the fields, am charged the sum of 1s. 6d. for the delivery of telegrams. I cannot for the life of me see why we should be charged for the delivery at all. If it pays the Postal Department better to deliver the telegrams from the neighbouring town, rather than have a telegraph office in every village, let them do so; but every telegram, like every letter, should be delivered free. If not, those who live half a mile from the office should pay 3d., and those only a few hundred yards 1d., and so on. As it is, we whose business compels us to live in the country have to pay not only for the delivery of our own messages, but we also bear the cost of nearly all the telegrams delivered in the towns. It is in this way: A messenger can easily deliver a telegram here, and return to the office in an hour and a half (for which I am charged 1s. 6d.), and the rest of the day he will be delivering telegrams within the mile circle free. I happened to be in the office the other day and saw the lad take his wages for the week. I noticed that he was paid 5s., or about the same amount as would be charged for delivering three telegrams here, which could easily have been done in six hours. Other farmers are even worse off than I am. A neighbour of mine, although distant from here only about half a mile, by a good hard road, or footpath, cannot have a message delivered under 2s. 6d. There has been a good deal of talk of late about the depopulation of our villages, but this is not the way to make country people feel in touch with the towns. We should much more often get a wire as to the state, say, of the fruit and vegetable market so as to know when to send, and when not to send; but we have to tell our salesmen not to wire unless the matter be very important."

The Department sometimes, however, caught a tartar. Thus, the Rev. H. W. Stewart, of Lumley Vicarage, Fence Houses, wrote—

"It may interest you to know that the Post Office for 18 months charged me 1s. portorage on telegrams, and, consequently, I had the distance measured. They then *invented* a new road to my vicarage, going first in the *opposite* direction and then back again. They have now for a few months charged me 6d., without writing to me upon the subject of their decision."

Those who love a hearty laugh ought to be grateful to the Post Office for the never-failing amusement provided for them in its solemn decisions as to the

Mr. Henniker Heaton

charges to be levied for telegraphing proper names. Some of these might have been laid down by Dogberry himself. But the broad humour of them came out best on comparing them, and endeavouring to trace the common principle on which they had been drawn up. The ground of the decision was in each case wisely kept back. There was an Emperor who declared himself to be above the rules of grammar. But it had been reserved for the British Postmaster General to set himself above the dictates of common sense. He proposed to give a few of the conflicting Rules that had come under his notice. The following was a list of places, the names of which passed as one word:—Breeze Hill, Cabbage Hall, St. Michael's Hamlet, Sandown Park, Toxteth Park, Druids' Cross, West Derby, Cressington Park, Fulwood Park, Princess' Park, Sefton Park, Stanley Park, Little Crosby, and Romney Street. The following counted as two words each:—Dingle Hill, Edge Hill, Low Hill, Mossley Hill, Old Swan, Rice Lane, The Brook, Victoria Park, Grassendale Park, Newsham Park, Shiel Park, Great Crosby, and Knotty Ash. Port Said was, by the Eastern Telegraph Company, counted as one word, in the General Post Office it was counted as two words. The British Postal Authorities counted ironworks as one word, steelworks as two words, 25½ as one word, 25A as two words, 12½ as one word, two-and-half as two words, per cent. as two words, and pro cent. as one word. Pitwood, blueblack, Ashton-on-Ribble, oatmeal, figurehead, coffee-mill, and broadcloth counted as one word; while spoolwood, blackwhite, cargo fleet, toll-end, bonemeal, augerhead, pepper-mill, and teacloths counted as two words. West Derby counted as two words, West Kirby as one word, some time (ago) as one word, sometime (future) as two words, Madame D'Albany as two words, Madame D'Orsay as one word, fishmarket as one word, cattlemarket as two words, Edge Hill (Liverpool) as two words, Edge Hill (Warwickshire) as one word. This list could be continued *ad infinitum*. The following letter appeared in *The Standard*:—

"Sir,—In sending a telegram from Kensington to Tulse Hill not many days ago, 'Tulse Hill' was charged as one word. I had occasion to wire to a friend to-night from a Brixton Post Office, where they charged 'Not

ting Hill' as two words. *Risum teneatis amici?*

"I am, Sir,

"Your obedient servant,

"PERPLEXED.

"June 21."

Mr. W. J. Borrows, of 18, Llanbleddian Gardens, Cardiff, wrote to him—

"I was sending a telegram of 11 words, and my initials 'W. J. B.' The official asked me for 7d. I gave him 6d., crossed out 'W. J. B.' and wrote 'Borrows,' and wondered why they wanted 1½d. for wiring three letters, when they were willing to send seven for ½d."

Any compound word which could not be shown in a dictionary to be a single word was declared to be chargeable as three words. A recent writer in a newspaper said—

"The word 'mother-in-law,' is declared to be chargeable as three words. The writer, who though at present he has not a mother-in-law, looks forward to a time when his position in this respect may be changed, is naturally anxious to know why, to the calamity of this relationship, a tax of the kind should unnecessarily be added. Possibly the frequency with which mothers-in-law figure in domestic telegrams may explain the apparent perverseness of the Department. It will be easily understood that the admission of the word into the privileged class of recognised compounds would involve a serious sacrifice of revenue."

Messrs. G. G. Gilchrist and Co., of 3, Peter Street, Liverpool, wrote—

"A telegram containing the letters 'gpo' in the text can be sent so as to count the combination as one word. If, however, a telegram is sent "Smith gpo Dublin" the abbreviation, as you will see by enclosed letter (from the General Post Office), is chargeable as three words."

Again, "mp" written small was counted as one word, while "M.P." written with capitals was charged as two words. "Upstairs" was charged as one word, and "downstairs" as two words; and "De Vere" was still charged as one word, but "De Vere Gardens" as three words. The Rev. E. Ledger, of Barham Rectory, Claydon, Ipswich, said—

"Five figures, or 91½, count as one word in a telegram; but 91A is two words."

The Rev. H. W. Stewart, of Lumley Vicarage, Fence Houses, wrote—

"I have to-day been charged an extra half-penny upon the word 'Notting Hill,' which the Post Office consider two words. The complaint is made upon form T. No. 55, and is thus written by the clerk: "'Notting Hill" counted one;—the hyphen being carefully omitted. I am at a loss to understand the meaning of this charge, as 'Fence-Houses' is always reckoned one word."

The following information came from a Post Office employé :—

"Telegraph messages handed in at Lothbury for Tokenhouse Yard, less than a dozen yards from that office, are not, as common sense would suggest, delivered thence, but are sent by pneumatic tube to the Central Telegraph Office—12 minutes' walk—thence sent again by tube to the telegraph office in Moorgate Street Buildings, where they are copied, and then delivered."

He would now proceed to offer some suggestions, and to bring forward certain grievances in connection with the Telegraph Service. The words "reply paid" in a telegram should not be charged for. They were transmitted free in Australia, and other Colonies. Incredible as it might appear, there was no direct telegraphic communication between Dover and Calais. A message from Dover to Calais was first wired to London, thence to Paris, and thence to Calais. The result was several hours' delay, for want of a few miles of cable. He had questioned the Postmaster General on this subject in the House, but his reply was of a most discouraging character. St. Martin's-le-Grand would not stir a finger in the business. The following suggestion was so obviously reasonable that one wondered it should be necessary to offer it to the Authorities. Mr. E. H. Courbe, of 4, St. Paul's Place, Canonbury, N., wrote—

"I would suggest that you should add to the list of your proposed reforms a direction to telegraph messengers to ask, when delivering a telegram, whether there will be an answer, and to wait a maximum time, say five minutes, to take back that answer. A case in point occurred to me recently. A boy brought a message to me at the above address, and did not wait. An immediate answer was required, and, at some inconvenience to myself, as I was very busy, I had to go to the nearest station about three-quarters of a mile away. When I got there, at about 8.10 p.m. the office was shut. I then had to go to the Central District Office—about one and a-half miles distant, in order to send my telegram. Now all this might have been saved if the boy had only waited. I understand they can wait if they like, but it is optional; in fact, it depends upon the taste and fancy of the boy. This seems to me to be absurd."

The Post Office plumed itself on the pains taken to deliver an imperfectly-addressed letter, for which it received 1d. The following was one of numerous complaints as to the neglect of the officials to take similar (or, indeed, any) pains to deliver a telegram, for which at least 6d. was received. The letter was

from a gentleman living at Club Moor, Liverpool—

"On Saturday, July 24th, I sent a telegram addressed 'Day c/o Sullivan, 31, Broad Street, London,' from Ranalph Place Office, Liverpool. The message was accepted without demur. When I arrived home, about four hours later, I received a notice from a sub-office, stating that it had not been delivered because there were 'several Broad Streets' in London. I sent an additional address—namely, 'Broad Street, Golden Square'; and for these two words I was charged 6d. 'for re-direction.' By the time the telegram was delivered the person to whom it was sent had left London. I think you will agree with me that this was a most shameful proceeding on the part of the officials in London, as my wife was sent in c/o a well-known tradesman, and by simply turning up a Directory of London they could have instantly ascertained which Broad Street was required. . . . But that is not all. This morning another 6d. was demanded of me. I am now expected to pay for sending the extra two words from Anfield Post Office to Liverpool (two miles), and 6d. is again the charge. This I have refused to pay. I said I would in the public interest put the facts before you; and if you say I should pay, I shall do so."

Although the Post Office paid, as justice plainly required, some compensation in case of the miscarriage, owing to the fault of its *employés*, of a letter or parcel, it refused similar compensation in the case of a telegram. Thus, the Rev. J. Phillips Dickson, of Dudleston Vicarage, Ellesmere, Shropshire, wrote—

"Having friends staying here, who were going up to town next morning, and from there abroad, I telegraphed to the livery stables which we are in the habit of using for a carriage to be here at half-past eight, a.m. I took the precaution to put the time in words, not in figures, and therefore paid extra to avoid, as I thought, the possibility of a mistake. The carriage did not arrive until 9.30, and so too late for the express train to town, which caused a waste of some hours, and untold inconvenience to myself and my party, as a result. I drove to the stables—some six miles away—and found the hour put in figures in the telegram, and the time given at 9.30.

"The Department ultimately admitted their error. After considerable correspondence they informed me, 'There is reason to believe the error is attributable to carelessness on the part of a certain telegraphist, whose services have been dispensed with.'"

"I made a claim for the additional expense I had been put to, and which, as a matter of justice, I considered I was entitled to; but, on the ground that there was no fund from which to meet such claims, it was not entertained. I was offered, however, the following very absurd consolation, which, needless to say, I declined:—'It is regretted that, for the reason given in the former letter sent to you, the sum which you claim as compensation cannot be refunded; but as the error appears to have rendered the tele-

gram useless, instructions have been given for the amount prepaid for it to be refunded to you.' I pointed out the unjust and unbusiness-like nature of this treatment, but all to no effect. In a subsequent letter I asked to be informed how it is that loss sustained in the Postal Department can be made good, but loss sustained in the Telegraph Department is ignored. To this apparently simple question I have not been able to obtain an answer. The calm, unbusinesslike way in which such loss and annoyance are brushed aside by the Department is very trying. Under our present system I fear a Postmaster General is a mere mechanical rail-tape figure-head, whose occupation of Office is too brief to permit of his instituting material reforms without strong Parliamentary pressure."

Too often, however, when Parliament encouraged the Department to adopt a reform, much of the expected benefit to the public was intercepted by some podantic requirement or unconscionable extortion. Thus when the privilege of the telegraphic remittance of money was tardily conceded, it was made to bristle with charges and commissions. A gentleman wrote from Smethwick Hall, Staffordshire—

"Dear Mr. Heaton,—Will you kindly allow me to draw your attention to a matter in connection with the Telegraphic Money Order Service, which appears to me to constitute a grievance. I had occasion to make use of the above facilities to make a remittance of £3 the other day, and paid a commission of 8d. and a 'Telegraph charge' of 6d. (1s. 2d. in all), thinking it would be delivered to the payee as an ordinary telegram would be. I found, after three days' trouble, however, that the expense of the remittance was further increased by a separate and distinct telegram having to be sent to the payee advising that the amount is lying to be claimed at their Post Office. This brings the cost of the remittance of £3 up to 1s. 8d., which seems extortionate. The 'Telegraph charge,' it seems, is simply an intimation to the Postmaster at the other end that a certain sum is to be paid to a certain person, no address being needed, as the remittance is not delivered, nor is any official notice given that the money is waiting to be claimed. It seems to me that the 'Telegraph charge' should include the notification to the payee that the money awaits him, his address being given by the remitter. I understand that this, or a similar course, has long been in practice in New Zealand.

"H. LINCOLN TANGYK."

In India, and on the Continent, the money was sent with the telegram to the residence of the addressee. This plan not only obviated all delay, but prevented fraud, for it ensured the delivery of the money to the right person. A correspondent had recently recalled his attention to the rapacious charge (against which he had so often protested) of 2d. instead

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of 1d. on the receipt given for a telegraphic message. The cost of transmission of the message itself was only 6d., yet a receipt cost 2d. They should bear in mind that a 1d. stamp was sufficient on a receipt for £100 or £1,000. When a telegraph clerk made a mistake in transmission, and an important word in the message was thereby rendered unintelligible, the Department charged for a repetition of the entire despatch, instead of charging for the undecipherable word. What would be said of a cobbler who charged the price of a pair of new boots for putting on a patch? Sir Arthur Blackwood, in a recent article, was particularly severe towards those members of the public who objected to some of the established charges for telegraphic transmission. The following communication from a gentleman well acquainted with the subject would, he feared, once more stir up his wrath:—

"If a member of the public addresses a telegram to, say, Harrison, Coleman Street, London, E.C., the name will be traced in the Directory, and the message delivered. If it were addressed Harrison, 3 Coleman Street, E.C., and Harrison's were at 2, it would be charged 6d. for 'amended address,' though well known. Thus he who first saves a ½d. gives extra trouble, and has his telegram delivered for nothing; in the other case an additional ½d. is incurred, and the Post Office charge 6d. for taking a telegram next door. On the Continent, as you are aware, the names of the streets are one with the word street. Thus 'Koenig-strasse' (King Street). These words, rightly one on the Continent, are charged on the receiver as two. If the receiver will not pay, messages coming after will not be delivered to him until he pays an inherently unjust charge. This gives rise to much indignation, and rightly so. Words that are by the officials counted one in Italy, Belgium, Holland, Germany, &c., ought in equity to be counted one here."

He had this information from a postal official, and it could be relied upon as accurate. He appealed to the Postmaster General to cease worrying the public with these petty Ordinances and Rules. He asked him to take a broad and liberal view of the public requirements.

*MR. THEOBALD (Essex, Romford) wished to draw attention to the case of Mr. Durnford, a clerk in the Central Post Office, who had been recently promoted for what was called "special qualification." When he (Mr. Theobald) asked what the special qualification was, he was told it was shorthand writing. If it had been known by the clerks that a

knowledge of shorthand writing would have led to such a rapid rise as this gentleman had had many of them would have studied shorthand writing. When his salary was £70 a year it was raised to £110, and very shortly afterwards it was further raised from £122 to £160. Although he had only 12 years' service, he was put over the heads of 400 clerks, many of whom had been 20 years in the Service. This was not the only case in which men had been pitchforked into higher places. When a former case occurred, and a question arose about it, no special qualification was mentioned. He hoped some explanation would be given of the Controller's power in this matter. There was also a question of an Assistant Superintendent, which affected the rights of first-class clerks to promotion, and it would be well in this as in other matters if the appointments were made on some basis that would be fair and reasonable.

MR. BILLSON (Devon, Barnstaple) said, there were certain complaints which he had brought before the right hon. Gentleman, and he hoped they would have the attention which he thought they deserved. With regard to the hon. Member for Canterbury, he wished to say that the whole community were deeply indebted to him for his energy and assiduity in bringing these matters under the notice of the Government.

COLONEL BROOKFIELD (Sussex, Rye) said, he desired to call attention to the subject of the employment of discharged soldiers and sailors as telegraph and postal messengers. Last year the late Postmaster General made a slight change with the view to finding some suitable employment for the class to which he referred. There was a distinct desire on the part of the right hon. Gentleman to increase the connection between the Postal Service and the Army and Navy. Those who were trying to face this problem, which was becoming so very serious, of finding civil employment for soldiers and sailors, were very much indebted to the late Postmaster General for this important step; but so far as he (Colonel Brookfield) could ascertain, the present Postmaster General had taken measures which exactly reversed the policy of his predecessor. This was not so much a question of Departmental detail as a really serious question of policy in which the whole action of the

Government might well be arraigned. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. A. Morley), in a Circular which was recently issued, not only said that the enlistment scheme, as it was called, should be withdrawn, but he went on to say that all telegraph messengers, whether engaged before or after the 10th November, 1891, who were to be nominated for postmen's places, were to be regarded as having a prior claim to soldiers and sailors. Thus the right hon. Gentleman not only refused to assist his colleague, the Secretary of State for War, and others who had taken up this subject, in finding suitable employment for soldiers and sailors, but to the extent indicated he said that to have served the country as a soldier or sailor was to be treated as a positive disqualification for the future. He (Colonel Brookfield) was well aware of the arguments which the right hon. Gentleman could adduce in this matter. He feared that the most cogent argument of all which the right hon. Gentleman would use was, that soldiers had not the good fortune to have votes in the election of Members to that House. It was amusing to contrast the extreme deference—he might almost say the abject deference—which was paid to postal *employés*, who were able to take political action, and the high and dry and cavalier manner in which soldiers and sailors were treated, who from the nature of the case could not as a matter of public policy have votes. It might be that many questions of semi-military policy like this might be explained by the theory that gentlemen on the Liberal side had a natural dislike for soldiers in any form. There was another explanation of their objecting to find civil employment for them, and this was likely to apply to the right hon. Gentleman. It was that they honestly believed that soldiers and sailors were not well suited for this particular class of employment. But was it fair to men of this class to assume their unfitness for any kind of employment before they had been properly tried? Some time ago the experiment was made of admitting women to be telegraphists. In his opinion that had been a complete failure, though many people thought otherwise. Those who objected were answered by the argument that at any rate the system must be tried. Well, he

Colonel Brookfield

replied, that the system of giving employment to discharged soldiers and sailors had not been tried—had not received a fair trial. He believed that if it were fairly tried, there would be a play of cause and effect which would bring about success. When it became known and well understood that a few years in the Army and Navy would be a means of progress to the Telegraph Department a class of men would enter the Services who did not do so now. They would no longer only have Telegraph servants who wished to be soldiers. They would also have servants who wished ultimately to belong to the Telegraph Department. If the right hon. Gentleman had studied certain letters from Ambassadors at the four principal Courts on the Continent he would see the stress they laid—from their experience of Continental practice—on the desirability of employing soldiers in a suitable manner. They referred to the Postal Department as pre-eminently a suitable one in which this class of men could be employed. The hint they nearly all gave was that this would be a solution of a question which was particularly difficult in this country, where there was voluntary enlistment.

MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE (Hereford) wished to know whether the patronage exercised by Members of Parliament over the post of sub-postmaster was absolute? He asked this with special reference to the Hereford case, with the circumstances of which the right hon. Gentleman was, no doubt, well acquainted.

*SIR A. ROLLIT (Islington, S.) said, with reference to what had been said by the hon. Member for Canterbury on the telephone question, he would point out that the State might very often, as it had done before, undertake matters for the benefit of the community which it could manage to better advantage and more cheaply than the individuals themselves, and this principle applied to communications. Much, however, had happened since the subject had last been discussed, and the policy then adopted by the Government and with regard to the trunk lines could not be reversed. He also desired to say a word as to the interest the Municipalities had shown in the telephone. He considered that what was now proposed was not a restriction upon

municipal action, but rather that Municipal Authority was reserved by the arrangement. He very often thought that for the purpose of having these great advantages conferred on the public additional powers should be conferred on the companies. They would thus have the means of providing cheaper communication than at present. As he understood, the Act of Parliament and the Treasury Minute on the subject were being followed, and he thought it would be acknowledged that the Telephone Companies had done their best to carry out the arrangement, the basis of which was already determined upon. In London the disadvantages under which the companies laboured were very great—they had both physical and artificial obstacles to contend with—obstacles placed in their way by those who knew nothing of this matter at all, or, at least, who took no interest in it. But, subject to this, there was no desire to restrict municipal action, if, on the other hand, conditional powers were given to the companies so as to lessen the great cost of wayleaves, and to facilitate underground wires, instead of obstacles being placed in the way. The companies did not even care then who did such work—their own or the Municipalities—provided it were well done; and his own personal policy would be, in the interest of all, to serve the public in the best and cheapest way, with which objects very much of London had been already placed in complete metallic circuit. His hon. Friend was not correct when he said that the charge for the telephone was £20. Under the Swedish system there were better conditions than there were here. The charge there was £7 9s. 3d. per line—

MR. HENNIKER HEATON said, his figures were taken from the Report of the Consul to the British Government.

*SIR A. ROLLIT said, then the Consul was wrong. There were differences in England. Here there was a royalty of 10 per cent.; then there were costly wayleaves and want of powers, and, altogether, there were greater difficulties. When all the circumstances—the number of wires in use and the length of the terms of take—were taken into account, he found that the average charge in London was £15 0s. 7d., and in the provinces

£8 16s. 10d. per line. And a private house wire was only £10 per year for five years, and any second wire £12. He would take Hull as an example, and he said that the service there was more efficient under the company management than it had been under the Post Office. There the National Company had been against the Post Office, notwithstanding the efficiency of the latter service, and now, as a consequence of two systems, most people had to join both and pay double. He would not express an opinion as to whether a lower price would pay. His view was that the work should be done in the best form, in the belief that really good public service would in the end be most remunerative. The administration of the Department in this matter, both by the Postmaster General and by his Predecessor, had been such as to lead the companies to desire nothing that was not fair and reasonable. Their wish was to consult the public interest, and he could assure the right hon. Gentleman that in the negotiations in regard to the agreement they would do their best with him to arrive at a right and fair conclusion.

*MR. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough) said, he had some experience in reference to this matter, and his opinion was that the Telephone Companies wanted what was unfair and unreasonable. Their object was to secure, by the aid of the Government, a permanent monopoly. They had, it was said, an actual capital of £1,000,000 and a nominal capital of £4,000,000, and they asked them to accept their terms as if they had a genuine capital of £4,000,000. The hon. Member who had just sat down told them of the interests of the Municipalities in the telephone, but he did not tell them that there was a Bill before the House at present for the purpose of enabling the companies to have powers over the raising of streets in connection with the wires without the slightest authority being had from the Municipal Bodies.

SIR A. ROLLIT: I did not say that, because I am not aware of it.

MR. A. C. MORTON said, that he was sorry the hon. Gentleman did not make himself acquainted with the Bill before the House, for by that Bill the company proposed to take away from the Local Authorities the control of their

streets, and it was not at all fair. They had to pay £20 a year for the use of a telephone in London, or give a guarantee for five years. He, therefore, did not want the Government to create any worse monopoly than at present existed. Whenever a new Telephone Company was started in opposition, this company purchased them up directly. He supposed that was the reason why the capital of the company was increased from £1,000,000 to £4,000,000. All he wished to say now was that the Act of last year was rushed through the House at the end of the Session in a great hurry. He did not object to the Government purchasing the main lines, but he trusted that the Postmaster General would do nothing to assist a monopoly, which was most unfair to the people of this country. All he asked for was fair play, and he hoped his right hon. Friend would take an open and public view of the matter. He did not say anything against Joint Stock Companies generally, because he thought they had done much good to the country, but against monopolies like the National Telephone Company he desired to speak most strongly.

MR. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) said, he desired to object to the extension of the system of employing soldiers in connection with the Post Office and other branches of the Civil Service. He would not object to giving soldiers a fair advantage; but his right hon. Friend would find that whatever might be said on behalf of Reserve men by military Members, there was a very strong opposition on the part of many Members to any great extension of the system to the exclusion of ordinary Civil servants. He could understand why Postmasters should desire to introduce the military element into the Service. The Reserve men would be more or less under the thumb of the Department; they would have their pensions to fall back upon, and would, therefore, be able to accept small salaries, and they would not have that independence which he desired to see enjoyed by the working classes of this country. The Reserve man had many able advocates in the House, and he would be prepared to second the efforts of these hon. and gallant Gentlemen if they endeavoured to make the position of the common soldier and sailor much better than it was; but he did not desire

to see the Civil servants elbowed out of the way to make places for soldiers.

*MR. A. MORLEY said, the discussion had ranged over a variety of subjects, which he proposed to deal with briefly. He would first take the question of the telephones. He did not think he could fairly be asked to make a declaration of the policy of the Government on that question at the present moment. The recommendation of the Joint Committee of the two Houses of Parliament which had been sitting would have to be carefully considered. There were, no doubt, recent developments that would have to be carefully considered. The question of statutory powers for establishing underground modes of laying wires was one point on which no decision could be given offhand, and he, for one, would hesitate very much to advise the grant of statutory powers, unless they were to be subject to the control of the Local Authorities who had charge of the streets. The negotiations now pending between the Post Office and the National Telephone Company had reference to carrying out the agreement practically arranged by the late Government. He thought that a strong case would have to be made out to justify the House of Commons in departing from that agreement, which was carefully considered by both Houses of Parliament, and by a Committee of the Commons. The hon. Member for Peterborough was not quite right in saying that the Act of last year was rushed through the House.

MR. A. C. MORTON explained that what he meant was that a great many Members were away when the Bill was passed, as the General Election was at hand, and that they, therefore, had no opportunity of debating the measure.

*MR. A. MORLEY replied that that might have been the case; but the fact remained, that the measure was the simple embodiment of a policy which was discussed more than once in the House during last year. With reference to the subject of competing telephone systems, he quite agreed with the hon. Member for Islington that competition in the same area was open to grave objection. He had used a telephone since the instrument had first been introduced, and he was strongly of opinion that two competing companies in one district would destroy half the value of the

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telephone. He therefore thought that Parliament should be very cautious in sanctioning any arrangement which would bring in competing systems in the same area. He also agreed with what the hon. Member had said with regard to wires carried over private ways. As Postmaster General, he had considerable difficulty in fixing up telegraph wires on private property. He thought that in these matters they attached too much importance to private interests when they came in conflict with the interests of the community at large; and he would be glad to see larger powers conferred on the Department for overcoming these difficulties—fair and reasonable compensation being, of course, paid for any inconvenience that might be caused, or damage done to property. He now came to the scheme as introduced under the late Government respecting Army Reserve men and telegraph messengers. The plan relating to the latter was, that telegraph messengers who entered the Service at the age of 13 or 14 should, upon reaching the age of 18, be turned out of the Service unless they consented to serve with the colours for five years. If they consented to serve, they were to have the right of re-entering the Service as postmen at the end of five years. Now, a number of parents had written to him protesting against this plan, and he had in consequence asked for Reports from the postmasters of Manchester, Glasgow, Liverpool, Birmingham, and other large towns as to the working of the system. The Reports which he received were almost unanimous in declaring that the boys who were entering the Service were less efficient as a class and inferior in many respects to the boys who entered under the old system, and also that it was difficult to obtain a sufficient number of them. In these circumstances, he would have incurred very considerable responsibility if he had allowed the new system to continue. The scheme which gave Army pensioners and Reserve men who wished to become postmen precedence over other applicants remained in full force. He thought the working of the rule would require watching, but at present he saw no reason to depart from it, and had no intention of doing so. With regard to the appointment of sub-postmasters, the facts were not as stated by the hon.

Member for Hereford. The Postmaster General had no power to appoint to these sub-offices except on the nomination of the Treasury. The hon. Member complained that he, as Member, received no communication in respect to one of these appointments made in his constituency. He was afraid the hon. Member would receive no communication of that sort under the present Government unless he came over to the Government side of the House. He did not defend the system. Indeed, as Patronage Secretary, he had been opposed to the system; but it was a system that had been in force for many years. In these cases the nominations were made by the Patronage Secretary, and he was bound to appoint on these nominations, provided that the persons and the houses were suitable, and that no damage would be done to the Public Service by the appointments. In regard to the particular case mentioned by the hon. Member, he had had a Memorial from the locality, and he ordered a careful Report to be made on the subject. He found that the Public Service would not be injured by the appointment of the person nominated, and he had, therefore, no option but to appoint him. With regard to telephone charges, comparison had been made by the hon. Member for Canterbury between London and such towns as Stockholm and Melbourne. It would be fairer, he thought, that the comparison should be with towns like New York or Paris. In New York in business houses the charge was £50, in residences £37. In Boston the charges were £37 and £28, and in Philadelphia £25 and £21. In these three towns, therefore, which were smaller than London, the charges were considerably higher than here. It had been suggested that the charge for portage in connection with telegrams might be done away with. In view of the loss in the Telegraph Department, such a change could not be acceded to, involving, as it would, a surrender of Revenue estimated roughly at between £30,000 and £40,000. In the course of the discussion some conundrums had been put to him respecting the charges for compound words in telegrams. He thought he might be excused if he did not answer them in detail. In regard to the anomalies arising in reference to the words "mother-in-law," "upstairs," "downstairs," the rule was that the

dictionary should be followed. But the words in question were each counted as one. "Downstairs" did happen on a certain occasion to be charged for as two, but the hon. Member was informed that this was due to a mistake on the part of a subordinate official, and not to any ruling of the Department. Yet he here accused the Department as though this explanation had not been given. Then, as to the names of the streets, which were under the control of the people in the localities, compound names were treated as forming separate words; but when the compound word formed the name of a town or village over which the inhabitants had no control, then the name was charged as one word. There were, doubtless, some anomalies, but it was difficult to lay down a general rule applicable to all cases. With regard to the extension of the Postal Telegraph Service in the country, the last point to which he had to refer, he could quote some figures which would show that the Department were doing their best to meet the increased demand. The number of additional telegraph offices opened in the year 1888-89 was 221; in 1889-90, 321; in 1890-91, 275; in 1891-92, 349; in 1892-93, 561; and this year, from April 1 to September 20, 450. During the latter period of six months, therefore, a larger number of offices had been opened than in any full year preceding that period, except last year, and this was a proof that substantial progress was being made in that direction. He had explained the case of Mr. Dunford some time ago. He had looked carefully into the case, and he did not think it was a case of injustice in the selection made. He was selected because he had special qualifications. He thought he had now answered all the questions put to him.

Resolution agreed to.

Resolution 18.

"That a sum, not exceeding £5,140,175, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Post Office Services, the Expenses of Post Office Savings Banks, and Government Annuities and Insurances, and the Collection of the Post Office Revenue."

*MR. HENNIKER HEATON said, it was with no light heart he rose to criticise the Post Office Estimates, but he could not consent to remain silent when

there were submitted to them these outrageous and shameless demands of the officials. Three years ago the postmen commenced an agitation for increased pay, and Mr. Raikes, who did him the honour of consulting him, agreed to give them the enormous sum of £100,000 increase. The result of that concession was that every official, high and low, claimed an increase, and to-day they were asked for £600,000, of which £420,000 was for increased salaries. There were 70,000 permanent officials in the Post Office, and this divided would give £6 extra per head. No one would accuse him of want of sympathy for, or of liberality towards, public servants. But he was sure that hon. Members generally, even those who were least disposed to pry narrowly into the details of Public Service expenditure, had, like himself, been staggered to find that they were asked to grant a total increase of more than £600,000 on the three Postal Votes; and they were told by the Secretary to the Treasury that this increase in expenditure was far more than "could be hoped to be met by growth of Revenue." The Chancellor of the Exchequer was equally astonished. He said, in his Budget speech—

"As to the Post Office expenditure, that is an abyss which no plummet can sound."

Now, they would like to hear from the Chancellor of the Exchequer and from the Postmaster General how they intended to meet the difficulty. They confessed they had not seen the end of this increase of expenditure. What had the public got in comparison? Some beggarly concessions valued at £16,000, as against £422,000 granted for salaries. It was idle to pretend that this augmentation was inconsiderable. It would be found that the percentage of salaries to total Revenue had risen from 34 in Mr. Raikes' time (three years ago) to 39. They were, in fact, paying about £500,000 more for salaries than in 1890. They were told that much of this was an "automatic" increase. But he ventured to lay it down as an elementary maxim of Post Office finance, or of any other finance, that an automatic increase of expenditure must never exceed, as in this case, the automatic increase of Revenue. He had no wish to be accused of want of liberality towards the servants of the

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Post Office in the matter of wages, but the people of the country, who had to bear this burden, ought also to be considered. The proposed increase practically meant the addition of 1d. to the Income Tax. The normal increase of the Postal Revenue was equal to £200,000 a year, but the increased demand in the Estimates of this year was equal to three years' normal increase of Revenue. It was useless, however, to expect to cope with the question unless both sides of the House co-operated to make it one of a non-Party character. He repeated, that the automatic increase of expenditure of the Post Office should not exceed the automatic yearly Revenue. It was not a popular thing to resist the demands of the Post Office officials, but he thought the question of the increased demand ought now to be dealt with. It was said that the money given to the officials was not fairly divided, and that some got more than their share while others got less. Under those circumstances, he thought the Postmaster General would have been well advised if he had appointed a Committee of Inquiry into the matter. He proposed at this point to set out various suggestions for the improvement of the Postal Service, and to quote a few of the letters which he had received in support of such suggestions. Thousands of business men were asking, indignantly, why they had no Anglo-American Parcel Post. For a good many years he had been trying to get a Parcel Post established with the United States, but in vain. Although they had a Parcel Post to nearly all parts of the civilised world, they had none to the United States, their natural ally; and yet the Americans did 50 per cent. of their foreign trade with us. Who was to blame? The American and British Governments threw the responsibility on one another. The late Postmaster General, to justify his Department, invited him to move for the Correspondence, and he did so. It showed an utter want of the qualities required for such a negotiation on the part of the British officials. Their attitude could only be characterised as childish, and their objections as trifling and uncalled for. Judging from the American documents in this Return, he would undertake to settle the matter satisfactorily in 30 days. It was a significant fact that the United States,

though unable to effect an arrangement with us, had established a Parcel Post with seven or eight of our Colonies, including Jamaica, Barbados, the Leeward Islands, British Honduras, &c. He would now say a few words about the harsh rule under which, while letters were re-directed free, a charge was made for the re-direction of all other matter. To show the spirit in which it was interpreted, he might mention that the word "letter" was held not to include a letter-card. Here was a complaint—

"9 Bedford Street,

"Belfast,

"8th June, 1892.

"I venture to address you with regard to the re-direction of postcards, although I daresay you are probably aware of the fact that, whilst 'the charge for re-direction of letters has been abolished, postcards, book packets, &c. are still liable to re-direction charge when the second address is not within the same free delivery as the original.' This information has been supplied to me by the Post Office here in connection with the sur-chargement of a postcard delivered at my house a few days since. It may, of course, be quite reasonable that for the present book packets as well as post parcels should be charged for, but it does seem to be a rather miserable reservation that postcards should not be placed in the same category as letters."

Men accustomed to the plain, broad principles of trade could not put up with these pettifogging distinctions. Here was a typical protest—

"From Charles Moon,

"Turn Bridge Mill,

"Huddersfield.

"Having carried business on at King's Mill for about 20 years, I removed some few hundred yards to this Mill about one and a-half years ago. I gave notice to the Post Office here of my removal. I have been engaged extensively in business in this town for close on 30 years, and my name being rather uncommon, and perhaps not another family of the same name in the borough, the letter sorters could in one-half the time they occupy themselves in re-directing halfpenny stuff which is mainly refused, put these amongst my batch of letters. You will easily understand, my name having got into a number of Directories, I have a large number of Prospectuses, Circulars, &c. which are simply no earthly use to me whatever, and I have had to begin and refuse these re-directed things, and I find I am occasionally refusing invoices, &c. of importance. I thought the Post Office, being a Public Institution, would be governed by common sense and for the public benefit, but under Radical control I find it is adopting fads which are against the true interest of the public."

This rule was specially odious in the eyes of mercantile men; and one of them dealt with the history of it as follows:—

"From Mr. Leonard Dobbie,

"23, Kilmaurs Road,

"Edinburgh.

"Last July, as you are, of course, aware, the charge for re-direction of letters and their delivery at another address in any part of the Kingdom was 'subject to regulations,' after proclamation over the length and breadth of the country, abolished. The wording of *The Postal Guide* as to re-direction was altered to suit this change, but at the same time all reference to the new address, in cases of re-direction, being within the same postal delivery, was removed. Then two months later, as regards Edinburgh, and without a single word of warning, a charge was imposed on delivery, the same as the original prepaid postage, of all communications other than letters, re-directed and delivered at a new address, even although the letter was situated within the same postal delivery, and in my own case, even when 'after removal,' my new permanent address was only four doors off from my old one, and in the same street. The much-lauded 'concession' made with the right hand concerning letters was thus more than counterbalanced by the hole-and-corner withdrawal by the left hand of a privilege concerning all other communications of many years' standing, which, after all, is only a small privilege compared with what other civilised countries enjoy. I respectfully submit to you, however, that it is a disgrace to the British Post Office."

The trick was exposed in greater detail by another correspondent, who said—

"Letters, postcards, news, books, commercial papers, and samples, coming from a country of the Union, can, of course, be re-directed free. Until the 31st May, 1892, free re-direction was applicable to all postal articles, provided that it was effected by means of a servant of the Department, and that the new address lay within the delivery of the same office that the old one did. For this purpose the whole of the London District counted as within the delivery of the same office. On the 28th May, 1892, directions appeared in *The Post Office Circular* to the effect that on and after the 1st June letters would be re-directed free, but that the usual charges would be maintained in the cases of all other articles, with a temporary exception in favour of all such as were already the subjects of application for re-direction under the old rules, which exception was to last a year, i.e. applicants who had already given notice of removal received their newspapers, &c. without charge, for a year within the same delivery. The limit of the exception held good for articles except parcels, in favour of which that which had been a temporary exception was confirmed as an established rule. This was some time in the latter half of 1892. Hence the present Rules allow free re-direction for all letters, and a localised, limited one for parcels."

Again, a gentleman connected with a well-known firm gave a case of glaring injustice—

"From J. Schweppe and Co., Limited,

"126, London Road, Liverpool,

"22nd June, 1893.

"The writer has been in the Westgate, Huddersfield, and the difference between the

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numbers 12 and 27 is that one is very little higher up on the other side. If we had put no number on the letter it would have been delivered. We have acknowledged the Postmaster's letter, and told him we think it a gross abuse of a Regulation meant to meet quite different circumstances than those of a well-known tradesman moving his business in a small street."

He now passed to the chequeseparating rule which, by the exaction of a high fee, prevented the registration of millions of letters. It was to be regretted that the Postal Authorities had fixed so high a charge as 2d. for the registration of a letter. Out of the total of 1,767½ millions of letters posted in 1892 only 12,000,000—or 1 in 417—were registered. With a 1d. fee this number would be at least trebled, and the heavy loss in stolen postal orders, to say nothing of the temptation to the *employés*, would be done away with. Let the House hear what a correspondent had pithily said on this head—

"The registration question is also of commercial importance. If we had 1d. registrations, and each letter registered per head, the office would gain gross £63,000: as it is, registration is at a standstill, while *rubbery* goes ahead."

Here was another illustration of the disfavour in which the very idea of registration seemed to be held at the Post Office—

"From Herbert Bramley and Son,

"6, Paradise Square, Sheffield,

"18th August, 1893.

"We beg to draw your attention to the Regulation laid down in *The Post Office Guide*, page 14, paragraph 4, for the registration of letters, which runs as follows:—Every article to be registered must be given to an agent of the Post Office, and a receipt obtained for it; and it must on no account be dropped into a letter box. If, contrary to this rule, an article marked "registered" be dropped into a letter box, it will, if directed to any place in the United Kingdom, be liable to a registration fee of 6d., less any amount prepaid for registration, instead of the ordinary fee of 2d. And to give you an example of the working of this particular regulation when a 'registered' letter is posted against the rule: On Monday last, the 14th instant, our office boy, by mistake, posted a 'registered' letter marked 'registered' duly stamped with the registration fee of 2d., and 1d. for ordinary letter postage, in the usual way, by dropping it with other letters into the box at the Sheffield General Post Office; and, although our firm is well-known at the Post Office, and the envelope in which the letter was enclosed bore our full names and address on the back, the letter was surcharged 6d. Had the letter been posted without having had the word 'registered' on it, or with only a 1d. stamp on it as an ordinary letter, it would have been duly forwarded with-

out surcharge, or even if the letter had been posted unstamped and not marked 'registered' the surcharge would only have been 2d."

Among the Regulations which seemed to have been ingeniously devised for the express purpose of worrying trade was that fixing the minimum of the Pattern or Sample Post at 1d. A book-packet weighing two ounces might be sent for $\frac{1}{2}$ d., but a sample weighing two ounces cost 1d. An enterprising manufacturer, who desired to scatter broadcast small shreds of linen as patterns, had thus to face an expenditure for postage of nearly four guineas per 1,000 shreds. He naturally shrank from submitting to such extortion, and refrained from pushing his trade. On this subject, a valued correspondent (Mr. J. H. Rawlins, of 15, Kelvin Grove, Liverpool) wrote—

"The restoration of the $\frac{1}{2}$ d. sample post to the world-wide $\frac{1}{2}$ d. which we paid for two ounces for a whole year from 1870 to 1871 is necessary for trade purposes. It is not quantity or weight that is the main object in sending samples, and two ounces are generally ample. At present, a two-ounce sample sent to the nearest English town costs as much as to the Pacific."

And Messrs. Richardson, Tee, Rycroft, & Co., manufacturers, 3, Portland Street, Manchester, said—

"By the same post we received the two letters enclosed [orders for linen goods]. Both were surcharged, on the ground that, having a pattern attached, they became liable either to the full letter-rate, or to the pattern-post rate, the lowest of which is 1d. Our contention is that the small pattern attached to an order is an essential part of that order, and cannot by any stretch make it into a letter. And that it cannot be subject to pattern post, because it is not a sample sent to induce a purchase, but merely a description in an order. One of the enclosed orders is a form, containing the printed name and address of a firm, and the words, '1 piece 48-inch apron linen to pattern 8d.—1s. 4d.' It was posted in an open envelope, with a $\frac{1}{2}$ d. stamp. The envelope is marked 'Liable to letter-rate pattern—1d.' The other order is a similar one, and the envelope is similarly marked. In my opinion, it never occurred to the official gentlemen who framed the Post Office Regulations that anybody would wish to enclose a sample when ordering goods, and, consequently, no provision was made for such a case. The remedy, obviously, is to extend the privilege of the Pattern Post to the enclosing of patterns with orders."

Finally, Mr. A. J. Tonkin, Park Street, Bristol, wrote—

"When you are successful in getting your Committee to revise the Postal Regulations in the public interest, will you try and get them to include traders' samples of materials at circular rates? At present, a trader selling

paper of any description, or cardboards, can send samples by $\frac{1}{2}$ d. rate, and print prices on. But if it be a linen—as pattern enclosed—or a woollen material, it is not allowed this privilege. It seems the $\frac{1}{2}$ d. rate may be extended to fabrics with advantage to all parties."

It was impossible to contemplate with patience the effects of the Regulations respecting the registration of newspapers. In order that a publication might be "registered," and thus become transmissible by post at the cheap $\frac{1}{2}$ d. rate, two 17th century conditions must, amongst others, be complied with—

"1. The publication must consist wholly, or in great part, of political or other news, or of articles relating thereto, or to other current topics, with or without advertisements.

"2. It must be printed and published in the United Kingdom, and in numbers at intervals of not more than seven days."

Both of these absurd Rules, based upon a legislative enactment, would long ago have been abolished, with the newspaper Stamp Duty, the tax on paper, and other hateful imposts, if the Departmental Chiefs had only taken a firm stand on the question with the Treasury. The effect of them was to place a formidable obstacle in the path of those who disseminated useful and entertaining information in larger proportion than accounts of current events. A paper consisting wholly of market prices was, in effect, subsidised, while a religious, scientific, or educational periodical was fined at each appearance. Many proprietors of periodicals actually padded their columns with bald discussions of "current topics," so as to become qualified for registration. Thus the editor of *The British and Colonial Druggist* said—

"You may, perhaps, be amused to hear that, when special issues of this journal take place, we are obliged to increase the weight of each copy by about two ounces, in order that it may go at the newspaper rate. And, although this was brought to the notice of the Post Office officials by me years ago, the Regulation which compels this still continues."

Again, Messrs. Oscar Sutton & Co., of Preston, said—

"It is necessary to take out the tiny tissue paper pattern that is given as a supplement once a month with *The Queen* to prevent surcharge. It is stated on the front page of *The Queen*, 'Postage without pattern $\frac{1}{2}$ d., with pattern, $\frac{1}{2}$ d. or 5d.'"

Again—

"4, The Lees,
Folkestone.

"Dear Sir,—Another absurdity is, exacting a postage of 1d. on a monthly periodical, however small, because it is published monthly, instead

of weekly. A little paper weighing only 1 oz. if it be monthly is subjected to double the impost made upon that lumbering weekly paper, *The Field*. Now, both the foregoing instances appear to be so ridiculous and devoid of any reasonable support, that I trust you will be able to squeeze them in amongst the many reforms you are endeavouring to obtain for us. When I once wrote to Sir Arthur Blackwood, to point out the inconsistency of the charge as between the weekly and monthly periodicals, I could get no explanation, beyond confirming the fact

JOSEPH ALLEN."

"J. Henniker Heaton, Esq., M.P."

Once more. Mr. J. Williamson, of 290, High Street, Lincoln, October 17, 1890, said—

"I venture to trouble you with this short statement of a monstrous injustice and absurdity in a small way. I supply to the Branston Reading Room, as per enclosed wrapper, eight newspapers, and *Tit-Bits*, which I now for the first time discover to be not registered for transmission as a newspaper. These nine publications were in one wrapper. The four penny stamps cover the postage of the eight newspapers, and the $\frac{1}{2}$ d. stamp was to cover the *Tit-Bits*, which weighs under 2 oz. But on delivery the Post Office charges 6d. (sixpence) over and above the prepayment, because the *Tit-Bits* is not registered as a newspaper, and they say should not be in the same packet as newspapers, although, as stated before, it is actually within the weight. If done up separately, it is carried and delivered by the Post Office for the $\frac{1}{2}$ d. Therefore, the Post Office prefers the trouble of sorting and carrying and delivering two packets instead of one for the same remuneration—namely, 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. This is, surely, an outrageous piece of officialism and red-tape."

And, lastly, Mr. Mayson M. Beeton, of 39 and 40 Bedford Street, Covent Garden, London, W.C., December 6, 1890, wrote—

"I take the liberty of drawing your attention to the anomaly which exists in the charges made by the Post Office in the carriage of monthly as compared with weekly publications. The point is probably quite well known to you, and I think all agree that in any Bill for Post Office Reform the equalisation of rates should be one of the first things to be dealt with."

It had been pointed out how jealously the officials watched for anything resembling a "communication in the nature of a letter" on the cover of a newspaper. In one case the matter of fact details, "published every Saturday: One penny," "Offices: 2, Bridge Street; Works: Bankside, Darwen," were printed on the cover; and for bearing this announcement, each newspaper was pronounced liable to full letter postage. Surely absurdity could hardly be carried farther. When a man paid letter rate, he paid for the privacy of his communi-

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cation—there was no other consideration for the extra charge. In this case there was no attempt at concealment, and the matter printed was an essential part of the contents. The fine could not be regarded as a punishment intended to keep the address on the cover free from other matter, for it was distinctly divided from the space reserved for the address by two ruled lines. Moreover, the sender of a newspaper was already permitted to write or print on the cover "a reference to any page of, or place in, the newspaper." It seemed unreasonable that one might write on the cover: "See round seventeen of 'Great Fight,' top of p. 4," or "See Gladstone's peroration, bottom of p. 5"; and not "published every Saturday; one penny." Again, the "name and address of the sender" might, according to *The Post Office Guide*, be inscribed on the cover. In this case the publisher was the sender, yet he was not allowed to add his address. Into this trap many an unlucky publisher must have fallen. These were the particulars of the case referred to—

"Darwen, Aug. 15th, 1892.

"Dear Mr. Heaton,—We are having some bother with the Postal Authorities, and I told the Postmaster here that I intended communicating with you. The Post Office object to the enclosed wrapper. They say we have no right to put on the second and third lines, that it is contrary to the Rules, and that they must be obliterated. There may be an objection to the second line, but to the third any objection seems monstrous. Will you kindly tell me if the Post Office objection is fatal?

C. J. L. ABBOT.

The Darwen Post.

Published every Saturday, One Penny. Offices: 2, Bridge Street; Work: Bankside, Darwen."

The postage on newspapers sent to the Continent was a serious check on the circulation of the larger journals. Thus Messrs. W. H. Smith & Son, of 186, Strand, London, W.C., on the 25th February, 1890, wrote—

"Sir,—Our charge for supplying *The Times* on the Continent complete is £1 13s. per quarter, or with portion cut away to bring it under 4oz., £1 9s."

The next complaint needed no introduction. It would be seen that the Post Office Authorities regarded an old handbill, used for a newspaper wrapper, as "a communication in the nature of a letter," and fined the recipient 2d. Hitherto people had used such scraps for the sake of economy. The Department dis-

couraged such thrifty notions, and required a new special wrapping sheet in all cases :—

“ S. Mark’s Rectory,
“ Strandtown.
“ Belfast,
“ June 7th, 1892.

“ Dear Sir,—Knowing the good work you have done and still hope to do in connection with Postal Reform, I enclose you proofs of the petty annoyances and blackmailing we are obliged to accept at the hands of official incompetency. About 10 days ago I sent a newspaper to a lady resident in Frederick Street (or Place), Edinburgh. I used as a wrapper for this paper an old and quite out of date handbill, which I took from a waste paper basket. You will note on the companion handbill now enclosed that the date of this emergency wrapper runs between March the 26th and March the 30th, 1892. I also enclose the piece of the actual wrapper used by me, and used afterward by the Edinburgh Postal Authorities as a means for extracting a fine from the lady who received the paper. I do not suppose this charge has been legal, but I imagine similar fines have been and still may be imposed.”

This was the formal letter condemning the use of handbills—

“ From Sir S. A. Blackwood,
“ General Post Office, London,
“ 15th June, 1892.

“ Madam,—With reference to your application of the 12th instant, I beg leave to inform you that the Rule to which your attention has been drawn applies as much to printing or writing on the inside of the wrapper as to printing or writing on the outside ; and the fact of the printed side being turned inwards only makes the wrapper more difficult to examine. The use of handbills as wrappers for newspapers is clearly contrary to the Rule, and renders the newspapers liable to charge.

“ I am, Madam,

“ Your obedient Servant,

“ S. A. BLACKWOOD, Secretary.

“ Mrs. M. Hamilton.”

As the elephant’s trunk could be used to lift a tree-trunk, or to pick up a pin, so the Post Office, which netted millions of profits, did not disdain to reap a little extra from small fines. When an envelope, or cover, bearing an embossed stamp, had been spoilt, one was not allowed to cut out the stamp and paste it on fresh paper. Thus the Post Office was in the invidious position of accepting money for a service which it eventually refused to perform. But they could cut a stamp from one telegram form and use it for another. This grievance was succinctly dealt with by Mr. J. Loder, bookseller, stationer and printer, who wrote from Woodbridge, on March 6, 1890—

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“ Here is another official piece of nonsense. I spoil an envelope—I cut the stamp off and use it on another, and the recipient is fined 2d. Good, is it not ? ”

Of course, to the official mind such a rule was the perfection of wisdom and expediency. Thus Mr. Sifton, of the General Post Office, London, said, on 26th May, 1893—

“ In reply to your letter of the 19th instant, I am directed to inform you that the Post Office Act of 1870 (Sec. 19), provides that it shall not be lawful to affix to a letter, by way of prepayment of postage, an embossed stamp cut out from the cover on which it was embossed, and the Department has, therefore, no power to authorise the alteration which you desire. The Regulation was made with a view of preventing the use a second time of embossed stamps which might accidentally have escaped obliteration during transmission through the post, and it no doubt serves a useful purpose.”

After this, Mr. Sifton may be recommended to imitate the Judge who never gave reasons for his decisions. Another case of hardship to a poor man and meanness on the part of the Post Office was this : On September 30, 1892, M. bought two halfpenny newspaper wrappers from the Post Office for 1½d. He found he had no use for them, and, wishing to send a letter, he cut the two halfpenny stamps from the wrappers and pasted them on to a letter. This was against Postal Regulations, and the receiver of the letter was fined 2d.—namely, 1d. postage and 1d. fine, and, in addition, the Postal Authorities stamped over and destroyed the ½d. stamps for which the sender had paid the Government 1½d. Mr. E. A. Phipson, Selby Oak, Birmingham, also wrote—

“ It really requires a lifetime to find out all the tricks which the ingenious officials of the Post Office take such pains in devising to entrap the innocent public. Only to-day I discovered that if a letter is sent in a newspaper wrapper the embossed stamp does not count. The letterpress on the wrappers is a masterpiece of cryptography, but the most natural and common-sense meaning is that, if a letter is enclosed, full letter rate must be paid. Otherwise, why does it not state that the original stamp is not available ? Yesterday I received the return half of a reply postcard with no less than two postmarks stamped on it at the receiving office so that only a small part of it was available for the reply. That this is an intentional device to limit the space is evident from the fact that no postmark was placed (over the writing) at the receiving office here.”

The following insistence on the letter, while transgressing the spirit of the law, would revolt a special pleader ; and the

fair complainant's censure was thoroughly deserved. The letter was from Miss Isabella M. Cooper, of All Hallow's Mission House, 127, Union Street, Borough, S.E.—

"I wrapped up a parcel of magazines in a halfpenny wrapper, and as I wished them to go by parcel post I added 2d., and took them into a post office. The officials there and in another refused to count the halfpenny on the wrapper as anything, and required the whole 8d. to be in adhesive stamps. I wrote to the General Post Office; the reply was, that was the rule. What possible difference can it make to the Post Office; for the same stamps are used for letters, books, and parcels? And the use of a wrapper is a convenient way of doing up some parcels. I trust your efforts to make the Post Office Authorities more reasonable will be successful."

With respect to the lady's question—"What possible difference can it make to the Post Office?" he pointed out that it derived some profit from mistakes of this kind, made by the unwary. Here was another case from Dr. John Brown, of Burwood House, Bacup, June 3, 1893, who wrote on the same subject—

"The following occurred a few days ago:—My brother-in-law lost a boy, and wrote a letter to convey the sad intelligence of his death. Having no penny postage in the house, and the Post Office being closed, he cut out a penny stamp from a letter card which he had, and gummed it on. I was charged 2d., because it is not 'lawful to affix' a stamp from an embossed stamp. It is manifestly dishonest to charge me 2d. when the Post Office have already been paid 1d. My brother-in-law was ignorant of the law, and I was mulcted in 2d., but I refused the letter and wrote to my brother-in-law, and had a reply next morning. The Post Office Authorities had the pleasure of taking the letter back for nothing."

He had now arrived at the subject of the innumerable petty fines imposed for slight breaches of the Post Office Regulations. Perhaps there was no Regulation which earned so little revenue and so much hatred for the Department as that prescribing a fine where a corner of the stamp or of the cover on a bookpost packet happened to adhere to the paper enclosed. Here was a specimen of the letters sent him on this subject. It was from Mr. A. H. Maxwell, of Glenlair, Dalbeattie, N.B.—

"A parcel of tracts addressed to a relative per bookpost, and weighing under 6oz., bears the following postal imprints:—'More to pay, above 4 oz. letter rate, 2d.,' and 'closed contrary to regulations, N.P.R.' Now the whole affair is a falsehood. The packet is in a wrapper, and open at both ends—nothing whatever is

closed. I have often in a newspaper wrapper put the stamp so that it might help to keep the wrapper on, and never heard that such adhesion was a closure; but you can judge for yourself the inference drawn. A book-packet becomes a letter, apparently because the penny stamp is partly outside the wrapper. I do not think I have ever met with a more odious attempt at imposition."

The Postmaster General seemed to think it was sufficient to urge that a Treasury Minute prescribed the fine. But the Treasury always consulted the Post Office in such matters, and, if he chose, he could get this and many other irritating Rules abolished to-morrow. Again, Messrs. F. Charles & Co., Advertising Agents, sent a similar case of meanness—

"The following may interest you as a piece of absurdity on the part of the Post Office, which is probably unequalled in any civilised country. We get daily a large number of newspapers, among other things a copy of *The Hull Daily News*, a little halfpenny paper. In the copy delivered to us to-day, probably through hasty work in doing up, or through a damp letter bag, or by the stamp of the Post Office, one corner, measuring about a quarter of an inch, of the wrapper, slightly adhered to the newspaper itself. It was, therefore, tendered to us with the charge of 2d., as not being open to inspection. A more grotesque and wilfully malicious action on the part of the Post Office we cannot imagine. Assuming the paper being a file copy, it were taken in by us, we should have to pay, plus the 1d. already on it, four times that sum. The chief feature of interest, however, is, that this shows that the Post Office Authorities go a long way out of their way to create difficulties, and go to an immense needless expense in the course of the year; firstly, in looking through every newspaper to see that in no case the stamp stands on the paper to the extent of a 16th of an inch, or that the wrapper of a 1d. newspaper, of which thousands are posted at a time, has not been crookedly folded to the extent of a 16th of an inch, and thus adheres to the paper; and, finally, it cannot but create dissatisfaction on the part of a sender and receiver, and all for what purpose? Simply because the Post Office are too lazy, if they want to inspect the paper, to inspect it by putting the 16th part of a finger against the little corner which adheres to the paper, and thus raising it, and gaining the inspection they want."

Again, Joseph Peacock, 31 Parliament Hill Road, Hampstead, London, N.W., on March 15, 1893, wrote—

"I recently received a single copy of *The Scottish Leader*, containing the announcement of the death of an old friend, and for which you will observe I was charged 3d. in addition to the 1d. stamp put on by the sender. I called at the North West District Post Office to ascertain why this extra charge was made, and was informed that it was because the 1d. stamp was affixed partly to the wrapper and partly to the newspaper, thus closing it against inspection

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and making it liable to double the letter rate. This does seem a very vexatious regulation."

He would now give illustrations of the nice distinctions drawn by the official who prescribed to the various postmasters what fines should be levied. He thought he had cured the Post Office Authorities of the habit of fining the public for politeness, such as the use of the words "please," or "esteemed" (order) in book-post matter. However, he had received the following complaint, which showed them to be incorrigible:—"Nearest can do to order" at the foot of an invoice would go for a halfpenny postage. "Nearest we can do to your order" at the foot of an invoice was "of the nature of a letter," and required 1d. postage, or was surcharged. "Why do the Post Office tax pronouns?" he was asked. He was unwilling to add a word to this pathetic inquiry. Another Draconic Ordinance was the one providing that double the deficiency should be exacted from the receiver of an insufficiently paid letter. Being unable to punish the real offender, the sender, the postal officials visited his negligence on the innocent receiver. So the Arab in the proverb, having been beaten by his master, revenged himself by kicking a stray dog, which, being afraid to retaliate, bit a passing child. There could be no justification for levying more than the actual deficiency. The following was a typical letter on this subject—

"Dear Sir,—As you are the recognised champion of sufferers by Post Office extortion, I hope you will soon take up the question of the unjust practice of charging over-weight double deficiency. This morning I received a letter from Christiania, the weight of which is $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. plus 3-40 oz. I, the innocent receiver, am charged 5d. for the neglect of the real culprit (the sender) to affix an additional 20 öre stamp (value 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.). I cannot be expected to spend an additional 1d. on a foreign postcard to demand this overcharge of 5d. from the party who has let me in for it, particularly as she is my wife's aunt, who sends me the formal announcement of her daughter's approaching marriage with a young captain in the Norwegian Army. I should, perhaps, willingly pay the Post Office 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. for this interesting news, but why 5d.? The system of overcharging doubly for deficiency ought to be put a stop to, or the penalty laid on the real offender

"Believe me, dear Sir,

"Yours very truly,—

"The surcharges on letters for the U.S.A. are very irritating. We have to pay some by every mail—sometimes 4s. 6d. on a single letter. Moreover a 1d. inland registration fee and a

$\frac{1}{2}$ d. inland $\frac{1}{2}$ -oz. trade-price circular rate interest us in particular."

He was quite willing to agree to a fine of $\frac{1}{2}$ d. on inland letters, and 1d. on foreign letters, but thought it monstrous to charge double the deficiency; for, say there was 1s. short, the fine would be 2s. Every effort was made to increase a fine when one had to be paid. Colonel Clementi, of 1, Mornington Avenue, West Kensington, January 19, 1893, wrote—

"The letter, the cover of which I enclose, was just over-weight; the deficient postage was, therefore, 20 pfngs. But how the Post Office can turn 20 pfg. into 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ d., and so charge 5d. for delivery of the letter, I cannot understand. The result is that the Post Office make, and I am defrauded of, something over 1d. by their method of calculating exchange. Surely it is time that this system of punishing receivers of letters for the errors, inadvertent or otherwise, of the writers of them, should be abolished."

No mercy was shown in fining the recipients of newspapers insufficiently stamped. The Department would fain suppress periodical literature altogether. Thus W. H. Everett and Son, Salisbury Square, Fleet Street, London, E.C., wrote on March 28, 1892—

"Whenever by accident a newspaper gets through without the $\frac{1}{2}$ d. stamp being affixed it is mysteriously transformed into a book and double the letter rate surcharged, so that we frequently have to return to our customers from 8 to 20 times the amount for which originally the Post Office were willing to transmit it. We have pegged away on this question for years, the only result being that we learn that when the proprietors attend to register a newspaper they sign an agreement in which a clause is inserted that this course shall be adopted in case of omission to prepay. Any refusal to sign would of course mean that the paper would not be registered. Consequently, we have to suffer, although we are no parties to this unfair compact."

One of the most obstinately persistent postal perversities was the dead set made at all kinds of "halfpenny business," as it was elegantly called. This was probably connected with the Secretary's mistaken belief that there was a loss on all such business. Not content with refusing to Englishmen the privilege enjoyed by foreigners of sending any card of the proper size through the post with a $\frac{1}{2}$ d. stamp on it, the Authorities had drawn up a bewildering list of 46 different charges for postcards, the smallest being $\frac{3}{4}$ d. for a single card. The term "halfpenny postcard" was, in fact, a misnomer in this country; our

Post Office knew of a $\frac{3}{4}$ d. postcard (the smallest and dearest in the world), but nothing so vulgar as a $\frac{1}{2}$ d. could be tolerated. When postage stamps were introduced, the clerks of the Department formally remonstrated against the indignity of being required to sell these tiny adhesive labels, at 1d. each, across a counter, "like any common grocer or draper." One would have expected this wealthy Administration, whose thousands of croupiers were raking in gold for it by millions, would have disdained to wring an extra farthing from a poor man or woman applying for a postcard. But a corporation had neither a nose to be pulled nor a conscience to be pricked. The following letters might here be read :—

"Last year 217,000,000 cards were delivered, of which thick and thin were half and half. The one weighs 4 lbs. for every 1,000, and the other about thrice that weight, and the average will be about 8 lbs. The size is the smallest of 20 offices in various countries. The actual weight of paper in the 217,000,000 cards, at 8 lbs. per 1,000, is close on 1,750,000 lbs., which, at 3d. per lb., is about £22,000. But the sum charged over postage at $\frac{3}{4}$ d. for every 10 will be found to be over £66,000, or treble for the small cost of printing large sheets with the stamp, &c. It is a very large margin. The paper is, or was, entirely supplied from Germany, and the thick cards will be found, on burning them, as I have done, in a platinum crucible, to contain $22\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of china clay. The thin cards are less 'loaded,' as it is termed in the trade."

Mr. R. D. Williams, of Bristol, wrote—

"May I draw your attention to the fact that postcards are only obtainable in tens and at an extra charge of $\frac{1}{4}$ d. or 1 per 10. This is a great hardship on poor people, to whom even the paper and envelope of a letter is an object. These cost 1d., stamp 1d.—2d.; 10 postcards, $5\frac{1}{4}$ d. Therefore, it is better, from a poor man's view, to buy an envelope, piece of paper, and stamp, though one postcard, value $5\frac{1}{4}$ d., would be sufficient."

Formerly many stationers brought their sheets of cards to be stamped as postcards (paying the Government the face value of the stamps, and a charge for stamping), and then sold these postcards to the public at lower rates than those fixed for the sale of the official postcards. As the Department made a profit on its postcards, the sale of stationers postcards was stopped by the simple process of increasing the charge for stamping them. Now, if the stationers had a right to sell their cards, the Department was clearly acting unworthily in depriving

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them of that right by a trick of this kind. A letter on the subject came from *The Midland Counties Herald* Office, Birmingham—

"February 27, 1891.

"Until the Postmaster General reduced the price of quantities of postcards issued by the Post Office the Inland Revenue Department printed 'private cards' at 9s. per gross of boards—that is per 6,048 cards, as 42 cards are printed on each board (42 by 144 equals 6,048). But simultaneously with the announcement of reducing the price of postcards issued by the Department, the Inland Revenue charge for printing 'private cards' was raised from 9s. per 144 boards (a gross) to 15s., a most monstrous charge, as we trust we shall be able to show you, and this has practically put a stop to the printing of 'private cards.' We are large printers, and we do good work, and we are prepared to guarantee that we would print official postcards sent to us in quantities at 1s. per gross (please observe the official price for printing 'private cards' is 15s. per gross); but as once the blocks from which the printing is done are 'made ready,' the actual cost to the Department, with a large profit, ought not to exceed 1s. per gross, which would yield a profit of 30 per cent. on the operation of printing. We should be very glad to undertake this work at these prices, and would give all necessary guarantees for the work being properly done."

A second letter was from Messrs. A. Ritchie & Son, 51 York Place, Edinburgh, on June 14, 1892—

"For many years we have been in the habit of sending cardboards to Somerset House, London, to be impressed; these boards contain 42 post cards on each, and the charge for printing the Government stamp has been at the rate of 1s. 6d. for 24 boards, in addition, of course, to the $\frac{1}{4}$ d. for each stamp. They now demand 2s. 6d. for every 24 boards, which raises the price considerably. We may mention that we print various forms upon these cards, and that we use a large quantity annually. Some time ago Government reduced the price of postcards from 8d. per dozen to 6d. for 10. They also issued an order requiring, as to all stationers who had been in the habit of sending cards to be stamped, that in future they must procure a licence. All this action seems to point to a complete monopoly, forcing us to use their cards and preventing us from meeting the requirements of our customers who desire a cheaper card. We would respectfully urge that this is against the principles of free trade, and an interference with the traders' rights. We have been in the habit for many years of sending various printed forms, such as receipts, &c., to be stamped, for which no charge is made, and we fail to understand why in the matter of stamping cards so prohibitive a charge should be made. What we desire is, that the old price for stamping—namely, 1s. 6d. for 24 boards—be charged, which seems more than sufficient to recoup them for actual cost."

He next gave a typical instance of what he called (borrowing from Sir A. Blackwood's vocabulary) "Post Office mean-

ness." It would be seen from the following correspondence with the late Postmaster General that our Postal Authorities, not content with an annual profit exceeding £3,000,000, had contrived to turn an honest penny by clipping the postcards which they supplied for transmission to foreign countries. To clip a postcard—the poor man's only vehicle of communication with his friends in the Colonies—was, to his mind, hardly less hateful than to clip the coin of the realm. The British postcard to send to foreign countries or the Colonies was sold to them (or was until lately, he was told) composed of 30 per cent. of clay; and it was at once the smallest and dearest sold in the Postal Union.

"House of Commons.

"Dear Sir James Fergusson,—A number of correspondents have written to me complaining, in more or less indignant terms, of the action of the Postal Authorities in reducing the size of the Postal Union 1d. postcard. I send you three of the letters. May I ask whether there is any difficulty in restoring the postcard to the size sold in foreign countries, or at least in keeping on sale a certain number of the larger size for those who specially wish them; and whether any advantage has been gained by reducing the size?—I remain, most obediently yours, J. HENNIKER HEATON."

"Post Office.

"Dear Mr. Henniker Heaton—In reply to your letter of the 19th instant, I should remind you that, until recently, three different rates of postage were chargeable in this country for postcards sent to places abroad—namely 1d., 1½d., and 2d. In carrying out the scheme of uniform postage to all places abroad, it was decided to abolish the 1½d. and 2d. postcard rates and make the 1d. postcards available to all destinations; but it was found necessary to accompany the concession with a slight reduction in the weight of the cards, the payments for the transit of cards through foreign countries and the Colonies being made by weight. In the two months of April and May during which the cards have been in use, six individuals have written to the Post Office on the subject of the reduced size; and the answer given by the Department has apparently been accepted as satisfactory, for nothing more has been heard from them. I am rather surprised, therefore, that you should have received many indignant letters on the subject. The size of the new cards was, of course, fixed with due regard to the reasonable requirements of the senders in the vast majority of cases. There is no reason to doubt that they satisfy those requirements. These explanations were given in answer to Mr. Webb in the House of Commons on the 12th instant, and I do not see my way to alter the size. The enclosure forwarded in your letter is returned herewith.—Believe me, yours sincerely, JAMES FERGUSSON."

"House of Commons.

"Dear Sir James Fergusson—In your letter on the subject of reducing the size of foreign

postcards, you express surprise at my having received many letters on the subject, and mention the fact that, during April and May, only six persons wrote to the Department, complaining of the change. This fact mentioned by you does not surprise or impress me. Some years ago, I called Mr. Raikes's attention to the numerous complaints as to the large number of missing illustrated and other journals posted for Australia and India. He retorted that only two complaints had reached the Department on the subject during a whole year. A few days afterwards I asked, from my place in the House, the actual number of illustrated and other newspapers posted to Australia which had been, on one ground or another (chiefly through being insufficiently stamped), stopped in the British Post Office and destroyed during the year in question. The reply was, 25,000! Yet the Postal Department officials said there were only two complaints. This might be interpreted as showing that the public, when annoyed by an oppressive Postal Regulation, recognises the futility of complaining to the framers and defenders of such Regulation. (At the same time, to my knowledge, the victims have, in frequent instances, made oral complaint at their local offices.) But the impression is generally prevalent that any complaint to the Secretarial Department at St. Martin's-le-Grand will merely produce one or more of those courteously worded, but inflexible, printed Circulars with which we are all so familiar. To obtain redress, or reform, public opinion must be brought into play. Your letter puts forward two explanations of the reduction in the size of these postcards. In one place it is stated that the size was 'fixed with due regard to the reasonable requirements of the senders,' the inference being, that the Department knows the requirements of the public better than the public itself, which complains of the reduction or clipping of the cards. Elsewhere it is admitted that the real reason of the change was the desire to reduce the weight of the cards and so to lessen the payments, calculated according to weight, for the transit of the cards through foreign countries. I confess I do not appreciate this objection. Even if the weight of the old and favourite card were to affect the payments for carriage to any notable extent, they might surely have been brought down preferably by employing a lighter material, or, better still, by inducing Foreign Governments to revise their scale of transit charges. In the case of a post card, the space for writing is so limited, that any diminution of it largely impairs the usefulness of the card. And I would urge, with much deference, that the Public Service should be the paramount consideration, and that the convenience of the public should not, in the smallest detail, be sacrificed in order to effect a petty economy.—Believe me, yours most sincerely,

J. HENNIKER HEATON."

He had long urged the Department to permit the transmission through the post of any card whatever of the Regulation size, bearing an adhesive halfpenny stamp. By adopting this plan the Post Office would save many thousands a year, since they would be free from the neces-

sity of providing postcards, the manufacture of which cost £283 per million. On this subject he read the following letter, one out of a great number, to the same effect :—

“Dunmore, County Galway.

“Sir,—I perceive by the Parliamentary Reports in the daily papers that you are making a determined fight in the interests of the public with the Postmaster General, and that, in one instance at least, there is a possibility of his yielding to your pressure—namely, to allow the use of private postcards with an adhesive halfpenny postage stamp attached. About 12 months since it was freely mentioned in the newspapers that the Postmaster General had sanctioned this concession, and on the face of such statements I got a large parcel of cards printed for my own commercial use. (I enclose you a specimen card.) In so doing I was sadly doomed to loss and disappointment, as the Postal Authorities declined to allow them to pass. Thanking you for your efforts to remedy this vexatious grievance,

“Yours faithfully,

“M. McDONNELL.”

Mr. Rawlins, of 15, Kelvin Grove, Liverpool, said—

“As a paper-maker, I can state that the material of the 217,000,000 cards, averaging 8lbs. to the 1,000, only costs the Government £22,000. But they receive (for thick and thin cards) £66,000. The thick cards contain 22½ per cent. of china clay.”—Mr. Rawlins's letter to *The Liverpool Mercury*.

“The size is the smallest sold by 20 offices in various countries.”—Mr. Rawlins's letter.

Why, he asked, should the Government make a profit on selling stationery? They made £20,000 a year by selling postcards above their face value. The Post Office would not allow a slip of paper to be gummed on the face of a post card, though a slip with the address might be gummed on the back. How could a slip be objectionable on one side, and not on the other? Mr. C. Inman, of 4, Park Hill, Richmond, Surrey, said—

“24th June, 1893.

“It frequently happens to me, and most likely to others, that there is a short paragraph in a newspaper you would like to communicate to a friend or relative, but you cannot cut it out and gum it to a postcard, for it is ‘Contrary to Regulations,’ though you may print as much as you like. An extract on a postcard would be much less weight than a newspaper for their servants to collect and deliver.”

Another person was fined for gumming a chess problem cut from a newspaper on to a postcard. The most urgent reform in connection with Postal Orders was to prevent thefts of them while in

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course of transmission. In his opinion this could best be accomplished by adopting the *Mandat-Carte* used on the Continent, and recommended by the Postal Union. By this system the remitter purchased a card endorsed with the amount required; and that amount was delivered, together with the card, at the addressee's door. There was accordingly no risk of delay, fraud, or mistake. It should be possible to transmit Postal Orders from one part of the Empire to another. This reform, which was urgently needed in the interests of trade, and of the poorer classes here and in the colonies, seemed to be highly obnoxious to the Postal Authorities. The Colonial Governments would willingly agree to adopt a uniform type of Postal Orders such as was used throughout the United Kingdom. There was no great difficulty in the matter, for we already received and paid Postal Orders from at least seven British Possessions, including India. British orders were payable at Malta and Gibraltar. He pointed out also that while it cost only 1d. to remit 10s. from Hong Kong, India, or Newfoundland to England, it cost 6d. to remit 10s. from England to Hong Kong, India, or Newfoundland. The following letter puts the matter in a nutshell. H. J. L. wrote from Slough—

“Sir,—Postal Orders can be sent from India, Strait Settlements, Hong Kong, and Newfoundland to England, but not from England to those countries—see *Postal Guide* for July 1892. Time occupied for a letter from Hong Kong is about 40 days, and from Singapore to this country is about 36 days—not much less than from Sydney or Melbourne to justify the refusal of their use between Australia and England when it is granted to the other countries mentioned. One great security for the sending of Postal Orders would be that the issuing officer should write in the name of the town where alone it is payable, and if any alteration should be made in such name it should be refused payment until proper inquiries had been made respecting it.”

At a great conference of Australian Postmasters General this year, a memorial was drawn up to the English Postmaster General asking him to establish Postal Orders between Australia and England. A peremptory refusal was given. The only reason assigned was the fear of forgery, which reason would equally prevent the circulation of Bank of England notes. It was pure obstruction on the part of the English officials.

Mr. Alfred R. Wallace, Parkstone, Dorset, sent the following sensible suggestions :—

"I have been reading with interest and approval your article on Post Office Reforms, and wish to suggest for your consideration two other cases in which the present system seems to me irrational and needlessly complex. 1. In Postal Orders the cost and trouble to the Post Office is exactly the same in all sums from 1s. to £1. Why, then, should a different charge be made? The money is paid in advance, and balances from unclaimed or delayed Postal Orders must be constantly in the hands of the Post Office. At all branch Post Offices the receipts and payments of orders must average about the same, and I can see no sense whatever in making three separate charges—½d., 1d., and 1½d.—for sums between 1s. and £1. If ½d. covers cost of Postal Orders for 1s. 6d. it must do so for all amounts. If not, then the uniform charge should be 1d., and that should cover all amounts (to even sixpences) between 1s. and 20s., whether made up by one, two, or three orders. For Money Orders also the charges are most extravagant. They should be uniform—say, 2d. or 3d. for all sums from £1 to £10."

There was one common feature in all the diversified petty tyrannies practised by the Post Office on the public—they all tended to swell the Postal Revenue. The dodge exposed in the next missive was particularly neat, and specially profitable. A. M. W. wrote—

"As one of the many thousands who are already very grateful to you for your efforts for Postal Reform, I venture to acquaint you with a piece of 'sharp practice,' as I consider it, by which it seems the Department makes a gain by its own negligence. My servant yesterday at Charlbury Post Office asked for a Postal Order for 3s. They said they had none, and persuaded her to take one for 2s. and one for 1s. and pay 1½d. poundage, thus gaining ½d. As it was their fault, not hers, they should either have given her two for 1s. 6d. each, or, at any rate, not charged more than 1d. This is not the first time this trick has been played there. In your most amusing list of negligences which the late Postmaster General ought to have signed I do not think this particular grievance was mentioned. Though Parliament is not sitting, I give you the information to do what you like with."

On this he pointed out that it was to this day more expensive to send 9s. 6d. by Postal Order than 10s., and dearer to send 19s. 6d. than 20s. For five years the country had been complaining of this needless anomaly. He had also vainly urged the Postmaster General to issue guinea Postal Orders, which he declined to do. Very great convenience to the public would result from the adoption of a suggestion by Mr. Ernest Pitman—namely, that permission should be given

for the remittance of stamps up to the value of 11d. by sticking them on a postcard, to be afterwards removed and used, or cashed by the addressee. The commission on these small sums would be saved, and no trouble given to the Post Office. Mr. William Wicking, of 54 High Street, Sevenoaks, wrote—

"I would suggest that a useful change in the size of Postal Orders would result from reducing them in width to the size of this paper (large post 8vo). This could easily be done by increasing the depth very slightly. To business men this would be of value, as 90 per cent. of them use this size—consequently the order would just fit, instead of leaving the old piece to turn in. I send this to you instead of the Postmaster General."

The Post Office was rich and powerful enough to be able to acknowledge a blunder, and offer fair compensation; but this duty was only discharged in the most grudging and ungracious manner, and in no case without compulsion. The following letter from Mr. S. Watson, of 11 Dale Street, Liverpool, was addressed to the Postmaster General by Mr. Watson from Carlisle :—

"Sir,—I have received here a Post Office Order from the London Chief Office for £3 8s. 8d. This represents a Post Office Order for £3 9s. 0d. I sent to my son in Freiberg, Saxony, about 12th July last, which, however, never reached him, owing to some mistake on the part of the Post Office. In the letter handing the Order you say—'In compliance with your application, I enclose herewith a new order (less the usual commission) in exchange for the order transmitted by you.' This may be the official mode of covering a blunder, but it is not the fact. I asked for no new order, but simply a return of my money, owing to your error; and on this plea of 'exchange of order' you have the temerity to charge me a commission of ½d. As the mistake was purely that of the Post Office, and so admitted by the officials in Liverpool, I see no reason why I should be mulcted even to this small extent. I therefore claim back the ½d., and in addition 1s., the original commission charged for Order to Freiberg, as you did not fulfil your undertaking, and consequently did not earn it. Further, the non-recapit of the money was a matter of great inconvenience and expense, for my son, who was expecting it to cover part of his expenses home, had to telegraph the non-arrival, was detained a day or two, waiting for it, and I had to wire him what to do. In addition, therefore, to the 1s. ½d., I claim from you the cost of the wires to and from the Continent—14 words—which, speaking from memory, I think is 2d. a word, 2s. 4d., or say in all 3s. 8d. My case is so plain that I have no doubt you will recognise the justice of it at once; and I may observe that on mentioning it to Mr. Henniker Heaton, who is stopping here, he has kindly undertaken to take note of it, in case I am

troubled with any of the curious excuses or peculiar tactics of the Post Office."

He believed the average time taken by the Department to deal with a complaint of this kind was one month. In this case, however, the sum claimed was sent without demur within three days. Our Post Office was content to leave us without the means of remitting small sums to several important countries. Thus, *The British Quarterly Trade Review* said—

"There is no exchange of Post Office Orders with Argentina, Brazil, Greece, Mexico, Peru, Russia, Spain, and several other countries which do a considerable trade with England. As an instance of the delay and costliness of the existing arrangements, it may be mentioned that it usually takes from four to six days to transmit from the Continent the amount of the annual subscription to this journal, and at a cost, exclusive of postage, of from 10 to 15 per cent. of the total sum. The trade journals of this country have between them several hundred thousand foreign subscribers who are unjustly taxed in this way."

We might bear with equanimity the losses of foreigners here referred to, but, unfortunately, the evil cuts both ways, and our own people suffer still more than the foreigner. He wished now to direct attention to a rule plainly based on the theory that the public convenience was as nothing compared with that of the postal staff. A postal order could be obtained at any time while a post office was open; but a money order could only be had between the sacred hours of 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. The reason seemed to be that certain mystical entries and "advices" were required in the case of money orders. But this reason was a poor one. In the majority of cases the same clerk performed the money order business and the other business of the office, and was perfectly able and willing to issue money orders up to the last moment; but the clerk was bound hand and foot with red-tape. Of course, the result was that a great demand was created for postal orders, and the temptations to dishonest sorters and letter carriers were multiplied. He asked a question on this subject, but could obtain no promise of amendment. In yet another instance our officials lagged behind the age. He alluded to the unnecessarily high charge made for commission on foreign and colonial money orders of small amount. The smallest fee which the Department condescended

to accept was 6d., which covered the transmission of a sum not exceeding £2. Now it frequently happened that a person residing in this country wished to order a newspaper or other small article from a foreign country, or some place in the Colonies; or, as in the case put by his first correspondent on this subject, he might wish to ask a question and prepay postage on the reply. He had to pay in commission six times the price of the desired newspaper, or if he wished a sixpenny magazine, the commission increased the cost of it by about 100 per cent. The effect of this fleecing was to kill small trade of the description alluded to, and to place a further obstacle in the way of the circulation of the best colonial and foreign literature in this country. That it was sheer rapacity which prescribed these heavy fees was proved by the simple fact that very much lower—in fact, quite fair and reasonable rates—were charged by France in such cases. A second writer pointed out how injustice occurred in another way—by setting up a faulty standard of exchange. F. M., Boulogne, wrote—

"I wish to direct your attention to the excessive commission charged by the Post Office for small sums sent by Post Office Order abroad and to the Colonies. The commission remains the same whether the money order be for 2d. or £2; it is 6d.—rather a high rate to pay, 10 per cent. on a 5s. order; for small sums it is an official swindle. Fancy someone in England requiring an answer to a letter from Japan having to obtain a Post Office Order for 3d. and have to pay 9d. If I sent you 5s. from here it would cost me 6f. 30c., plus 10 cents (6f. 40c.—5s. 1½d.) the commission charged between France and other countries (with the exception of one or two), which I suppose is in force throughout the Union on the Continent at least, being at the rate of 1 per cent. It is an impost levied solely by the English Office, to which the Foreign Office is no party, nor does the latter benefit."

C. H. Bradford wrote—

"In the United States and Canada the commission on foreign money orders is 10 cents; in this country it is 6d. For Spain exchange is reckoned at 25 pesetas or francs per £, whilst exchange is quoted at 40½d. per duro or pesas of 5 pesetas or francs, a depreciation of 15 per cent. I can buy Spanish books from Spain direct (at less than) half the price at which they can be bought here. If I buy here, my choice is limited to the publication of one Leipsic house, mostly one author, and even here my choice is limited to perhaps half-a-dozen volumes. If I go beyond these, I must order unseen, and do not receive them more promptly. My opinion is, that the new measure only subserves the interests of a few dealers—plays into

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their hands. If this be the situation in Bradford, what must it be in other towns? No wonder the study of languages is in a backward state, where obstacles are met with at every turn."

If the public hit upon any device for accelerating the delivery of correspondence, not bearing the official *imprimatur*, it was promptly tabooed. Thus a gentleman wrote to him from the Carlton Club—

"Formerly I used regularly to send a stamped letter to the railway station, and 1d. with it, which was handed to the guard, and the guard took it straight on to his destination. Now a Regulation has been issued against this, and I have to pay 2d. to the railway authorities, besides the 1d. on the stamped letter, and they put a ticket on it, and it goes into their parcel office, and is often not delivered till several posts afterwards. In France and Germany, in all through trains there is a railway letter-box. Why cannot we have such a convenience attached to all our trains in this country?"

He went farther, and asked why should we not have a letter-box on every tram-car and omnibus, to be cleared at the terminus? The incredibly absurd Regulation referred to by the next correspondent would be found at page 35 of *The Post Office Guide* for July, 1893. The Rev. E. Ledger, of Barham Rectory, Claydon, Ipswich, wrote—

"One cannot send a letter by train with 1½d. on it to be posted, say, at Liverpool Street, and catch evening mails—i.e., one cannot put the extra ½d. on; it must only have 1d. on. Nor may I send a letter with, say, 2½d. on for a foreign country—though such a privilege is just what might make it worth while to pay 2d. for the railway carriage."

The privilege of sending a letter by railway, so as to save initial delay in sorting, &c., was largely impaired by the exaction of a fee of 2d. in addition to postage. A well-informed correspondent, Mr. H. J. Luff, of Arbour Vale, Slough, wrote on this subject—

"Respecting railway letters. There is one point I am desirous of mentioning—namely, that when I was striving many years ago to get the system brought into use, I adopted 1d. as the compensation to the railway. My reason was that they carry single copies of any newspaper between any two stations, irrespective of distance, for ½d., which must be prepaid by the sender affixing a stamp to the paper; and I thought if ½d. was sufficient for a newspaper, surely double that amount should be ample for a letter weighing not more than one ounce."

The existing arrangements between the Post Office and the Railway Companies should be inquired into; especially those

referring to the remuneration of the companies for the conveyance of mail matter, and their right of sending any number of telegrams from station to station without payment. What had been done in this direction? Did the old contract apply to new lines of railway? He would next devote a few words to a reform which had been of unspeakable value to business men in various parts of the world—the Cash on Delivery system. The Postmaster General would render a vast service to trade if he would persuade the Chancellor of the Exchequer to sanction the institution of this system. Under this, the postman who delivered a parcel of goods at the same time received the price of them, which was then paid over by the Post Office to the tradesman who sent them, a small commission being deducted. Every shopkeeper would hail the introduction of this plan, which was in full force in several great countries, including India. In Egypt, indeed, the Post Office actually collected bills and debts on commission. The advantages were obvious. Here was a picked, trained, trustworthy Civil servant passing every door in the Kingdom at least once a day. He was accustomed to the collection of fines for deficient postage, under Rules which rendered mistake or fraud impossible. All that was required was an extension of this existing system to the Parcel Post, and in a moment five-sixths of our tradesmen would be made independent of vans, porters, messengers, and carriers; while customers would receive their purchases more quickly. A post card would convey an order to a shop, and by return of post the book, or other article demanded, would, without further trouble to him, be laid on his table. No one would question that the Post Office Revenue would be largely swelled by the adoption of this reform; but there was a disposition among the officials to be alarmed at the possible growth of postal transactions, in this and other directions. So long as it was remunerative business, however, there was no need for alarm. He believed that in 1839 a postal official objected to Inland Penny Postage that the building at St. Martin's-le-Grand would not be large enough to contain the correspondence that might be expected. "Then it must be enlarged," was the reply. If there were one direction in which, by general

consent, the authorities had neglected their duty, it was in the postal service of rural, and especially out-lying, districts. From all directions complaints poured in of the neglect with which country residents were treated. Letters took a day to reach them from London, while London letters reached Paris or Brussels in eight hours. There were but one delivery and one collection a day, always at the most inconvenient hours. Thus he knew of one case in which the outgoing post started 20 minutes before the incoming one had arrived, so that nobody writing to that village could expect a reply until the next day, or third day. It was unwise to add to the disadvantages of provincial life. We all lamented the crowding of country folk into the congested centres of population; and here was the Post Office doing its best to drive the remaining population of our hamlets and farmhouses into the towns. Its policy should be to diminish the sense of isolation which now weighed on the countryman; to bring him into close connection with the intenser life that flowed through our streets, and to give him a greater share of the benefits which steam, electricity, and human energy had enabled the Post Office to confer. He should not, in a word, be punished because he voluntarily remained in a position wherein he rendered the State greater service than if he joined the swarms that overburdened the Metropolis and the great manufacturing boroughs. There was, moreover, a growing tendency in the postal administration to neglect the less remunerative branches of the Service. It seemed to be an established rule, for instance, that remote and sparsely-peopled localities should not be supplied with a telegraph office, unless the householders would guarantee the Department a certain sum per annum, and the consequence was that nobody who wished to keep in touch with the markets, or to feel the pulse of trade, would reside in such districts. Such a policy intensified the discomforts incidental to residence in out of the way places, kept away capital, and drove the labouring population into the towns in search of work. It was a policy unworthy of the country to which the world owed the electric telegraph, and of a Department which drew a clear profit exceeding £3,000,000 per annum

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from its business. He gave a few words from a country rector about this matter—

“Avering Rectory,
“Stroud, Gloucestershire.

“Dear Sir,—

“May I ask if you can kindly give me any facts, or other information, which would help me in an application to the Postmaster General for a telegraph office in this parish? We have a population of 804, mostly within a mile of our village office, and yet we have to send a distance of three miles for a telegram message, a savings bank, or a money order, while our own Post Office close at hand could afford us all these needed facilities. The Secretary of the General Post Office requires a guarantee of £28 before he will grant us a telegraph office. But the residents in the village decline to give the guarantee, on the ground that the General Post Office should give us this facility without a guarantee. Three of our residents have houses in London, from which they pay largely in telegrams. The Government make large profits out of the telegraph wires in the towns, and we think they should give our neglected villages the benefit of a slight share of those profits in a wire at Avering. Having heard that you take such interest in the working of the Post Office, I have not scrupled to trouble you with this letter.

“Yours faithfully,
“F. DE PARAVICINI.”

The following letter called attention to another example of the mischievous effects of Post Office blundering. It would be seen that, owing to the excessive charges made for the conveyance of parcels over small distances, trade was diverted from small country towns to the Metropolis, and the Postal Revenue was, on the whole, a loser. His correspondent's pathetic picture of the half-ruined tradesman seeking half-bricks, not to throw at his persecutors, but in order to make his parcels more ponderous, and so defeat the Regulations, ought to touch the hearts of the magnates at St. Martin's-le-Grand. Mr. G. W. wrote to him—

“Seeing your name so often in connection with reforms in the Postal Service, I have ventured to address to you a few lines with regard to a grievance which exists in the rural districts, particularly in connection with the Parcel Post. I am a tradesman in a country town, which is the centre of a large agricultural district, and, of course, what affects me in this respect affects my fellow-tradesmen in this and other small towns, and, probably, in large towns, too. I will give you one or two instances of how the Parcel Post works with us: Our customers in agricultural districts are widely scattered, extending, in most cases, as far as the limits of the rural postal district—say, six, seven or more miles in each direction. Supposing a customer of mine wants a particular article which can be got either from a local

tradesman or from London—a 7 lb. parcel would cost 1s. in coming from London. In this case the Railway Company would get 55 per cent. of the 1s., the remainder going to the Post Office. If the customer sent to the local tradesman—say, six miles—it would cost 1s.—just the same amount as from London; but the Post Office would get the whole 1s. This is, however, not the only difficulty, for the customer would receive the parcel from London as soon as he would from the local tradesman, because the letters or orders brought by rural postmen to the town are not delivered until next morning, after the rural postmen have left the town on their day's journey, and thus a day is lost; and the London tradesman, who will receive his letters at the same time, is on a level with tradesmen living only a few miles off. The following two cases happened to me last week: I had a parcel about 7 lbs. to send to a customer three miles away. The mail cart passes the door, but I could not send it for less than 1s. It so happened that the article was returned next day for a slight alteration, which cost another 1s., and had to be sent again after the alteration, costing still another 1s. The second case was similar in all respects, except that it was another postman, who said that if I would make it over 11 lbs. weight with a brick or stone he would take it for 3d. I could give you more cases, but hope these will give you some idea of how the Parcel Post works for country tradesmen. Previous to the Parcel Post being established, the rural postmen carried parcels—as many as they liked. Since the Parcel Post was started, it has been the custom here for the younger men to run the risk of carrying parcels under 11 lbs.; the older men have not dared to do so, on account of the risk of losing their pensions, but would carry them if made over 11 lbs. Lately, however, an Inspector has been here and given strict orders that all parcels under 11 lbs. must go through the post. It cannot be called anything but an imposition to charge 1s. to carry a parcel six miles, and carry the same parcel 300, 400, or 500 miles for something less than 6d., which is the Post Office's share after paying the Railway Company. Besides, why should tradesmen be put to the trouble and annoyance of having to seek bricks and stones to over-weight parcels? We are handicapped in the race with large centres like London, Manchester, &c. Uniformity of rates, as of everything else, is very beautiful in theory, but does not always work so well in practice; and this, I venture to suggest, is a case in point. Are the Post Office people the masters of the public, or are they the servants of the public? If the latter, I think it a great shame that in all these years there has not been, so far as I know, the slightest inquiry made into the working of the Parcel Post in rural districts, although it has been brought under the notice of the Inspectors. I hope, Sir, if we can only enlist your interest in the matter, you will be able to waken them up a little. I think it ought not to be a very difficult thing to adopt a local rate for short distances—say, where a parcel does not touch the railway, make the rate one-half of the present rate; have two prices for local parcels to make it more simple; carry a 6 lb. parcel for 3d., and 12 lbs. for 6d., and also arrange for a delivery of letters after

the rural postmen return from their journey. The most ridiculous part of the present system is, however, that the postmen can carry a parcel, no matter what weight it is, if only above 11 lbs., for 2d. or 3d."

It must be unpleasant for the Postmaster General to receive such letters as the one that followed. It was addressed to his predecessor, on June 1, 1891, by the Rev. C. H. Brocklebank, of Bolton Hall, Gosforth, Cumberland. After giving a list of delayed and missing letters, he proceeded—

"We have no post-box nearer than Gosforth, more than a mile off—a long way to have to send the letters every day. Telegrams are sent *via* Seascale—porterage 1s. At several of the farmhouses and cottages near here the letters are not even delivered. It is impossible to get one's Sunday letters even by sending to the Gosforth Post Office for them."

Or take this case. Mr. M. Robertson, of Crabble House, River, near Dover, wrote—

"In a Berkshire parish (Suthamstead Abbots) only seven miles from Reading, where I have recently been living, we were two days' post from every place except those on the main Great Western Railway between London and the West, and even so from some places within a drive. We were also three miles from a telegraph office, the messages from which often reached my house one and a-half hours after they had been received at the office, because, as they said, they only had one boy."

A correspondent at Plymouth called his attention to another grievance. Without giving his letter he would briefly state that the Post Office charges for the despatch of parcels to India were 8d. per pound, and to Australia 9d. per pound, while the shipping agents only charged 3d. per pound. The only possible explanation of such an excess charge was, that the Post Office would rather not be troubled with parcels for the Colonies, although it was worth the while of private firms to advertise for the carrying of such parcels. A parcel of shells was sent from Brussels to the British Museum for 2d., to be examined. On returning the parcel, the Museum authorities had to pay 1s. 6½d. The French Government allowed 320 gr. to be sent for 2½d. He now approached the subject of the Express Letter Service, which was forced upon the Postal Authorities by public opinion, and which they undertook with about as much grace and cheerfulness as a bucking horse displayed while being saddled and mounted. Not only were the portage charges, as in the case of telegrams, far too high in

comparison with the wages paid to the messengers, but the service was hampered with the necessity of filling up a complicated form, writing certain words on a particular part of the cover, and, above all, attending at some post office to hand the message over the counter. This last provision was puerile and vexatious. Why could not an express letter be stamped with a special crimson stamp, or a stamped crimson envelope used and posted in the nearest pillar box overnight, so as to be delivered the first thing in the morning, as in a country where common sense governed the postal administration? He appended an envelope so posted, on which a fine was charged, and also a pregnant note from a correspondent—

“The White House,
“Chelsea, London, S.W.

“Sir.—Having occasion to post an express letter I found it much more difficult than in Belgium, besides being 300 per cent. dearer. I enclose the two methods for your own use.—
Yours truly, A. MACKENZIE ROSS.”

“England :

I sent express letter addressed to ‘City,’ found nearest P.O., did not forward express letters; had, of course, to take it to one that did, which was some considerable distance away. Had to pay 1s. postage.”

“Belgium :

Express letter would only require to be posted in first ‘bus passing. Postage 3d.”

Another complaint was that an express letter sent from here to France or Belgium on Saturday evening was delivered on Sunday morning. But a letter from France to England posted on Saturday evening on business of life and death was not delivered until Monday morning. The next case was not one of extortionate charges, but of neglect to secure the same privilege of registration of valuable parcels for Englishmen which foreigners enjoyed. Mr. F. Powell, of Iddlesleigh Villa, Egham, wrote—

“18th June, 1893.

“Sir,—I am a lapidary, and have to maintain a severe struggle with the Swiss and French cutters, who work somewhat cheaper than we handicapped English cutters can, and who send large parcels of cut stones to London by post every day registered. I, however, possess a little special skill, which induces a few even of the best French houses to send their stones to me to be cut; but, after cutting and presenting to the Post Office as a foreign registered packet, I am told my unset stones come under the head of ‘Jewellery,’ and cannot be sent per post. Consider, Sir, how this operates against the unfortunate English in favour of the foreigner.”

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Here was another legitimate grievance. A person ordering a small article from the Colonies, or desiring a reply to a letter, could not buy in our Post Offices two or three stamps of the country of destination to send to his correspondent. The subjoined was a case in point, from Mr. Barlow, 21a, The Crescent, Salford—

“Whilst writing you upon the matter of surcharges, may I also bring under your notice the great convenience that would result if postage stamps of Canada—Australia in particular—could be obtained at the general offices? It is constantly coming under my notice that persons corresponding with places desire to prepay replies by enclosing the necessary stamp; and disappointment is often expressed. It is very general not to receive replies from the person or firm written to from this cause. I am sure advantage would be taken of such a boon, not only in this country, but by the people of other countries; and it would be the means of greatly augmenting correspondence with these countries.”

The Post Office would not use its despotic power to soften and refine the manners of the people; and anything in the nature of politeness introduced into a paper sent by book-post was pounced upon as a pretext for a fine. Such a document must contain only the skeletons of sentences; it must demand a debt with brutal frankness, and convey descriptions of quality and indications of route with military brevity and mathematical precision. The subjoined was a case in point—

“Deptford, London, S.E.

“Dear Sir,—Referring to your letter in *The Times*, re Post Office punishment for politeness, we are very pleased to see you have taken this matter up, and it may interest you to know that some few years ago we had printed at the foot of our invoice forms the words ‘The above sent to your esteemed order per’ The Post Office Authorities objected to our invoice form being sent at circular rate, on the ground that the above printed words were regarded as of the nature of a letter. We could put simply ‘Sent per’ (which we now do), and it would be allowed to go at circular rates. We think you will agree with us that the authorities made a distinction without any real difference, we only putting it originally in a more polite manner, but for which same politeness we found our customers had to pay a fine of 1d. in each instance.—Yours faithfully,

FREDERICK BRABY & Co.”

Here was an instance of the way in which our Post Office regarded the exchange of literature with our Colonies: A person sent 10 copies of “Horner’s Penny Series” (each of them a thin pamphlet) to Australia, and the postage was 10d. At another time he sent 20,

the cost of which was 1s. 8d., and was charged 2s. for postage. Mr. Wedderburn Maxwell, Glenair, Dalbeattie, N.B., also wrote—

"Dear Sir,—Could you not get the $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. Indian and Australian postage single letter weight increased to 1d. oz.? It would be a matter of convenience, as regards using decent paper instead of flimsy stuff, and as steamboats and railways carry the bulk of the mails the extra weight would not be a burden. Weight does not seem to come in, when heavy letters are charged at less comparative postage rates, in this country. The public are deeply indebted to you for your successful toils in getting reduction of postage, the loss on which will doubtless be recouped in time."

On this subject also the Rev. F. T. Cole, of 38 Burlington Gardens, Acton, W., February 17, 1893, said—

"Let me call your attention to the cheap Indian postage. A letter is conveyed to any part of India, 2,000 miles, for half an anna, in reality $\frac{1}{2}$ d. The Government sell embossed envelopes for $\frac{1}{2}$ d. and post cards for quarter of an anna, i.e. one farthing."

Mr. E. O. Walker, C.I.E. (late of the Indian Telegraph Service), of 144, Queen's Road, Bayswater, W., wrote—

"In India, where I have served for many years, one can send a letter equal in weight to half a rupee (or tola) for half an anna to any part of India or Burmah—perhaps over 2,000 miles. Again, letters, papers, cards, book-packets and parcels are re-addressed over and over again, without additional charge. My argument is, that if these concessions can be made in a country where the distances are so vast, there should be no difficulty in making them in the British Isles. Newspapers, parcels, book packets, and printed papers, legal and commercial documents—in fact, all articles and communications dealt with by the Post Office should, as well as letters, be re-addressed free of charge."

Mr. Ivor Phillipp (Junior Army and Navy Club) said—

"The Indian Government conveys a letter from Peshawur or Quetta to Calcutta (1,500 miles by rail), then to Rangoon (3 days by sea), and then to Bhamo (700 miles) for $\frac{1}{2}$ d. ($\frac{1}{2}$ anna); or a postcard for $\frac{1}{2}$ d.—3,000 miles."

He now turned to the subject of postmarks. Some time ago he presented to the then Postmaster General a Memorial signed by 210 Members of Parliament, asking that the hour as well as the date of collection, &c., might be stamped on all postal matter. This was done, with much advantage to the interests of business, in several British Colonies and foreign countries, and was formerly done in England (to 1818). The Postal Authorities, however, refused to make

this concession, the reason of their refusal doubtless being that it enabled the public to trace, check, and control the movements of correspondence—in other words, to bring home unerringly to the officials any negligence of which they might have been guilty. As a correspondent lately wrote to *The Times*—

"Any lawyer or man of business can testify to the importance of postmarks. I enclose some of the colonial and foreign postmarks for your inspection, and would call special attention to their clearness and legibility, as contrasted with the blurred smudges too often found on British letters."

With the great towns sucking the population from our rural districts, and paying £30,000,000 a year to the foreigner for dairy and garden produce which British cultivators might supply, it would seem good policy to furnish exceptionally cheap postal facilities to our own country. He had proposed an "Agricultural Parcel Post" rate of 1d. a pound, but the postal officials exhausted themselves in finding objections to it. A correspondent, farming 4,000 acres, wrote—

"I believe that, if properly worked, an Agricultural Parcel Post would do more than anything to make small holdings profitable."

And others pointed out that when the present postage had been met, the price secured for the articles referred to did not cover the cost of production. A collection of these letters would be found in *The Mark Lane Express* for May 18th, 1891. Before leaving this subject he urged that an Agricultural Parcel Post would be a wonderful auxiliary to make profitable small allotments and holdings. He now referred to another subject of irritation. At some post offices the fee for a private box was £2 2s., as the fee went to the Crown. At others it was £1 1s., and went to the Postmaster. There should be a uniform charge, not exceeding £1 1s. Several correspondents had written to him complaining of the double charge for double weight. Now, he maintained that the chief items in the cost of letters to the Post Office being sorting, despatch, and delivery, it was absurd to charge double postage for double weight. This was recognised as regarded inland letters, but not for foreign. Why not? The half-ounce was often necessarily exceeded by a trifle owing to an enclosure; the cost to the

Post Office, owing to the extra weight, could not be more than $\frac{1}{2}$ d. additional, yet we were charged $2\frac{1}{2}$ d., or the receiver 5d. Surely, if it was necessary to restrict the foreign letter to the half-ounce for the single postage of $2\frac{1}{2}$ d., it should increase only by $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per half-ounce. This was the more reasonable, as printed matter was carried abroad, as at home, at $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per two ounces. Hon. Members would agree with him that the fine for each inland letter should not exceed $\frac{1}{2}$ d., and for a foreign letter 1d. The heavy hand of the British Post Office fell even on such harmless and graceful sciences as that of conchology, as witness this racy protest from a gentleman of more than European fame (whose letter was written before the institution of the uniform $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. letter rate to the Colonies)—

“Budleigh Salterton, Devon.

“Dear Mr. Henniker Heaton,—A foreign *savant* lately sent me a box of shells for my identification, as they are New Caledonian species. He is publishing a splendid work on them. He paid about 2d. I replaced the shells in the box, reversed the paper, retied the string, so the weight was the same, and had to pay 1s. postage, besides being called upon to fill up and sign two declarations of value, contents, name of sender, and address ditto of consignee, &c., &c. Now, is not this too absurd? I am writing to all my old shell correspondents giving them my address. I have paid different postages— $2\frac{1}{2}$ d., 3d., 4d., 5d., 6d.; and, I think, $3\frac{1}{2}$ d. Every other country seems to have an uniform postage of $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. There must be something rotten in the state of England if we cannot do the same. More power to your elbow!—Believe me, yours faithfully,

“E. L. LAYARD.”

It was abundantly clear, from what had been said, that it would require the memory of Porson and the acuteness of an old special pleader to have dealings with the Post Office without infringing one or more of its multitudinous Rules. And a curious point was, that where one of these Rules had an exception, the exception was sure to contain a new trap for the public. The following instance would suffice to show their insidious character. Messrs. Day & Co., 21a, Berners Street, London, W., wrote—

“We are allowed by the Postal Authorities to send batches of letters and circulars unstamped to the head and different district offices provided that the postage does not amount to less than £1, and then they are stamped in red as on enclosed envelope. The postage in England and everywhere else all over the world being alike for book packages, in addressing from various lists we no longer separate the foreign from the English addresses, with the

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result that the authorities take our money for the postage, stamp our circulars as paid, and then return them because the payment is not made in stamps. If instead of sending the circulars to the Post Office to be marked as paid we put $\frac{1}{2}$ d. stamps on them, the same $\frac{1}{2}$ d. stamps would cover them everywhere, so that in the case I refer to the stamping of the foreigners cannot enable the authorities to keep any special account of them.”

Messrs. Dick Radclyffe, Limited, of 128, High Holborn, W.C., wrote that the Post Office accepted a sum of money to stamp the payment of postage in ink on a bundle of circulars. The officials afterwards altered their minds, and required adhesive stamps to be affixed, but declined to return the money first paid. A curious system was in vogue that only circulars for the United Kingdom could be stamped “postage paid.” What was the objection to having this done for circulars to be sent abroad? The next communication irresistibly recalled the story of the conscientious Scottish inn-keeper who would only supply small glasses of punch on Sundays, sternly replying to all remonstrances—“We dinna sairve large glasses on the Saw-bath.”

“6, Wedderburn Road,
Hampstead, N.W.

“Dear Sir,—The Post Office is open all Sunday for sale of stamps, &c. I asked there this morning (Sunday) for a packet of reply post-cards, and was told that ordinary post-cards were sold there on Sundays, but no reply post-cards! Wishing you success in your efforts to make our Post Office arrangements more sensible,

“Yours truly,
“JOSEPH KING.”

What explanation could the Postmaster General offer for this stupid Regulation? He would now ask, when would the Postmaster General issue a popular *Post Office Guide*? When should we have a *Post Office Guide* written in the interests of the public? The Regulations were now obviously drawn up in the interests of the Department as a collector of Revenue. The principles of interpretation ordinarily adopted were reducible to two: (1) Read the regulation as unfavourably as possible to the public; and (2) Never alter a decision once pronounced. In the *United States Guide* 40 pages were devoted to suggestions to the public to guard them against error and fines. Mr. T. R. Bridson, of Rock End, Torquay, wrote—

“I have spent three winters at Pau, during which my solicitors have frequently occasion to

send me by post, deeds, leases, &c., which had also to be returned. I will give one instance. A package weighing 11½ ounces reached me from Liverpool. On this the British Inland Postage would be 4d.; the French Inland Postage fcs. 3.60, or a little under 2s. 11d.; total, 3s. 3d. But the postage charge at Liverpool was 5s. Thus the cost of transit from Dover to Calais was 1s. 9d."

A very reasonable suggestion was, that letters should be received at the London District Offices on Sundays, for transmission by the evening mails. Letters posted at the General Post Office, the West Strand Telegraph Office, and the various railway termini were so forwarded, an extra fee being charged; and there could be no reason why residents in other parts of the Metropolis, as well as those living near the favoured spots, should not be similarly accommodated, as very little extra labour, of man or horse, would be involved. A man staying at an hotel in Northumberland Avenue had merely to walk round the corner and despatch an urgent letter; whereas millions of Londoners were miles away from the nearest point at which such letters were collected for despatch on Sunday. Turning to Northern Australia, he commended to the authorities the following letter from Mr. Edwin Luxton, of Port Darwin:—

"Allow me to inform you that in this part of the world we receive our goods before we get advice of them. And as it is a great disgrace to the British Post Office that such a state of things should exist, I trust you will pardon me addressing you on the subject, knowing well, with everyone else, that you take great interest in postal matters. The General Post Office could easily make up a bag for this port, and send it *via* Hong Kong or Singapore, as we now have three lines of steamers running to these ports."

He had still to complain that a series of extravagant bargains had been made with the Governments of France and Italy respecting the conveyance of our mails between Calais and Brindisi. Under these agreements we were paying about £60,000 a year more than the market price of the service, which money went as a kind of subsidy from British to French and Italian taxpayers. Yet the Post Office loftily refused even to communicate the existing contract to Parliament. Where was our control of expenditure if the officials could render us liable, on a secret contract, for any amount they pleased? The Postal Authorities positively declined to lay the

contract on the Table. He maintained that they were acting illegally in declining to do so. Next, he met with a piece of brilliantly red-tape. It would be seen, from the official letter annexed, that a person could not drop an important letter into the bag of a postman who had just emptied a pillar-box. He must march to the next pillar-box a yard in front of the postman, and drop in his letter just before the latter came up. The actual facts of this case were that a gentleman asked a country postman returning from his round to take a letter for him to the post office, as there was no messenger available. Of course, in view of the Regulation, the postman declined to run any risk. He could not see why a postman should not allow his bag to be used, on emergency, as a collecting receptacle for letters—

"Childwall Lodge, Wavertree.

"Sir,—Pray excuse my bringing the enclosed under your notice as a very energetic Post Office reformer, to whom we all owe much. I asked a Post Office official going to the General Post Office, Liverpool, to drop me a stamped letter in the box there. I was, perhaps, distant a short quarter of a mile. He said he could not do so. I drew the postmaster's notice to the occurrence, saying that doubtless it was according to some Regulation, and of course I in no wise blamed the man, but I added I hardly thought the Regulation could be meant to apply to such a case, and if it was so intended I hardly thought it worthy of a Department claiming to be progressive. His reply I enclose. Pray don't trouble yourself to reply or to return the enclosed. I simply draw your attention to a fact, and beg you to accept my apologies for thus intruding, as a stranger, upon your notice. — Yours truly, ARTHUR EARLE."

Here was the reply from Mr. J. D. Rich, Postmaster, Liverpool, to the complaint of his correspondent—

"Dear Sir,—With reference to your letter of the 26th ultimo, I beg leave to state that the postman concerned acted in strict accordance with the Regulations in declining to take the letter which you offered to him in the street on Thursday last. The Rule on the subject is as follows:—'A postman is forbidden on pain of dismissal to carry or deliver, either singly or in parcels, ordinary letters of any kind, whether stamped or unstamped, which have not been regularly posted.'—I am, dear Sir, yours faithfully, J. D. RICH, Postmaster."

He had long been impressed with the necessity of adopting some means of preventing the numerous thefts from pillar-boxes and letter-boxes. Some mechanical check for this purpose was required. Such a contrivance, of simple yet effectual construction, had been shown

him by Mr. Wilberforce, and a second invention of the kind had also been brought to his notice. The Post Office had refused to make a trial of either. He commended to the Postmaster General another suggestion on the subject of the trouble and delay so often experienced in the registration of births and deaths. A correspondent sent a suggestion, which was well worthy of consideration. Humanity dictated that we should render the duty of registering a death as easy as possible to the relatives of the deceased. His correspondent wrote—

"Town Hall, Chorlton-upon-Medlock,
"Manchester.

"Sir,—Your success and efforts for further facilities for the public lead me to ask your assistance for the purpose of throwing open the post offices of the Kingdom for the Registration of Births and Deaths. The present system is out of date, and costs £80,000 a year, which might be saved. It is monstrous that the occupiers of country districts should have to walk 10 or 20 miles to register a birth or death, when this State duty might be performed in five minutes at the village post office. To say nothing of the great inconvenience, waste of time and money to the public, it is very unwise to impose delay of interment in cases of infection, or where, as in the labourer's cottage, accommodation for the living is restricted. Can you help in this desirable reform?—Yours, &c.,

"G. BENNETT."

There were a number of other suggestions to be considered. He could not hope to see all these reforms carried out by the Postal Authorities, and he therefore, as a means of solving the difficulty, advocated the passing of the following Motion:—

"To call attention to the friction, obstacles, and delays invariably attending any effort to procure the acceptance by the Postal and Telegraph Authorities of reforms, or changes in their rules and methods, called for in the public interest, and to move, That there be established a Postal and Telegraphic Consultative Committee, similar to that existing in France called 'La Commission Consultative des Postes et des Télégraphes,' to consist, as in France, of 26 Members, selected from the Members of both Houses of Parliament, Presidents of Chambers of Commerce, Chairmen of Railway Companies, and representatives of the principal commercial, industrial, and social bodies, the Postmaster General to be President of such Committee. That it be the duty of such Committee to invite, consider, and report upon suggestions for the improvement of the Postal and Telegraphic Services."

In conclusion, he should like to sum up briefly the chief reforms and improvements of the Postal and Telegraph Services for which the public was waiting. He would do this by enumerating the

various subjects to which the Postmaster General should devote his special attention. They were as follows:—

"1. That a Parcel Post should be established between this country and the United States.

"2. That the public be allowed to supply its own postcards, adhesive halfpenny stamps being affixed, as in other countries.

"3. That the 'foreign' postcard should be restored to its former dimensions.

"4. That letter-boxes should be attached to all through trains.

"5. That the rule against the use of discarded printed papers for newspaper covers should be abolished.

"6. That postmen should be authorised to allow mail-matter to be dropped into their bags.

"7. That excessive 'portage' charges for telegrams should be abolished or greatly reduced.

"8. That 1d. should be charged on the receipt given for a telegram.

"9. That conventional terms and phrases of courtesy in circulars, statements of account, &c., should not be taken to be 'of the nature of a letter.'

"10. That the charges for telegraphic money orders should be reduced.

"11. That an 'Agricultural Parcel Post' should be established, at special low rates, for dairy produce, poultry, vegetables, fruit, &c.

"12. That where a post office is at present open on Sunday all articles sold there on week days shall be obtainable during the hours of business on Sunday.

"13. That the rules requiring a registered newspaper to be published at intervals not exceeding seven days, and to contain a certain proportion of news and articles of a particular character, shall be abolished.

"14. That postal officials shall undertake the registration of births and deaths.

"15. That the tariff of charges for the transmission of telegrams shall be purged of such anomalies as I have exposed.

"16. That any written or printed or type-written matter which merely states the price, size, or place of publication of a newspaper shall be allowed to appear on the cover of such newspaper.

"17. That the fine for insufficient postage should not exceed the deficiency.

"18. That the Express Letter Service should be simplified; and that 'Express' envelopes should be sold, which may be posted in any pillar box by day or night.

"19. That the minimum charge for the sample post should be 4d. (for 2 ozs.)

"20. That the charge for the registration of a letter should not exceed 1d.

"21. That more postal and telegraph offices, and more frequent collections and deliveries, should be provided in country districts.

"22. That letters addressed to the Colonies or foreign countries should be stamped in batches on payment of the postage, without the necessity of affixing adhesive stamps.

"23. That postcards and stamped envelopes should be sold, as in other countries, at the face, or nominal, value.

"24. That the Parcel Post Service in the country towns should be improved and accele-

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rated, and the charge for short distances reduced.

"25. That Postal Orders should be freely transmissible, at a moderate commission, between all parts of the Empire.

"26. That the commission on postal orders should be reckoned on the total amount purchased, and not calculated at so much for each order.

"27. That in the carriage of outgoing mails the most direct routes and swiftest steamships should be employed.

"28. That the parcel rates to the Colonies should be reduced.

"29. That the commission on foreign and colonial money orders should be reduced.

"30. That money orders should be obtainable at any time when a post office is open.

"31. That it should be permissible to trim the edges of a postcard so as to allow of its being enclosed in an envelope.

"32. That the chief office in each district should be open until the latest possible moment for the receipt of letters with an extra fee on Sunday.

"33. That the wording of the Regulation as to inserting the name of the page in a postal order shall be amended so as to make it clear that the name of a firm or company may be so inserted.

"34. That the 'mandat-carte' system of Switzerland shall be substituted for the inland postal order system, the money being delivered with the 'mandat' at the payee's residence.

"35. That naturalists' specimens shall be conveyed through the post at a nominal rate.

"36. That the hour of collection should be stamped on all documents posted, so as to enable the public to check, control, and trace the movement of correspondence.

"37. That when a mistake is made in telegraphing a word, that word only, and not the entire message, shall be repeated.

"38. That it shall be permissible to cut out embossed stamps and use them for postage.

"39. That the Post Office arrangements with the Railway Companies should be revised.

"40. That the charges on telegraphic money orders should be reduced, and the money sent with the order.

"41. That the charge for a private box at any Post Office should be £1 1s.

"42. That the 'Cash on Delivery' system should be introduced.

"43. That the arrangement under which the French and Italian Governments pocket some £60,000 a year, over and above the actual cost of transit, for the conveyance of British mails between Dover and Calais shall be revised, and the contract submitted to Parliament.

"44. That Imperial Penny Postage should be instituted from the United Kingdom to the Colonies.

"45. That our Government should propose the employment of an International stamp for transmitting mail-matter or small sums of money, and should keep on sale the chief foreign and colonial stamps.

"46. That all Post Office expenditure for sites and permanent improvements should be carried to a capital account, and spread over several years, instead of being defrayed out of one year's income.

"47. That privately-printed postcards should be stamped at cost price.

"48. That 'query' postcards (for question and answer on one card) and letter-cards should be introduced.

"49. That one-guinea postal orders should be supplied.

"50. That the Continental system should be introduced of placing a locked box in each postal pillar, with a perforation adjusted to that in the pillar, so that the postman has only to collect the boxes, and cannot touch the letters.

"51. That 'cartes-télégrammes' should be introduced (*i.e.*, correspondence should be transmitted from one part of a city to another through pneumatic tubes).

"52. That the Post Office accounts should be kept in a businesslike manner, and that full and clear estimates for all expenditure, without exception, should be submitted annually to Parliament.

"53. That full accounts should be annually published of foreign and Colonial correspondence.

"54. That registered Benefit Societies should be permitted to open current accounts at the Post Office Savings Banks.

"55. That the names and addresses (not exceeding eight words in all) of the sender and addressee of a telegram and all compound names should be transmitted free.

"56. That the right to advertise on the backs of the 300,000,000 telegram forms annually consumed should be sold, the money so raised to be devoted to increasing the salaries of postal and telegraph officials.

"57. That direct cable communication should be established between Dover and Calais.

"58. That telegrams should be sent to France, Belgium, Holland, and Germany for 1d. per word, to the rest of the 'European system' and to Egypt, India, Persia, and the Straits Settlements for 6d. a word, and to the countries in the 'Extra European system' for 1s. per word.

"59. That the Government should, either from its own resources, or in concert with the Indian and Australian Governments, purchase the existing cable system of the Eastern Telegraph, the Eastern Extension, and the Indo-European Companies, and the allied associations, and lay such additional cables as may be required, in order to provide a cheap cable service for the Empire.

"60. That the minimum number of copies produced in imitation of typewriting, and transmissible at the book post or circular rate, shall be reduced from 20 to 4.

"61. That the weight of a letter carried to India, Australia, and the Colonies generally, should be increased to one ounce for a single stamp."

Mr. J. BURNS (Battersea) said, he regretted, at this stage of the Estimates, to have to trouble the House with a few remarks upon the mail cart service of the Post Office. He must say that the Postmaster General and the Government were to be congratulated on having conceded the right of meeting and the right

of combination. He also commended the Department for having restricted overtime, and for having restored the men who engaged in a strike some three years ago. They had been told that a large sum had been added in the last few months by reason of higher wages, but he would like to point out that that increase did not arise from an increase of the wages of individual postmen and officials. He would remind the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down that the increase in the expense of the Post Office was mainly due to the additions which had been made to the various staffs. He was afraid that some of the money had gone to officials who received over £300 a year instead of to the postmen and the lower grade *employés* who were in receipt of less than £100 a year. He desired to raise a question as to whether the Government should in future place the carriage of mails by road in the hands of a contractor instead of doing this work by the direct employment of men who should be, like postmen, the directly paid officials of the Postmaster General. Every London Member would agree with his criticism of the dirty and scandalous condition of the mail carts in London, and to criticise the condition of the mail cart service in London he must deal partly with a firm. One of the firms was that of Macnamara. This firm in 1887 was in a very bad condition. The horses were overworked, the harness was dirty, the men were overworked and underpaid, and the vehicles were in a ramshackle and shameful condition. In 1877 a company was formed to take over the business of the firm of Macnamara. The vendors of that company got £54,000 for the good-will of the particular business, besides £50,000 they received in exchange for it as a going concern. The capital of the firm was watered very much. It was over-capitalised, and the result of that was that the men had to work scandalously long hours and received very low wages indeed. The Postmaster General himself had admitted that the men worked 12½ hours per day, but the men maintained that they frequently had to work 14, 15, and 16 hours a day. In a private Report of one of the Manager Directors of the company it was stated that the horses were not in a good working condition, and that one-twelfth of

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them ought to be sold at once and replaced by new ones.

MR. A. MORLEY: What was the date of that Report?

MR. J. BURNS: August, 1892. The same condition of things prevailed at the present time as he was told by the men who drove the horses, and who, with all respect, knew more about the matter than the Postmaster General or the permanent officials of the Post Office. This was a record of the horses which either died or were killed or sold as worn out through overwork. During the year ending June, 1889, 40 per cent. of the stud; in 1890, 27 per cent.; in 1891, 18 per cent.; 1892, 35 per cent. The heavy mortality for the year ending June, 1889, was explained in this way. It was stated that during the year then the horses were overworked and underfed in order to show a good return in the first year's working. In fact, the business generally was starved. The Government made a considerable profit out of the Post Office, and they ought not to allow work to be done by contractors who cruelly overworked their horses and underpaid their men to a disgraceful extent. That House ought to prevent these abuses, and they ought to prevent a Government Department being used for Stock Exchange manipulation to an extent that was known to every man on the Stock Exchange and outside of it. That was a condition of things that the House ought under no circumstances to tolerate, and he appealed to the Postmaster General whether he could not arrange, between now and the expiration of Macnamara's contract, to follow the example of other Government Departments and every Local Authority throughout Great Britain. They found the horses in the Army well cared for, fed, stabled, and groomed. There they had the direct employment of horses and the direct employment of men looking after them with advantage to the State, and without cruelty to the animals. If Artillery and Cavalry horses could be kept for the service of the State for drawing guns, he did not for the life of him see why direct employment should not be insisted upon for the permanent work of drawing letters and mails for the Post Office along the roads to the railway stations. There was no doubt that in London between

now and the next five or six years they were going to see a considerable increase in the number of deserving unemployed. Contract labour always meant working overtime, low rates of wages, and a restriction of the area of employment, but by direct labour there was a stopping of overtime and a better distribution of labour employment being provided for a greater number of men. He urged the Postmaster General to terminate the contract system as soon as possible, to have depôts and stables in different parts of London, and well-equipped vehicles. As an instance of the success attending the system of direct employment he alluded to the Weights and Measures Department of the London County Council, where the horses and vehicles were in excellent condition and the men employed contented. Turning to another point, he suggested that when supernumeraries were required at Christmas and New Year time, and at other busy seasons, the Postmaster General should not employ for that purpose sergeants and Inspectors of police and other persons in receipt of high wages or pensions to the exclusion of deserving unemployed men. He appealed to the Postmaster General to put a stop to the contract system, and to take over the whole system of direct employment as soon as possible.

*MR. A. MORLEY sympathised with the hon. Member in regard to many of the facts he had mentioned. With reference to the question of contract *versus* direct employment, he would take care that the matter should be most carefully considered. He did not think, however, that allegations of cruelty to horses could be made against the Post Office. He would take care that the matter was investigated. He had paid a surprise visit to the stables at the end of June or in the beginning of July, and did not think that the condition of the horses bore out the statements of the hon. Member, which he had quoted from a Report made a year ago. With regard to the drivers of the mail vans, he would inquire into the question of the hours of work, but it was only fair to state that the men had not the heavy work in loading and unloading to which other carmen, such as Pickford's, were subject. It was very easy employment, and, though the hours seemed long, it could not be suggested that those hours were fully employed in actual driving all the time,

for the men had several hours for rest. With regard to the County Council Weights and Measures Department, he thought that the County Council could exercise a greater control in that sort of work than a great Government Department like the Post Office. As to the suggestion of the hon. Gentleman that the Post Office should take the Mail Van Service under its direct control, he confessed he had serious misgiving about adding a new Department, with a large staff of officials, to the present enormous staff of over 130,000 persons in the Postal Service. But he promised that the question should be fairly considered, with a view of seeing whether the evils complained of in the present system could be remedied, or, if not, whether the Government could take the matter over themselves. He agreed that supernumerary appointments at Christmas and New Year time, and other busy seasons, ought to be given as much as possible to those whom it would really benefit as not having regular employment, provided only that a proper class of men could be obtained for the work, and he had already made arrangements for the appointment of such men. The hon. Member for Canterbury began his speech by making a statement which was wholly and absolutely devoid of foundation. He said that an increased amount of £600,000 had been paid in salaries during the past year. That was an exaggeration of about 30 per cent.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON: I read the exact words of the Secretary to the Treasury, who stated that, taking the three Postal Services together, it was to be remarked that there was an increase of £614,000, and that a great portion of this increase was for salaries.

*MR. A. MORLEY said, the hon. Member attributed the increase to salaries, meaning increase in salaries. It was nothing whatever of the kind. There had been no increase of salaries during the past year. There had, indeed, been an increased amount paid in salaries, but that was because the staff was constantly increasing, owing to the fact that the House of Commons, and the public, and the hon. Member himself were constantly pressing the Post Office to give increased facilities and advantages, which necessarily meant an increased cost. In no single case had there been an increase of charge or salary, except the automatic

increase of the scale sanctioned by Mr. Raikes and his successor some years ago. The hon. Member said he was going to take a strong stand against this shameless and outrageous expenditure of the Post Office, and yet upon the Telegraph Vote and Post Office Vote the hon. Member had made certain proposals, almost every one of which would mean an increased expenditure upon the Postal Vote. The hon. Member had made 11 proposals, and of these no fewer than nine, if adopted, would lead to an increased expenditure. The hon. Member talked of the charge for registered letters being too great, but the Post Office received less for them than the registered letters cost. He hoped that in future the hon. Member would stand by the Postmaster General in resisting demands for the increase of expenditure over revenue, unless there was a good case for it. With regard to establishing a Parcel Post between this country and the United States, the hon. Member was quite wrong in thinking that there had been any difficulty raised on the part of this country. Frequent communications had been made through the Foreign Office to the United States Government with regard to a Parcel Post, but he was informed that in America there were large corporations and companies which carried parcels, and they had been too strong for the Post Office to deal with them in the matter of a Parcel Post. He knew that the Post Office at New York was anxious to see a Parcel Post between the United States and Great Britain, and he hoped, with the change of Government which had taken place, that a better state of things might be brought about. He was in communication with the American Post Office now, through the Foreign Office, and he hoped terms would be arranged on the subject. With regard to the question of the re-direction of postcards, circulars, and newspapers, that was a matter which was carefully considered by the late Government, who came to the conclusion that they could not further extend the principle, and the more he looked at the matter the more satisfied was he that that decision was a right decision. The hon. Member for Canterbury seemed to think that the Post Office was averse to improvement, but there was no foundation whatever for the suspicion. The heads of the Department

Mr. A. Morley

and the officers generally were anxious to bring about improvements whenever they could, and he believed they were thoroughly prepared to do their very best to meet the increasing needs of postal communication.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the right hon. Gentleman to consider whether it would not be possible to extend the limits of size at present laid down with reference to samples, drawings, plans, &c. allowed to be sent through the post? It would be a great convenience to architects and others if they could send sections, plans, and drawings through the post, but owing to the present restrictions as to size they were unable to do so.

MR. A. MORLEY said, he had heard no complaints on this subject, but he would inquire into it.

Resolution agreed to.

WINE AND BEERHOUSE ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Herbert Lewis, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Licensing of Beerhouses and places for the sale of Cider and Wine by retail in England and Wales, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Herbert Lewis, Mr. Crosfield, Mr. Snape, and Mr. Herbert Roberts.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 462.]

WAYS AND MEANS.

CONSOLIDATED FUND (APPROPRIATION) BILL.

Resolution [18th September] reported,

"That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March 1894, the sum of £26,449,207 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom."

Resolution agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Mellor, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Sir John Hibbert.

Bill presented, and read first time.

COMPANIES (CERTIFICATE OF INCORPORATION) BILL [*Lords*].—(No. 236.)

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

COMPANIES (WINDING-UP) BILL [*Lords*].

Read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

House adjourned at Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 20th September 1893.

QUESTIONS.

LOCAL TAXATION IN URBAN DISTRICTS.

MR. H. LAWSON (Gloucester, Cirencester): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that a vast mass of evidence upon the incidence of local taxation in urban districts, together with various plans for its readjustment, is contained in the Reports of the Select Committee on Town Holdings, 1886-91; whether he is aware that the London County Council have adopted and recommended several plans for making the owners of ground values contribute towards the rates levied for permanent expenditure upon street improvements, open spaces, main drainage, and other like objects; and whether the Government will consider the expediency of appointing a small Commission, similar to that now appointed for the unification of the County and City of London, with instructions to consider and report what is the best way of making the owners of ground values contribute their fair share towards local taxation? I should also like to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he is aware that, according to the Reports of the Local Government Board, urban rates have increased and are increasing at an enormous ratio year by year?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby) said, that the subject referred to in the hon. Member's question was well worthy of consideration, but he was not able to make any statement upon the subject at present.

THE FEVER HOSPITAL AT HOUNSLOW.

MR. J. BURNS (Battersea): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, considering the allegations that are being made in the Press about the unsanitary condition, overcrowding, and general maladministration of the Fever Hospital at Hounslow,

the Local Government Board will at once institute an inquiry?

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Sir W. FOSTER, Derby, Ilkeston) said, the Local Government Board had brought under their attention the allegations which appeared in the Press with respect to the sanitary condition and administration of the hospital at Hounslow belonging to the Heston and Isleworth Local Board; and on the 8th instant the Board addressed a letter to the Local Authority asking for their observations on these allegations, and a Report by the Medical Officer of Health giving full information as to the facts with regard to the condition of the hospital, the number of patients admitted, and the officers and servants of the hospital. The Board have not, however, received any reply to that communication, and they have arranged for a Medical Inspector at once to visit the hospital for the purpose of ascertaining the facts.

MR. J. BURNS: May I supplement my question by asking whether the reason why no reply has been received from the Local Board is that, notwithstanding the serious condition of things, the Local Board have adjourned for their holidays, leaving illness, infection, and death behind them?

SIR W. FOSTER: I have no information as to the adjournment of the Local Board for the holidays; but, even if that were so, it would make no difference to the action of the Local Board in securing a prompt remedy for any unsatisfactory conditions connected with the hospital in question.

MAGISTRATES IN IRELAND.

MR. BUTCHER (York): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland what is the number of licensed victuallers who have been appointed to hold the Commission of the Peace in boroughs in Ireland since the present Government came into Office?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. J. MORLEY, Newcastle-upon-Tyne): I must ask the hon. Gentleman to postpone his question.

MR. SEXTON (Kerry, N.): Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will, at the same time, say how many such Magistrates were on the Commission

before the present Government came into Office?

MR. J. MORLEY: I will endeavour to do that.

PROSECUTIONS IN SLIGO.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary for Ireland whether the prosecutions which had been instituted in Sligo had been undertaken at the instance of the Government?

MR. J. MORLEY: I may say that instructions were yesterday sent that the whole proceedings should be at least postponed for a certain time.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

CONSOLIDATED FUND (APPROPRIATION) BILL.

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

THE COAL STRIKE RIOTS.

*MR. J. LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet) said, he would take this opportunity of drawing the attention of the House to matters connected with the recent disturbances which had occurred in various parts of the country, arising out of the labour troubles which were prevailing at the present time. At the outset he desired to say that he did not in any way desire to convert this into a Party question, or to make any attack whatever upon the Home Secretary, or upon any Member of the Government. It would be his duty, in the few remarks he had to offer, to deal with matters for which the right hon. Gentleman was responsible, and duties for which provision was made by the Votes contained in the Bill; but he was happy to think that matters as grave as those to which he now desired to call attention could be approached without being in any way associated with Party controversy. He was bound to say that if it was his desire, which certainly it was not, to introduce any Party element, he did not think, from the recollection he had of successive Administrations, extending over a period of 30 years, that it would be in the archives of the Home Office he would seek to furbish up weapons for attack. However any other hon. Members might consider themselves justified in making a special attack upon a public servant on account of his discharge of a bounden duty,

Mr. Sexton

he could assure the right hon. Gentleman that he should approach the matter in no Party sense. When this subject engaged the attention of the House for a few brief moments the other day, the hon. Member for Haggerston expressed an opinion that in the information he (Mr. Lowther) had put before the House he had been misled, and that the circumstances to which he had referred had been greatly exaggerated in the public prints. If that had been the case, or if he felt that the dangers of the situation had passed away, he would be far from any desire to recur to these evils, and gladly would he have allowed this humiliating chapter of contemporary history to remain untouched, and he would not again have obtruded these matters on the attention of the House. But he was sorry to say, as the result of inquiry and local information vouchsafed to him, not only was the original information published in the newspapers not exaggerated, but, unfortunately, it largely understated the gravity of the situation; and in his remarks he had erred in largely understating, rather than overstating, what had been actually proved to have occurred. The condition of affairs which prevailed in different parts of the country during the last month had been most discreditable—a condition of affairs that he thought deserved the most anxious attention of Parliament. The condition of many districts was that of absolute anarchy. Mobs, numbering in many instances thousands of men, had paraded large areas of the mining districts of the country, committing in some cases minor outrages, and in other cases, unfortunately, proceeding to the commission of offences of a graver character—brutal assaults on honest labouring men discharging their inalienable right to earn their daily bread; and also these mobs had been guilty of outrages on other inoffensive persons, had destroyed a vast amount of property, had committed arson, and other crimes. He was glad to say that, so far as the greater part of the country was concerned, where these disturbances had occurred the Local Authorities appeared to have been equal to the situation. Additional police had in many instances been drawn into the disturbed neighbourhood, and troops had been summoned to be in readiness if required in

case the emergency should become more acute. In the mining districts of South Wales special precautions taken in advance had the desired effect, and rioting which began to display itself was suppressed, and further extension of the evil avoided. Happily, in Wales, the working men who were prepared to stand by their liberties were sufficiently numerous to render a very good account of themselves, and every lover of liberty must have rejoiced to hear that in Ebbw Vale the lawless scoundrels who contemplated attack received a well-merited thrashing. Unfortunately, other districts were not able to supply a sufficient number of independent men to vindicate their personal liberties; and that task devolved, as in all civilised communities it should, on those charged with the duty on the part of the Crown of preserving the public peace. In one district especially he regretted to say there was a backwardness in taking active precautions, and that was in the West Riding of Yorkshire. There a state of affairs prevailed which he should have thought would have aroused the authorities to bestir themselves to the discharge of their duty for the prevention of the extension of disturbances. He found that on Monday, 4th September—he would not weary the House with details—the practice was adopted which had frequently been followed in other districts similarly affected, of a large mass of men being gathered together from different colliery villages, and these marched, gathering in numbers on their way, to some appointed centre, and in the case he was about to refer to the march was directed to Garforth, in the heart of the colliery district. Arrived there the mob proceeded to the pit's mouth, and demanded to know whether any men were at work—in other words, whether any free-born subject of the British Crown was exercising his inalienable right to earn his daily bread in a legal manner he thought fit. Unfortunately, the men at Garforth were not so situated as the men at Ebbw Vale. They were not in sufficient strength to administer a well-deserved thrashing to those who interfered with them, and he regretted to have to say that, owing to intimidation, the persons in charge of the mine had to give assurance that employment should be suspended. As a matter of fact, he believed that the only men in the

pit were those engaged in the necessary work in connection with keeping down the water in the pit. But the leaders of this lawless mob were not satisfied, and insisted upon going down the pit, where they had no business. They intimidated those in charge to let them down to satisfy themselves that their lawless behest was obeyed. Such a matter deserved, he thought, the anxious consideration of the House of Commons. This was not all. After this proceeding, a meeting was held close by. A person was called to the chair, and, not to weary the House with details, the usual resolutions were passed, and the usual talk was indulged in. The men then proceeded to find out whether there were any so-called “black sheep” in the neighbourhood of the colliery—“black sheep” being a word locally used, as in other places “blacklegs,” to describe those honest working men who exercised their personal liberty and declined to be dictated to as to when they should work. Men found to be working in the pits were roughly handled, in many instances were brought out into the crowd, and, under threat of personal violence, compelled to sign undertakings not to work again. Now, as to the popular feeling in the neighbourhoods concerned, which the House had been told by some who professed to speak for the miners was opposed to violent tactics, he regretted to say that such a notion must be dismissed as an idle tale, as evidence of which he might mention that amongst the most violent were women with babies in their arms, denouncing the so-called “black sheep.” On Monday, the 4th September, a dangerous condition of affairs evidently prevailed in the West Riding. What were the authorities doing to prevent a recurrence of evils which occurred at the outset of the disturbances, between the Monday at midday and subsequent days, when affairs assumed greater gravity? As far as he could make out, the Chief Constable of the West Riding or those responsible took one step, and one step only—namely, to withdraw 25 per cent. of the police force of the West Riding and lend them to the police authorities at Doncaster to preserve order in connection with Doncaster races. But the Chief Constable of the West Riding was primarily responsible for order in his own district; and if, according to custom, he

had to furnish assistance to the Doncaster police, it was his duty to obtain, in like manner, assistance from other police forces to enable him to do his duty in preserving order. The only step, however, that the Chief Constable of the West Riding took was, not merely not to strengthen his force, but to send away to Doncaster 269 members of his force of 1,080. It was only fair to mention that the Chief Constable was away upon holiday at the time. Everybody, unless he be a Member of Parliament or an officer of the House of Commons, was fairly entitled to an annual holiday; and, therefore, the Chief Constable had a perfect right to a holiday, but his place, in his absence, should have been filled by an efficient deputy. But, so far from having one, affairs seemed to have been allowed to drift into a condition of hopeless chaos. Nothing was done until matters assumed an exceedingly grave aspect, and then additional police and troops were summoned. He deplored the necessity for the use of troops in conflict with civilians. When it was necessary, however, to employ troops, they should be protected from taunts, insults, and actual assaults from disorderly crowds, which tended to a breach of the peace, and not only rendered them useless to preserve the peace, but even placed them in danger of their own lives. The greatest moderation was observed by the Civil and Military Authorities. A small force of some 25 or 26 men was dispatched from Bradford to Featherstone, where a serious riot was going on. No Magistrate was to be found to read the Riot Act, and the officer in command placed his men in a building where they were subjected to jeers and insults, and actual assaults, from the mob, while being powerless to act. His own opinion was that the reading of the Riot Act was altogether unnecessary, and that every subject of the Queen, whether military or civil, was bound to assist in preserving the peace, and in preventing the commission of a felony, when called upon even by a common constable. However, the Queen's Regulations tied the hands of officers, and he was not prepared to say that—with an eye to Coroners' juries, with their erratic and chaotic and frequently ridiculous verdicts—the Military Authorities were to be blamed for observing caution in these

matters. And, as to the delay in procuring a Magistrate, it was only fair to remember that it was holiday time; and while, no doubt, the best plan when feasible was for a Magistrate always to be sent along with troops, it must be likewise remembered that a Borough Justice could not act outside his municipal area, so that if a Bradford Magistrate had accompanied the soldiers he would have been useless in the West Riding area. At the same time, what occurred at Featherstone was most humiliating, as, owing to being unable to act, the soldiers were withdrawn under a kind of improvised treaty entered into between the officer in command, the manager of the colliery, and the ostensible leaders of the mob, amidst the jeers and the insults of the crowd. They subsequently returned, accompanied by a Magistrate, after which every effort was made to persuade the mob to disperse, and it was not until it became absolutely necessary that the officer in command gave the order to fire. He had seen it stated that the persons injured were mere spectators, and were not engaged in the riot; but, in his opinion, the Riot Act having been duly read, these unfortunate men, by not at once dispersing, were in their own persons guilty of aiding and abetting, if not of taking actual part in, the disturbance. Moreover, what business had men from a distant village to be at such an hour so far from their homes in the midst of riotous scenes. It should also be borne in mind that it was not the inhabitants of a village who had the disadvantage of being personally known to the local police and colliery officials who headed these disturbances, but persons from another neighbouring village, like the deceased. The Civil and Military Authorities responsible for the maintenance of order had been denounced by those who might have been expected to support them. The right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary could take very good care of himself, and he (Mr. Lowther) was not going to interfere between him and other Members of the House, but he desired that the House should make it clearly understood that no Party capital would ever be attempted to be made out of any unpopularity any public servant might incur, or run the risk of incurring, while honestly in the discharge of his duty.

Mr. J. Lowther

If the *bonâ fide* leaders of the men could be relied upon on such occasions as he had been speaking of to assist the authorities in the maintenance of order, the provision made in the Appropriation Bill for the services of extra military and police would be unnecessary. The right hon. Gentleman was about to cite instances of inflammatory language which, he contended, had been used by certain Members of the House against the authorities, when—

*SIR C. W. DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) rose to a point of Order. He did not intend any discourtesy to the right hon. Gentleman, but he wished to ask whether a Debate on the Second Reading of the Appropriation Bill must not be confined to objects that came within the scope of the Bill? He understood the right hon. Gentleman was about to quote the utterances of certain Members of the House, which was travelling beyond the Bill.

MR. SPEAKER said, the right hon. Gentleman could not speak of Members of the House, unless he could show that they were connected with the disturbances and the action taken by the Home Secretary.

*MR. J. LOWTHER said, then he would eliminate from his argument the quotations he intended to have made. His contention, however, was that the burden imposed on the taxpayers would be greatly diminished if the Home Secretary and those responsible for the preservation of order could rely upon the assistance of the *bonâ fide* leaders of the men. Attacks had been made on the constituted authorities of the realm by many persons, who not merely shared the responsibility common to all Her Majesty's subjects to assist in the preservation of the peace, but some of whom were actually Members of that House. In his judgment, so far from assisting the authorities, and diminishing the charge on the taxpayer to which he had alluded, these gentlemen had delivered speeches which, in one particular instance, he did not hesitate to say, could not be characterised properly by any language which the Forms of the House sanctioned, and no language that any recognised lexicographer could furnish would adequately convey his opinion of such a speech. He trusted that before sanctioning any contribution from the Imperial Exchequer towards local police

funds the Home Secretary would satisfy himself that Local Authorities had not neglected to furnish additional police to other districts when such could be spared without detriment to the districts themselves, as was provided for by various Statutes. He mentioned that as he had seen it stated that the Nottingham Borough Authorities had raised difficulties of the kind in connection with the Hull Dock strike, and similar reports prevailed regarding the present crisis in regard to other Local Authorities. He hoped the Government would take care that it should be made clear who were the Local Authorities who were responsible in cases of this kind—whether the local Justices or the Watch Committee, as confusion seemed to prevail in some quarters in those respects. It should be clearly laid down who were responsible, and in what manner they were to be brought to book if they neglected to discharge their duties. The present condition of affairs was of sufficient gravity that he felt bound to bring the question prominently before the House, and he thought it would be generally agreed that the matter demanded the earnest consideration of the Government.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. ASQUITH, Fife, E.): The right hon. Gentleman has not made any attack upon the Government, and I do not propose to follow him in the criticisms he has thought it right to make on the action or inaction of the Local Authorities in the West Riding of Yorkshire in the early stages of these deplorable disturbances. At the present time I do not think that there is sufficient information in the possession of the Government, or the House, to justify us in expressing approval or disapproval of what was done, or left undone, by the Local Authorities. Therefore, I think any further dispute on that line of argument may be fairly deprecated. I will avail myself, however, of this opportunity to tell the House at once what has been and what is the attitude of Her Majesty's Government in relation to this matter. It would seem difficult, and almost impossible, to get the people of this country to understand what are the functions and responsibilities of the Executive Government in reference to local disturbances. It cannot be too clearly laid down that

the responsibility for the prevention and suppression of local disorder lies, where it has always lain from the earliest period of our history, with the Local Authority. So deeply is that principle ingrained in our law that when, from a failure on the part of the Local Authority to do its duty in that respect, damage is done to anyone, not the Public Exchequer, but formerly the inhabitants of the hundred, and now the ratepayers of the particular police district, are the body that has to make good the injury. In the same way, when the County and Borough Police were established nearly 60 years ago, their administration was entrusted to the Local Authorities in the districts in which they were raised. That being so, what is the position of the Secretary of State? According to the ideas that seem to prevail in many quarters, it might be supposed that the Home Secretary in this country is in the position of the Minister of the Interior in France, or in the position of the Chief Secretary for Ireland. His position is nothing of the kind. I entirely disclaim on behalf of myself, and of those who may succeed me in this Office, any responsibility of any sort for the way in which the local police force in this country is governed. No doubt, by a practice which has gradually grown up, it has become the duty of the Secretary of State in the case of emergency to give advice to the Local Authority, but the Local Authority is perfectly at liberty to accept or reject that advice as it thinks fit. Further, the Secretary of State is the channel through which the demands of a Local Authority for assistance, when their own police resources are insufficient to cope with an emergency, may be made; and, further than that, if the Local Authority are found to be guilty of excess or remissness, it is the duty of the Secretary of State to conduct such inquiries and to institute such proceedings as the nature of the case may require. I believe I have summarised in this statement the whole of the duties which the law imposes upon the Home Secretary.

MR. J. LOWTHER: The contribution from the Imperial Exchequer?

*MR. ASQUITH: It is true that the Secretary of State has the power to withhold the certificate which the Act of Parliament empowers him to give at the

end of the financial year, and so deprive a Local Body of its share of the Imperial contribution towards its police; but he can only do that if he is able to certify that the police force concerned has not been kept in a state of efficiency during the year. He would be travelling beyond his powers and his duties if he were to inquire, in addition, how it had been managed in the course of the year. I am not going to say anything in the way of criticism of the existing system. It has its drawbacks, no doubt, when the area of disturbance extends over several counties, and when it is impossible to expect uniform and concerted action on the part of the various authorities concerned. On the other hand, in my opinion, the advantages of the arrangement infinitely outweigh the disadvantages. I think it would be an evil day for the administration of justice if we were to centralise that which is at present local. In my opinion, the privilege of local self-government ought to carry with it the responsibility for the maintenance of local order. I have thought it right to state these few general principles, because the case now immediately under consideration is, after all, only a typical case. This is, I think, the fourth or fifth case of great gravity in which I have had to consider what the powers and duties and responsibilities of Ministers are, and I do trust that what I have said may help to get rid of misconceptions in the public mind, and enable the country clearly to realise what are the limits of our functions and responsibilities. And now, Sir, a very few words on the immediate case before us. A very grave state of things existed in the West Riding of Yorkshire three weeks ago. I am not prepared, from the information I have received, to assent to the proposition that the riotous and marauding proceedings that went on, the wrecking of collieries, the burning down of buildings, the levying of toll on innocent passers by—that these actions met with any sympathy whatever from the general body of miners on strike. I believe these outrages were the work of a comparatively small number of rowdies and normally unoccupied men, and that, so far as the general opinion of the mining population was concerned, they would discountenance any such proceedings. But, whatever might have been the state of feeling

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among the miners themselves, it is undoubtedly the melancholy fact that these things did go on, and that there was for some time no attempt on the part of the law-abiding population to stop them. The local resources in police in a county like the West Riding are, of course, calculated with reference to a normal and not an abnormal state of things; and, whatever may be the justice of the criticism of the right hon. Gentleman as to the withdrawal of police for Doncaster races, they would have been in any case insufficient to cope with this suddenly-arising emergency. I am sorry not to see in their places to-day some hon. Members who have been going about and denouncing me, and circulating what I can only characterise as a pitiful and ridiculous fiction—namely, that Her Majesty's Government deliberately sent, without warrant or cause, the armed forces of the Crown into districts where industrial disputes were going on, in order that they might take the side of the coalowners and crush the miners. Where are the men who made these statements? It was well known that this matter would form the subject of discussion this afternoon. Why are they not in their places? It is a very easy thing to go about the country speaking to excited audiences where you are safe from refutation and reply; but it is a very different thing, and the only proper thing, to come here, to the House of Commons, and on the floor of this House, face to face with the Minister you condemn, to fight the matter out. I regret that this has to be said of men, personal friends of my own and generally supporters of Her Majesty's Government, but I do think that conduct such as that of the hon. Members to whom I am referring ought not to be allowed to pass unnoticed, and that the least a Minister of the Crown whose action is challenged by Members of this House has a right to expect—especially as we are at the close of our present Sittings, for the opportunity may not occur again—he has a right, I say, to expect that he should be given the opportunity of answering the statements made with respect to his conduct in the presence of the hon. Members who make them. These hon. Members are away. If they were present I should ask them what they would have done in my position? Supposing that

they had held the Office which I hold, and that the state of things which I have described had been brought to their knowledge; supposing that the Local Authorities, alarmed for the preservation of the public peace and for the safety of property, had sent them telegram after telegram saying that the local police forces were insufficient, that they had tried to borrow additional police elsewhere, but unavailingly, and that unless special protection were given to them they would no longer be responsible for the public peace, what course would any responsible Minister adopt in the circumstances? These gentlemen know as well as I do, and would admit it if they cleared their minds and tongues of cant, that there is no man in this country who would not have acted as I have done, and who would not have felt it his bounden duty to supply the Local Authorities with such a force as, in their judgment, was necessary to supplement the local resources at their disposal. I do not believe that the House will disapprove the course which I took. No one can deprecate more strongly than I do the employment of soldiers unnecessarily. I know that their employment in the performance of police duty is distasteful to the soldiers themselves, and for many obvious reasons it is, undoubtedly, irritating to the people. I have, therefore, impressed upon Local Authorities over and over again that, whenever it is possible, they should obtain in emergencies additional police from other localities, and on the occasion under consideration that direction was followed. But it must be borne in mind that the total police force of the country is very limited in number, each borough and county being bound not to retain a larger number of police than is necessary for its ordinary requirements. From Wiltshire, however, from Dorset, and from other parts of the country police were supplied to render assistance in the West Riding and Nottinghamshire. I, therefore, do not think that it is fair to say that there was any indisposition on the part of Local Police Authorities in other parts of England to render such aid as they reasonably could. I myself sanctioned the despatch of about 400 men of the Metropolitan Police, and I find that I am denounced with exactly the same energy of vituperation for having sent

these policemen down to Yorkshire as I am for having sent the soldiers. It is very difficult to understand the position of those who think that in such circumstances as I have described a Minister would not have failed in his most elementary duty if he had not supplied all the resources at his disposal which appeared to be reasonably demanded. What was the result of the action that I took? Within 48 hours, almost within 24 hours, from the time when the local forces were thus supplemented the whole disturbance ceased, and for nearly a fortnight we have not had in the whole of the three counties which constituted the area of disturbance a single case of collision, either with the police or the military. I find it difficult to believe that that striking and rapid change from what had become a most serious situation is not to be attributed to the prompt measures that were taken. In many parts I gladly admit that the leaders of the miners have helped loyally and well to bring about the improved state of things. I think it is a most creditable circumstance that in the whole of Lancashire, where there are a very large number of miners on strike, from the beginning of the disturbance up to the present moment there has not been any serious trouble whatever. I attribute this very largely to the efforts of the miners' leaders to exercise a restraining influence upon their followers, and to keep them within the bounds of moderation. I have no doubt, also, that their example has had a tranquillising effect elsewhere. I am as anxious as any man in this House can be for the removal of the additional forces from the localities to which they have been sent. At the earliest moment when it shall be possible to remove them without jeopardising the preservation of public order the House may be sure that then they will be withdrawn; but until that moment arrives it would not only be wrong, but almost criminal, to take any steps to weaken the powers which the Local Authorities have demanded and obtained. Before I sit down I will say a few words respecting the most deplorable incident in these disturbances. I refer to the riot and the intervention of the military at Featherstone, near Pontefract, which resulted, as we all know, in the loss of two lives. As the House is aware, inquests have been held upon the bodies

of the men who were, unfortunately, killed. In the first inquest the coroner's jury returned a verdict of justifiable homicide, but in the second inquest the jury refused to return that verdict, and apparently shrank from the only other logical conclusion open to them—namely, that of returning a verdict of wilful murder against the Magistrates and troops. They preferred—and I am not quarrelling with them for doing so in the painful position in which they found themselves—they preferred to return an open verdict, to which they appended a rider to the effect that the authorities had not taken proper steps in the earlier stages of the affair to prevent the disturbance from reaching a climax, and they also intimated plainly that, in their opinion, the order given to the soldiers to fire was not justified by the circumstances prevailing at the time when that order was given. When those two verdicts were brought to my notice, I saw that we were face to face with a very serious state of things. But before taking any action I thought it right to call for the evidence which had been taken at the two inquests, and to give it my most careful consideration. I have now completed my study of that evidence, and I have come to the conclusion that the matter cannot be allowed to rest where it is. We are face to face with two verdicts upon the same state of facts, which are absolutely irreconcilable one with the other. A careful investigation of the evidence has convinced me that there are a number of facts materially bearing upon the point at issue which were not investigated at all, in consequence, no doubt, of the hurry of the proceedings. I have to consider both the position of the authorities and the feeling of the public, and I do not think that I should be able to satisfy the legitimate demand of public feeling, or that I should be acting fairly to the authorities themselves, whose conduct is distinctly impugned by one of these verdicts, if I did not take the best means in my power to provide for a thorough and adequate investigation of the facts, so that we may have materials on which to pronounce an authoritative and final judgment. As I pointed out yesterday, in answer to a question, there are some difficulties in the way of constituting a proper tribunal for the

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purpose. Without a special Act of Parliament, giving powers to take evidence upon oath and to compel the attendance of witnesses, a Public Department is, in a matter of this kind, largely dependent upon the spontaneous co-operation of those concerned. But I feel confident that we shall have that co-operation, for the public interest demands that the whole truth shall be disclosed. If I succeed in providing a tribunal which shall command general confidence, I am sure I may rely upon everyone concerned to do all in his power to insure that all the facts connected with this deplorable occurrence shall be known. I must now utter one final word of appeal to those who have far more power than even the Local Authorities or myself to put an end to the existing state of things. This deplorable dispute has now been going on for the greater part of two months; it has involved the districts affected in widespread misery; it has engendered feelings of animosity easy to arouse, but difficult to allay; and it has been productive of most disastrous results to the general industries of the country. I trust, then, that it is not too much to express the hope that neither on the one side nor the other will there be a continuance of that unreasoning obstinacy which, I cannot but think, is the main obstacle to the settlement of this great quarrel. Serious, indeed, will be the responsibility of those who persist in such an attitude. I believe I am expressing the unanimous opinion of all Parties in this House, and of every reasonable man outside, when I say that we look with confidence to the moderation and good sense of both sides in this dispute to put an end to it without delay.

*MR. NUSSEY (Pontefract) said, he did not propose to enter into the facts of the case; indeed, he agreed with the right hon. Gentleman that the facts immediately surrounding it were shrouded in some obscurity, nor did he intend, on the one hand, to criticise the action taken by the Local Authorities for the preservation of the peace, nor, on the other, the action taken by the miners of the district. He rose merely to say that great anxiety had been expressed that there should be further inquiry, and he was very glad to find that the right hon. Gentleman had

consented to hold such an inquiry. An inquiry into the whole proceedings was due, in common fairness, to all the persons concerned, and he hoped the investigation would be full and complete.

MR. DODD (Essex, Maldon) said, he did not wish to detain the House after the promise of inquiry that had been given by the Home Secretary, but he wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he would include in the inquiry the question whether it was necessary for the Local Authorities to seek the aid of the military—a point upon which there was difference of opinion. There were great differences of opinion on that point. There were many people in the district, as he knew, who thought that the whole matter would have been better managed by bringing in additional police, and for that reason he asked the Home Secretary to inform the House whether the inquiry would include an investigation as to whether it was right to bring in soldiers? There was reason to believe that the unfortunate men who were killed were innocent of any complicity in the rioting, and if this was proved by the inquiry to be the fact he hoped the Home Secretary would devise some means by which compensation should be awarded to the relatives of the deceased men.

MR. J. BURNS (Battersea) said, as the Home Secretary had pointedly alluded to the Labour Members of Parliament, who he regretted were not present to criticise, in the light of fuller information than he possessed, the conduct of the Local Authorities and the Home Secretary, he (Mr. Burns) ventured, not as one in full possession of the facts, to briefly address the House. As the Home Secretary had granted an inquiry, which he trusted would be full, clear, impartial, and comprehensive, this was not the time nor the occasion for discussing matters which could only be adequately discussed when the Report of the inquiry was laid upon the Table of the House. He most sincerely agreed with the Home Secretary in his hesitation to assume towards the Local Authorities who were responsible for law and order in this country, that position and that power of controlling and supervising the local forces in a manner that could only be properly undertaken by a Minister of

the Interior such as existed in France. He gathered from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Thanet that he was inclined to impose upon the Local Authorities a central control. He (Mr. Burns) was certain that if such a system was applied to the large industrial communities in England, not only would riots ensue, but it would produce civil war, if not actual revolution. The Home Secretary, with that respect for local governing institutions which characterised all conditions of Englishmen, preferred to throw upon the Local Authorities through their Watch Committees—and he (Mr. Burns) hoped very soon through their elected Magistrates—the responsibility which no centralised State power could control. If one of the results of the inquiry was still further to decentralise political power and establish the right of every district to have its own elected Magistrates, then they would see the workmen's leaders jointly charged, with Magistrates from other sections of the community, with the preservation of order. Under the present Magisterial system, the administration of the law was practically in the hands of a body of men who, when a dispute took place and riot was threatened, thought less of the interests of the community, and the maintenance of law and order, than of using the soldiers and the police for morally intimidating men whom they, as masters, were fighting. [*Cries of "Oh, oh!"*] He believed that the military had been imported into this district without sufficient justification. There was no doubt that in the case where the military were called in near Pontefract, the thing was done to intimidate the men through their wives and families. [*Cries of "No!"*] He felt confident that such was the fact, and if the local police had been kept at home instead of being kept on duty at Doncaster Races the military would not have been required. [*"Oh!"*] Yes, it was quite true, and he regretted that police should be drafted off to racecourses to keep in control the acts of blackguardism which were associated with racecourses everywhere. He could cite one instance of the advantage of elected Magistrates. He referred to the City of London, which had the only Corporation with elected Magistrates. A short time ago he conducted a trade dispute right in the centre of London, the

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richest city in the world, and in that case the Aldermen were strictly and regularly at their duties, were brought face to face with the circumstances of the dispute, and were, to a very great extent, in touch with the leaders of the men.

MR. SPEAKER said, the hon. Member was scarcely entitled to raise the whole question of elected Magistrates on the Appropriation Bill.

MR. J. BURNS said, he deferred to the Speaker. He only wished to say that when the whole facts were brought before the House it would be seen that in order to deal satisfactorily with these labour disputes, and to prevent men on the outskirts, as it were, of a dispute from discrediting those who were engaged in the struggle, it would be necessary to have elected Magistrates. They succeeded, and what was possible in their case could be achieved in other towns if Magistrates were appointed on the elective system. If the Home Secretary, who was a strong man—perhaps on some matters too strong, and lacking a little in discretion—would bring in a Bill to provide for the appointment of Magistrates by election, he would do a great deal to assist in the preservation of law and order everywhere, especially on occasions of public excitement and trade disputes.

FOREIGN POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall) said, he was sorry to have to ask the attention of the House for a few moments to another subject; but, as a matter of fact, those Members of the House who were not Members of the Government had had no opportunity this Session of bringing forward questions which in ordinary Sessions could be done on private Members' nights. He proposed to call attention to two or three points which, he thought, illustrated the reason why a general want of confidence prevailed in the Government at home and abroad. He thought the condition of affairs at home was very much to be deplored. There was a general feeling of unsettlement. There was a grievous depression in trade, and the existing labour disputes and the misery and ruin which prevailed in consequence were very considerably due to the want of confidence in the present Government. They had been in power 13 months, and from a legislative

point of view had done nothing. It was a curious misfortune—if it was not the fault—of the present Government that at this period, as, indeed, during the Administration of the present Prime Minister, foreign Governments felt at liberty to attack British interests. Taking the 13 months that the present Government had been in Office, and referring first of all to Egypt, our interests in that country were threatened with very serious injury indeed. Egypt seemed on the point, for the moment, of sinking back into the disorder and anarchy from which British administration had rescued it. That was entirely due to the fact that the present Prime Minister, when out of Office, gave foreign countries, and especially France, reason to believe that he was prepared to evacuate Egypt. Happily the danger which had arisen in Egypt from the weakness of the right hon. Gentleman and his most unfortunate utterances in public before he came into Office had been averted by the firmness of Lord Rosebery, whose influence in the Cabinet was sufficient to cause timely action to be taken; but the restoration of order and the maintenance of our interests in Egypt had only been effected by the process of nearly doubling the British Army of Occupation. Our interests had also been seriously injured by the action of the Government in regard to the dispute between France and Siam. Her Majesty's Government had shown a great want of acquaintance with the affairs of Siam, and had allowed themselves to be steadily pushed down hill by the progress of French aggression. Ten weeks ago, if any hon. Member had told the Under Secretary that by the 20th of September Siam would have been despoiled of one-third of her territory; that she would have been compelled to pay a large and unjust indemnity; that the revenues of some of her wealthiest Provinces would have been assigned to France; and that there would be great danger of a French Protectorate, such a statement would have been laughed to scorn. But all these evils had come about. Siam had been despoiled with impunity by the French Government, and its integrity and independence had been threatened. One of the most serious elements in the matter was the influence which this weakness on the part of the Government must have on public feeling

in India. It was a most deplorable coincidence that at the moment Russia was rapidly advancing towards the frontier of India through the Pamirs, and generally seeking to extend her influence and control over Northern Persia, another great European Power should be successful in making a serious attack upon the integrity, if not the independence, of Siam, whose interests were largely bound up with our Indian Empire. Now these things caused a general feeling of want of confidence in the Government. The Under Secretary for the Colonies, with a courage which did him credit, disputed the proposition that the Government had exhibited weakness.

MR. S. BUXTON: Hear, hear!

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: But it was a fact that owing to the weakness displayed by Her Majesty's Government several British enterprises in Siam, involving the expenditure and profitable use of a large amount of capital, had been abandoned by British merchants. That was a distinct injury to British trade and commerce, and unless our interests were looked after more closely than they had been this injury was likely to extend. It was stated that the demands of France on Siam had by no means ceased, and that her Representative was now pressing further claims in excess of the Ultimatum which Siam had accepted. He hoped the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs would be able to tell the House that the Government were vigilant in the matter, and were determined not to consent to further concessions and further surrender on the part of the Government of Siam, and that if these exaggerated claims should be pressed by France the Government of Siam would have the support of Her Majesty's Government in resisting them. He desired to know if the Under Secretary could assure the House that the Russian forces now engaged in the Pamirs were not engaged in fortifying the very important Passes that led to Kashmir, and through Kashmir to our Indian frontier. It was a mournful fact, which could not be denied, that the moment the return to Office of Mr. Gladstone last year was assured, telegrams were sent from St. Petersburg ordering a Russian detachment to advance into the Pamirs. With regard to Mashonaland, it was a singular fact that the statement he made in the

House yesterday as to the danger of the replies made by the responsible Ministers of the Crown being repeated to foreign Governments and savage potentates, and thus encouraging them in attacks on British interests, was confirmed by a letter in this morning's *Times* from Lord Gifford, a representative of the Chartered Company. The varying statement made by the Government to Lo Bengula was—

"At the inevitable risk of the loss of all prestige at the hands of a man who, although a savage, is astute enough to read the situation thus brought about."

The vacillating conduct of the Government with reference to the threatened Matabele raid, and their contradictory orders, were simply encouraging this savage chief in his attacks. The House had been given to understand that Mr. Rhodes, the representative of the Chartered Company, was satisfied with the action of Her Majesty's Government. But Lord Gifford practically contradicted that statement. He said as to the contradictory orders of the Government—

"On learning of this collision the Government informs the British South Africa Company at one moment that they (the Company) were solely responsible for providing both men and money for any war, and for the maintenance of peace in Mashonaland and Matabeleland; the next moment, despite the attack by the Matabeles, the Company are advised that war could not be commenced without Government authority."

Another contradiction was thus described—

"The High Commissioner at one moment sends a message to Lo Bengula virtually ordering him to withdraw his impi and punish the indunas who had brought about the collision, and, further, claims compensation for the injury done to the property of the white men; the next moment, notwithstanding the defiant reply sent by Lo Bengula, and with the knowledge that the King has sent for his impi to return at once from the Barotse raid, and notwithstanding, further, the great damage done to the property of the settlers in Mashonaland, the Government informs not only the company, but also Lo Bengula, that compensation should not be demanded from him—thus at the inevitable risk of the loss of all prestige at the hands of a man who, although a savage, is astute enough to read the situation thus brought about."

Further on Lord Gifford said—

"To a large extent this state of affairs has been brought about by the hesitating attitude of the Government; the absolute withdrawal of the claims for compensation to the white settlers; and the unreasonable veto fettering the action of the Chartered Company, which is virtually this:—'You must wait until the Matabele assegais are at your throat before you

may lift a hand in your own defence.' This position of the settlers in Mashonaland caused by the attitude assumed by the British Government is unparalleled in the history of England."

The state of affairs in Mashonaland was, as the Under Secretary for the Colonies had said, becoming graver day by day. The hon. Member had spent a large portion of his speech in making an attack on a British officer who was now in a position of responsibility. The hon. Member had used language of severity and injustice. ["Oh, oh!"] Yes; because he had spoken of cruelty and murder. He had very much regretted to hear the attack made upon Captain Lendy yesterday by the Under Secretary of State (Mr. Buxton), and he did not think it was at all justified. Captain Lendy's offence was at the most the offence of a soldier who was too reckless in the conduct of military operations, and who did not cease firing at the moment when the minimum loss of life was secured. That was very different from being responsible for murder, and no Member of the Government should bring such a charge against a man in Captain Lendy's position. The hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary (Mr. S. Buxton) subsequently withdrew the word "murder," but others did not, and he (Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett) said that the attack made upon Captain Lendy was scandalous. Captain Lendy might have been guilty of imprudence, and might have continued to fire longer than was necessary, but these were things that happened everywhere in the employment of the armed forces of the Crown. Captain Lendy might be at that moment engaged in defending the British settlers and British interests in Mashonaland at the peril of his life, and yet that was the moment chosen by the hon. Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Paul) and others to denounce him. The responsibility the Government had assumed in ordering the Chartered Company's forces to make no advance without the permission of the Home Government was extreme. How could they telegraph and wait for an answer when Lobengula was perhaps burning their barns, laying waste their fields and massacring their servants? If the lives of the settlers could be saved in the forts their property would be destroyed in a day or two if Lo Bengula's forces were permitted to

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advance. The Military Authorities ought to have permission the moment they were satisfied that Lo Bengula was making an offensive movement against them to attack him.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir E. GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down is so much in the habit of bringing general charges of a sweeping character that I think we have ceased to attach much importance to them; and, therefore, I shall devote myself to the one or two instances in reference to foreign policy which the hon. Member has advanced in support of these general charges. As to the question of Siam, it has been discussed more than once before this Session, and there is nothing new to be said about it. On the last occasion that the hon. Member brought charges against the Government in reference to Siam, the right hon. Baronet (Sir J. Fergusson), who was Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs in the last Administration, dissociated himself from the statement of the hon. Member that the prestige of this country has been damaged in the least degree in reference to what has occurred in Siam. The policy of always maintaining that when the opposite Party is in power whatever happens may diminish British prestige is not a patriotic policy; it is not one which enables us to say that he who adopts it has done his utmost to uphold the honour of the country. The hon. Member suggests that the troubles in the Pamirs were owing to the advent of a Liberal Government to power; but these troubles began under the late Government. The incident at Somatash occurred on the 24th of July last year, long before the present Government came into power, and orders must have been sent from St. Petersburg many weeks previously.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: My distinct allegation is that the orders for the Russian advance on the Pamirs were telegraphed towards the end of July, when it was known that the Elections would result in the return to Office of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) at a very early date. The practical result of the English Elections was known in St. Petersburg by the middle

of July, and orders were immediately telegraphed.

SIR E. GREY: I repeat that it would have been impossible to have sent such orders in time for the incident at Somatash on the 24th of July, after the result of the British Elections was known at St. Petersburg. Some time ago the Russians in the region of the Pamirs actually went so far as to arrest a British officer. That was when the late Government was in power.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: And they apologised.

SIR E. GREY: Yes, they apologised for it afterwards; but the hon. Member's contention is that they only dared do these things when a Liberal Government was in power. Then, take the question of Egypt. The hon. Member alleges that there would have been no disturbance or friction in Egypt but for the advent to power of the present Government, and he bases that assertion on statements made by the Prime Minister when in Opposition. It is perfectly true that a desire has been expressed for the evacuation of Egypt, but that desire has found its fullest and most legitimate expression in the Drummond Wolff Convention, which was signed by the hon. Member's own Government. The Drummond Wolff Convention, it is true, did not come into force; but that was not owing to any want of will on the part of Lord Salisbury. When the hon. Member says that troubles in different parts of the world have occurred in consequence of a feeling of apprehension owing to the present Government being in power, he is bound, if he wishes to obtain, if not the assent, at all events the respect of his opponents, to have regard to such events as the signing of that Convention, and such things as took place in the Pamirs.

SIR R. TEMPLE (Surrey, Kingston) said, he wished to submit a few remarks on our Imperial position in the world, as it had been affected by the proceedings of the present Sitting of Parliament. He did not wish to make an attack on the Government; on the contrary, he quite recognised that in some respects they had done well, and there were certain matters on which he could join with their friends in offering them congratulations. In the first place, the happy termination of the dispute between the

United Kingdom and the United States with regard to the seal fisheries in the Behring Sea and the North Pacific Ocean was undoubtedly a matter for congratulation. Whilst the reference of the dispute to arbitration was settled by the late Government, it might fairly be admitted that when the arbitrators met at Paris, Her Majesty's present Government did all they possibly could to present the British case in the best possible manner. It was, no doubt, largely owing to the most able presentation of that case by the two leading barristers in the House as well as to the inherent justice of the case itself that this happy result had been attained. He thought Her Majesty's Government might also be congratulated upon having despatched a Mission to Uganda in deference to the wishes of the philanthropic and religious world. The religious world desired the Mission in the interests of missionary labour, while the philanthropic world desired it for the suppression of the Slave Trade. Now that the Mission had been carried out, everybody was looking forward with the deepest anxiety to see what course would be taken by Her Majesty's Government. As regarded Egypt, he also thought the attitude of the Government had been highly satisfactory. The speech of the Prime Minister on the subject was one of the most useful and able speeches he had ever heard delivered on any Imperial question, and this was the more wonderful because the right hon. Gentleman had rendered his position peculiarly hard for himself. The right hon. Gentleman had undoubtedly said much more on previous occasions than he ought to have said, and had made declarations which were understood by the French to foreshadow the evacuation of Egypt. Notwithstanding that, Egypt had not been evacuated, and the prospect of evacuation was as far off and as much relegated to the dim and distant future under the present as under the preceding Government. At the same time, he felt bound to warn the Government that Members on the Opposition side of the House felt very great anxiety upon a great variety of foreign and Colonial affairs, and hoped that during the short Recess Ministers would do something to allay and mitigate their alarms. If they did not he respectfully warned them that when the House met again in the

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Autumn there would be constant interpellations and a free use of all the Rules of the House for the purpose of impressing upon the Government and their supporters the views entertained by the Opposition. He trusted that the Government would not lose sight of India, which might be said at the present moment to be between two fires. The grave contingencies and possible eventualities should not be lost of. With regard to the Eastern danger which threatened India he should not say anything specific at this moment, because when the House was in Committee of Supply he had twice an opportunity of going into that matter with the utmost detail. But he might say this, in justice to the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs—that he believed he was quite correct in saying there was no disturbance in the region of the Pamirs. Nevertheless, he did not think his answer was as satisfactory as it might have been. It is, no doubt, a very suspicious circumstance, that when a certain proceeding politically took place in this country in July of last year a forward movement in the Pamirs was ordered from St. Petersburg during the latter part of July. They know that the time of England's difficulty was always that of Russia's opportunity. If he were not unwilling to detain the House, he could show that the step Russia took in Central Asia had been connected with a movement in this country. He therefore, repeated that they on that side of the House were not to be thought unduly suspicious if they did connect those events in the Pamirs with the political electoral circumstances in this country. No one could say it was so for certain; but everything points very much in bearing this out. As regarded the movements which took place previously under the late Government, they were not withdrawn. As the House knew, a British officer was arrested, but he was immediately released and an apology made. But the movements were not withdrawn. He did not think, however, that there was any remissness on the part of the late Government in respect of the Pamirs. At the same time, he did not wish to fix any blame whatever upon the present Government either. All he contended was that if the result of the General Election of July, 1892, had been other

than it was, they should have heard very little about Russia moving in the Pamirs. That, of course, was purely a matter of opinion, which he had a right to submit to the House. Russia, however, had made this movement, which was of immense importance with regard to India. It was probably the political action last year which gave an impulse to Diplomatic Missions. At any rate, various military movements had been made from Cashmere towards the boundaries of the Pamirs by this Government. He greatly regretted that such a policy should have been questioned by hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway. They probably did not perceive that this movement, of which they are inclined to complain, was taken by reason of Russian advance in the Pamirs. That Russia intended to take a portion of the Pamirs was most certain. He would not detain the House to detail the geographical position or the political importance of the Pamirs. But he might add that the whole question of the delimitation of the Pamirs was pending, and they should do nothing to embarrass the proceedings. According to British ideas, Russia was only entitled to a very small part of the Pamirs if they came to a partition. There must be a partition of the Pamirs, as there had been of other territory in different parts of the world. They could only wish God speed to the British negotiations. Another word:—They should prevent Russia taking the law into her own hands. While negotiations were pending they should prevent Russia taking a forward movement; possibly there was regret expressed for the action of her officers; but, nevertheless, they had not been withdrawn. Therefore he did hope nothing of that kind would be permitted in this case. Again, in Africa they had abundant cause for anxiety. The inhabitants and cultivators in the neighbourhood of Suakin were in great danger from Mahomedan and Arab invasions, and Her Majesty's Government ought to see that the Egyptian Government performed its duty of protecting the inhabitants of that region. The Niger Company seemed to have got into some embarrassment and danger. He was glad to hear the defence of the company which had been made by the Under Secretary. No one could doubt that it was doing England's work in the upper and middle regions of the

great river. It was difficult for private Members to get at the real truth as to Lieutenant Mizon's actions; but if we were not careful these would lead to serious complications between Great Britain and France. He earnestly commended that important letter to the consideration of the Government, assuring them that great interest was felt, not only on his side of the House, but in many important quarters outside, on this subject. With regard to Uganda, there could be no alternative to bringing the territory under a British protectorate. The Government might endeavour to avoid that great contingency, but the sooner they made up their minds to face the inevitable the better, for he was perfectly certain that the minds of the great majority of the British people were made up on that subject. There was very great anxiety as to the future of the British South Africa Chartered Company. That company had been very active in the most honourable as well as patriotic manner. Though it might be true that some Corporations of the same character had been mixed up in questionable finance, and engaged in transactions of a doubtful character, nothing of the kind could be urged against this company. At least two distinguished men—the late Sir William Mackinnon and the late Sir William Bennett—took part in originating it, and with it was associated the hon. Member for Westminster, a gentleman whose position placed him beyond all possible motives of interest in the matter. He urged that as a reason why the Government should help the company to maintain its position, and, above all, they should give them some assistance in constructing the railway from Mombasa to the Great Lake, a project of the most important character. The railway had practically been taken in hand by the late Government. He did not know what the present Government was doing in the matter. No doubt they were handicapped by the unfortunate speeches which they had made in Opposition; but he hoped that they would take a patriotic view of the matter, and remember that England required the total suppression of slavery. He was unwilling to mix himself up in the controversies about South Africa. It was said a design existed for the formation of a great Customs Union, which was to bind Cape Colony to the

Transvaal Republic, to the exclusion of Natal. That would be a very serious matter for Natal, and it deserved the very careful consideration of the House and the country. On the subject of Mashonaland, he wished to say that that country was within the British sphere of influence or it was not; it was under British protection of some sort or kind or it was not. If it were, we were bound to protect it. That was a proposition so plain as to be almost a truism, if it had not been controverted in the Debates which had taken place on the subject. Mashonaland was threatened with invasion by a certain tribe, and he wanted to know why we should not take care of Mashonaland as we took care of the outlying districts of the Indian territory? We did not allow tribes to raid our outlying territories in India. Why should we allow Mashonaland to be made a sort of unhappy hunting ground for the Matabeles? We were bound by every principle of duty to effectually protect Mashonaland, and the only question that remained was as to the best mode of protecting the country. The authorities on the spot were, he contended, the best judges on that subject, and we ought to have confidence in those authorities, and not find fault with every movement that was made or proposed by them to repel the enemy. It had been urged that we should not be rushed into war by the colonists in Mashonaland. But we had permitted ourselves to take up a position in Mashonaland, and it was now too late to withdraw. We must perform the duties appertaining to that position, and we should not say that the performance of these duties meant being rushed into war. He strongly condemned the observations which had been made by certain hon. Members in reference to Captain Lendy. Whether Captain Lendy served under the Crown, or under the Colonial Government, or as a Mashonaland Administrator, he was to all intents and purposes a British officer.

*MR. A. C. MORTON: It has been distinctly stated that these officers are lent to the company, and while acting as such are not acting for the British Government, and that we are not responsible.

SIR R. TEMPLE said, he thought that Captain Lendy had been acting for the British Government; but, for the

sake of argument, he would concede the point to the hon. Member for Peterborough. Beyond all question, Captain Lendy was a British officer, employed on difficult duty in Mashonaland; and he was, therefore, entitled to more generous treatment than he received yesterday at the hands of hon. Members opposite, some of whose speeches were calculated to have a very bad effect on those who were serving their country abroad under circumstances of the greatest danger and discouragement. It was all very well for hon. Members to sit there and criticise men who were acting in great emergencies and in scenes of doubt and difficulty; but he was not sure that those hon. Members would have done any better, if so well, under similar conditions. It might be conceded that Captain Lendy had acted injudiciously; but his action was, after all, only an error of judgment, and they all knew how the judgments of military officers were open to question. Hon. Members who dissented from that proposition had criticised, as an error of judgment, certain actions of a military officer which had recently been taken in Yorkshire. How much more, then, was it possible to commit an error of judgment in the heart of Africa? Captain Lendy's conduct was certainly not open to the extreme observations which had been passed upon it yesterday by hon. Members opposite; and, in justice to his fellow-countrymen who were serving their country abroad under circumstances of difficulty and danger, whom some hon. Members were too much given to denouncing and condemning, he felt it his duty to make these observations. Passing from South Africa, he desired to say that there was great anxiety about the future of Newfoundland. In Newfoundland there was, no doubt, grave dissatisfaction on the part of the people with the *modus vivendi*, and with the arrangements which had been made. The opinion prevailed in the colony that France had been allowed to take undue advantage of her Treaty rights, and to acquire on the coast of Newfoundland a position that was intolerable. India was about to come up for discussion, and perhaps he might be allowed to refer to the great half-way house between England and India—Gibraltar. The greater part of our

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Indian trade passed in front of that historic rock. There was grave doubt whether the fortifications there were sufficiently strong ; but one of the most pressing needs at the present time was the construction of a dock, such as would enable our men-of-war to be repaired there. If this dock were not constructed, there would be the greatest danger to our Fleet in case of war, for, in the event of a naval action being fought in the Western part of the Mediterranean, any British men-of-war that might be injured would either have to be repaired at Gibraltar, or, if that were impossible, to remain *hors de combat* for the rest of the war. He knew that there were other dockyards under construction elsewhere ; but the need for the construction of no dockyard in the Empire was so pressing and important as that suggested at Gibraltar ; and he could assure the Government that they on that side of the House would not let the matter drop, but that they would spur, spur, spur the Government until they did their duty. He trusted that next Session the House would be gratified by seeing a substantial amount placed upon the Estimates for that purpose. A few words now about our naval position. We had a first-rate programme under the late Government, but that programme had been given up by the present Government. He desired to know whether the Government had undertaken the construction of the proper number of ships to maintain our position in competition with other nations, and also to replace the wastage that occurred annually in such a vast Service ? They had been told that certain new vessels were under construction. They hoped they were ; but while they did not doubt the sincerity of the Government and the accuracy of their information, they regretted to say that they had been unable to find out on the spot whether that was the case or not. They would defer the subject until the House met again, when they hoped that they would have better information.

MR. PAUL (Edinburgh, S.) wished to say, in reply to those hon. Gentlemen who had attacked him for bringing forward the case of Captain Lendy, that he did not withdraw anything he had said with reference to the conduct of that officer. The statements he made on the

previous evening were based upon the Blue Book which had recently been issued. It was said by the hon. Baronet that there were people who took a delight in running down their fellow-countrymen who were serving their country in difficulty and danger abroad. If that were so, he could only say that he was not one of them. It was because British officers did their duty, as a rule, so admirably that the case of Captain Lendy attracted notice. Very likely, if Captain Lendy had been a French officer, nothing whatever would have been said ; but we were not French. This country had always observed a higher standard than others in dealing with natives, and he hoped that standard would always be maintained.

GRIEVANCES OF WARRANT OFFICERS.

MR. E. J. C. MORTON (Devonport) called attention to the grievances of the warrant officers of the Navy, and pointed out that the Navy was the only Service in the country in which there was an absolute wall across the line of promotion, preventing the continuance of a man's advance to commission rank. He could best explain the grievance under which warrant officers in the Navy suffered by relating an instance within his own knowledge of three brothers, sons of a farmer. One of the brothers by energy and ability obtained a Scholarship at Cambridge, and was now a Professor in connection with the University. Another brother enlisted in the Army, and obtained a commission. At present he was a captain, and might some day arrive at the rank of colonel. The third brother entered the Navy, and at the age of 25 became a warrant officer, and that was the highest thing he could look to in the Service for the rest of his life, the only other advance possible being the nominal rank of sub-lieutenant, which he would be entitled to on retiring from active service at the age of 55. This case was a remarkable one, owing to the extraordinary ability and services of this warrant officer. So great was the ability he displayed that in the Burmah Campaign in 1885 that he was placed in command of a gunboat patrolling 100 miles of coast. In the course of this service he had a severe encounter with pirates, and although the pirates had a much superior force he defeated them ; and so valuable

were his services that he was specially complimented by the captain of his ship on the quarter-deck, and he also received a special letter of reward from the authorities at Whitehall. Then, again, when the *Howe* was stranded, the captain of that vessel based his statement on the estimates made by this same warrant officer, who further distinguished himself during the time the *Howe* was on the rocks by superintending the construction of 15 copper dams in a manner which called forth the special commendation of the officers of the *Howe* and of the Salvage Company. Could nothing be done to reward this warrant officer, whose services in the Navy were of such value that the Admiralty awarded him a sum of money in recognition of their merit? He presumed it was competent for Her Majesty to give a commission to any seaman of the Navy, but, as a matter of fact, only two seamen in the past 80 years were so rewarded. These two instances occurred in 1887, when two men were selected on the ground of valour, which he might remark was not a special ground for promoting men to commission rank. For many years there had been a continued cry amongst naval officers for more Lieutenants in the Navy. Warrant officers were sometimes entrusted with Lieutenants' work, and as long ago as 1885 the Minister then in charge of naval affairs stated that if the difficulty of education could be removed, and if warrant officers were able to pass the examinations that Lieutenants had to pass, the chief difficulty in the way would be removed. Upon that hint the warrant officers, at their own expense, instituted classes, and got themselves instructed in navigation and other matters, and they were now ready and willing, numbers of them, to submit themselves to an examination of the same character as that passed by Lieutenants. It seemed to him that the promotion of warrant officers to some form of commission rank would not only be just in itself, but would save the nation money, because these men had great experience, and if they were promoted the great cost of training men for the position of Lieutenants would in some measure be avoided. Warrant officers did not demand that they should have continuous promotion. All they asked was that a

new rank or line of promotion should be created for them corresponding to the position of Quartermasters and Riding-masters in the Army. To do this would cost money, but it had been calculated—and the calculation had not been contradicted by the Admiralty—that the total cost would not exceed £3,000. Although no exact promise had been made with regard to these officers, he would point out that extreme sympathy had been expressed by previous Ministers, and the late First Lord of the Admiralty in the year 1891 held out strong hopes that their case would be met—hopes so strong that men not altogether unreasonably took it for a promise. He hoped, therefore, that the Secretary to the Admiralty would be able to hold out some further hope that the case of these men would be dealt with, and that the warrant officers of the Navy, who were not less able nor less efficient than warrant officers in the Army, would as soon as possible be put on an equal footing with the Army warrant officers in respect to promotion to commission rank.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Sir U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH, Lancashire, Clitheroe), in reply, said, the grievances of the warrant officers had been under the consideration of the Admiralty, but, although some points might be further considered, the Board did not see how to overcome the great difficulties in the way of creating a new grade or rank. With regard to the declaration of the late First Lord, the Admiralty were desirous of opening appointments in the Ordnance Establishments to warrant officers. When the Ordnance Department was taken over from the War Office the officers of the Establishment were, of course, also taken over, but it was intended as vacancies occurred to promote warrant officers to those positions which are now held by commissioned officers. He could only add, on behalf of the Admiralty, that they felt great sympathy with the warrant officers in the want of promotion at a certain stage of service, but they must recognise that there was also stagnation in some other branches of the Service, and it was very difficult to avoid. To remove it might cost more than could be justified. The interests of this extremely deserving and valuable class of Her Majesty's Service

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would always receive careful attention at the hands of the Board of Admiralty.

THE SPARKBROOK FACTORY.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS (Birmingham, Bordesley) said, he wished to call attention to the proposal of the War Office to dismantle the Small Arms Factory at Sparkbrook, and to turn it into a repairing shop. This was, he urged, a matter not only of local concern, but of national import. He contrasted the advantages of the Sparkbrook Factory with those of the factory at Enfield, and pointed out that in the event of a prolonged invasion of this country Enfield would be almost unprotected. Railway communication with that place could not be compared with Sparkbrook, which was in the midst of a network of railways, placing the district in communication with all parts of the Kingdom. Sparkbrook, moreover, was situated in a district possessing rich resources of coal and iron and other requisites for carrying on such a factory. The policy of the Government, if carried out, towards the Sparkbrook Factory would entail great loss upon his constituents in Bordesley, and, although he insisted on their fair and equal treatment, he did not base his objections solely on the loss his constituents would suffer. He based them on military grounds, and thought every military man would agree as to the imprudence of closing a small arms factory with so many facilities for its work as that at Sparkbrook. The factory was capable of turning out from 600 to 1,000 rifles a week. It possessed the best machinery, and he contended that to close the place as a factory and remove the works to Enfield would not only be contrary to the understanding on which the Sparkbrook Factory was opened, but wasting a considerable amount of public money. He earnestly asked the Government to reconsider their attitude in the matter.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby): I am sorry that the right hon. Gentleman has not given notice of his intention to raise this question. The representatives of the War Office are not present, and I am in the unfortunate position of being a sort of residuary legatee of all the odds and ends that turn up on the Appropria-

tion Bill. I am afraid I cannot give a detailed reply; but I am sure the right hon. Gentleman's observations will receive due weight. I am not surprised that the right hon. Gentleman should think that everything the present Government has done is wrong, and that everything its predecessor did was right; but I am at a loss to understand the right hon. Gentleman when he puts his claim on national grounds. The right hon. Gentleman said that in the event of a prolonged invasion it would be better to have a factory at Birmingham than at Enfield.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS: My statement was not against Enfield.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I am afraid that in the case of a prolonged invasion Birmingham from its importance, and especially from the importance of its Representatives, would be one of the first objects of an invading Army. They would probably desire to hold the Members for Birmingham, and especially the right hon. Member for Bordesley, as hostages, with a view to the conclusion of peace on favourable terms. But it ought to be some consolation to the right hon. Gentleman that, whatever method be adopted by the War Office, it will be adopted on the deliberate advice of competent military advisers.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

EAST INDIA REVENUE ACCOUNTS.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

*MR. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough) rose to move the following Amendment:—

"That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable that all Indian officials should be allowed an appeal to the Home Government without regard being had to the amount of their salary."

The hon. Gentleman said that a few weeks back he brought a special case before the House, and he now referred to that case to say that it was on a question of principle. He brought before the Secretary for India the case of Mr. Kalvade, whose salary was just 250 rupees per month. There was an un-

fortunate rule in connection with the Government of India that when an officer had a salary of over 250 rupees per month he could appeal to the Home Government; but if his salary was only 250 rupees, or under, he had no right of appeal. In this particular case the official's salary was just 250 rupees per month, and on that occasion he asked the Under Secretary for India whether he would consider the appeal under all the circumstances? This officer's salary was only short of the amount fixed by the rule by a fraction of a rupee, and on account of not having the right to appeal he had been practically ruined. It was not necessary for him to argue his case, whether it was right or wrong. This official had been ruined by a decision of the Government of India; and, therefore, he desired—and he thought very properly desired—to appeal to the Home Government; and, above all, he made a request—and this was the object of his getting the appeal—that there should be a judicial trial so as to settle the questions in dispute between himself and the Government. This was the point refused, and, therefore, he thought, so far as that particular case was concerned, that Mr. Kalvade had a very strong case indeed in favour of the right to appeal to the Home Government. He would not argue that particular case any further at the present moment. He had brought it forward before, and he only mentioned it now as an illustration of the desirability of carrying out the reform proposed by the Amendment. There were a very large number of these cases, probably more than they knew of at the present time, and he should take an opportunity later on of asking the Under Secretary of State for India to furnish a Return showing how many of such cases there were. What he desired to do now was to get the principle acknowledged of the right of appeal. According to present Rules it was held that a person having a salary above 250 rupees per month had the right of appealing to the Home Government, but that the poorer officials had no right of appeal. It might be said that it was “too much trouble,” or that it was wrong to allow appeals at all to the Government at home. If they decided that, well and good; but

now they said that the rich official who, in his (Mr. Morton's) opinion, did not need the right so much should have an appeal to the Home Government, and that the poor man should not. That was opposed to all ideas of justice in this or any other civilised country. He had another reason for specially asking for this reform from the Government. So far as he understood, it was the European officials who had the large salaries, and, therefore, the right of appeal to the Home Government, whereas it was the natives and the half-caste people that had smaller salaries who were deprived of the right of appeal. So far as he had been able to ascertain from the figures, there were about 4,000 European officers as against 12,000 natives and half-castes. Therefore, it was the natives who got the smaller salaries who would be benefited by an alteration in this rule with regard to appeals. Why should not the people with the smaller salaries have this right of appeal? He might be told that if appeals were allowed in all these cases there would be so many appeals that it would take too much trouble and time to look after them in this country. He did not agree with that view. His own impression was that if it were known to the officials in India that these people had the right of appeal they would act towards them more fairly, and there would be less injustice and cruelty. In some cases it was gross cruelty to refuse to redress the grievances, and if the higher officials were aware that an appeal could be made to this country against their conduct and decisions they would act differently. It was all very well to say that our officers in India and our Government acted fairly and well. He did not want to make any charge against them, but they knew very well that in India the British people considered it their duty to protect themselves at all hazards against the natives, and to treat them as a conquered people. Therefore it was not likely—it was against human nature he supposed—that they would take a very fair view in all cases of the position of these native officers. [“Oh, oh!”] So far as they had been able to ascertain, that was just what the complaints had been in India—that justice was not meted out to the natives; and, notwithstanding the ironical cheering of some hon. Members, he

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believed he was right in saying that the general tendency was to act against the natives. Then, why not allow these appeals? In their ordinary policy in this country they allowed appeals to almost everybody; it was the principle upon which they acted in all their Government affairs. Should they be bound by the judgment of any official whatever? Sometimes in this country officials of the lower rank were turned off without being heard, and the right of appeal in these matters had in some cases been brought before the Law Courts. He remembered reading of an eminent Judge who said that the meanest of Her Majesty's subjects, no matter what his conduct had been, had the right to be heard and the right to appeal, and he added that even the Almighty called Cain before him before he condemned him. So that they had very high authority that a man should be heard, and heard impartially, before he was condemned. He wanted the Government to thoroughly understand that they were not satisfied with the present condition of things. He did not at all wish to charge the Home Government with a desire to act unjustly. No doubt the Governments of India had a right of discretion if they choose to send on Petitions, but he did not think it ought to be a question of their discretion, because it was not likely that that discretion would be exercised in the way it ought to be. He thought it was very wrong that that discretion should be in the hands of officials in the position our officials were in India. He meant the officials who did not act from the will of the people, but depended upon the Army, and, therefore, had great power in that direction without consulting the wishes or feelings of the natives of the country. He had referred to one eminent Judge—he would now refer to another. Lord Camden said with regard to the discretion of a Judge—

"It is the law of tyrants; it is casual always; unknown, and depends upon temper, prejudice, or passion."

He supposed in any case in dealing with Indian affairs, they should have, to some extent, to depend on temper, prejudice, or passion; but as far as possible by allowing the right of appeal they ought,

of course, to remove that difficulty out of the way of their fellow-subjects, and in that sense he desired to treat the Indian people as British subjects, and allow to them the same liberty, rights, and privileges that he would allow the people of this country. He might be told that in another Amendment which was on the Paper—an Amendment with regard to a Royal Commission being appointed—his wishes might be gained by consenting to a Royal Commission being appointed, amongst other things, to give this very reform that he desired. On former occasions he had said that he objected to Royal Commissions altogether. As a rule a Royal Commission was a farce and a fraud upon the people, and they were moved and appointed for the purpose of putting off a question instead of settling it. Probably, this Royal Commission might be agreed to by the Government, and it would report five or six years hence. Then the Government would take another five or six years to consider the matter, and eventually they would be all dead and buried before anything was done in the way of a settlement. He asked the Government for justice for the people of India, and he did not see that a Royal Commission would do any earthly good to him nor to the Indian people. Everybody knew what were the grievances of the people of India, and they wanted immediate redress. They did not want to be put off by Royal Commissions, neither did he. Therefore, it was much better to propose, as he had done that day, some practical remedy for an acknowledged grievance. This was a grievance that would not be permitted in this country to last 24 hours, because it had always been admitted to be the right of the poorest and most insignificant individual to have an appeal, and he trusted that the Government of India would be able to consent to this reform. Several times during the last three or four years he had been asked to bring this matter before Parliament, and it ought now to be attended to immediately. This was an opportunity of doing something for the natives of India, and he had felt it his duty to urge the Government to do this little justice towards them. He hoped the Government would consent to the Resolution and make the necessary

it. You had better disencumber yourselves of the fatal gift of Empire than that the present generation should be punished for the sins of the past. I hope that no future historian will be able to say that the arms of England in India were irresistible, and that an ancient Empire fell before their victorious progress—yet that finally India was avenged because the power of her conqueror was broken by the intolerable burden and evils which she cast upon her victims, and that this wrong was accomplished by a waste of human life and a waste of wealth which England, with all her power, was unable to bear.”

*MR. NAOROJI (Finsbury, Central) : Forty years ago, when I first spoke upon this question, I expressed my faith that the British people were lovers of justice and fair play. After those 40 years, and with an intimate acquaintance with the people of this country, and a residence of 38 years, I repeat that faith. I stand here again in that faith, ten times stronger than ever it was before—that the British people are lovers of their Indian subjects—and I stand here in that faith hoping that India will receive justice and fair dealing at the hands of this Parliament. I might also add, Sir, that from that time to the present I have always held that the British rule is the salvation of India. A higher compliment I cannot pay to the British rule. It has done a great many good things, and has given new political life to India. If certain reforms that can be made, and about which there was no difficulty, are brought about, both England and India will be blessed. I do not want to occupy much of your time, so I will not say more on this point. I acknowledge with the deepest gratitude that so far, in several respects, though not in all, the English rule in India had been a great and an inestimable blessing. With regard to the Amendment I propose, in which I ask that a Royal Commission be appointed in order that we may come to the bottom of many questions of grievances, and especially into the principle and policy of the British rule as it exists at present, I may just quote a few words that were uttered by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister only a few days ago in connection with the question that is before us. He says—

“I must make an admission. I do not think that in this matter we ought to be guided exclusively—perhaps even principally—by those who may consider themselves experts. It is a

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very sad thing to say, but unquestionably it happens not infrequently in human affairs, that those who ought, from their situation, to know the most and the best, yet from prejudice and prepossessions know the least and worst.”

How far that is applicable to the Indian administration I am not undertaking to say; that is exactly what the inquiry ought to settle—whether the views expressed by the Anglo-Indian officials are the right views, or whether they are mistaken in the way the Prime Minister thinks they may be. He says, again—

“I certainly, for my part, do not propose to abide finally and decisively by official opinion. Independent opinion—independent but responsible—is what the House wants in my opinion in order to enable it to proceed safely in the career upon which, I admit, that it has definitively entered.”

And that is exactly what I appeal to. In the matter of the difference of opinion that exists between the Indian officials on the one hand and the native opinion on the other question it is absolutely necessary—especially in the case where this House cannot in any way watch the taxes and the taxpayers, which it cannot at a distance of 5,000 miles—it is absolutely necessary that there should be some independent inquiry to satisfy this House and the public whether the administration is such as it ought to be. I hear that grumbling has begun to come from India itself. Only the other day, the 15th June, a telegram appeared in *The Times* saying that there seemed to be little doubt that all classes of India would soon join in demanding a strict and impartial inquiry into the excessive cost of the Indian establishments and the contributions levied on the Indian Treasury by the War Office, the Admiralty, and the Foreign Office; it was universally felt that India has been treated very unfairly in these matters, and that any attempt to stifle or delay the inquiry would cause much bitterness and discontent. Now, this is not all that has to be inquired into. I say that the whole policy and principle of the Budget, and the whole administration requires an overhauling. The last inquiry we all know took place in 1854. Since then there has not been an inquiry of the same kind. When we see the Prime Minister himself acknowledging only a few weeks ago, on the 30th June, that the expenditure of India, and

especially the military expenditure, is alarming, and when we see also the Finance Minister telling us in his last speech—

"The financial position of the Government of India at the present moment is such as to give cause for apprehension."

I think it will be admitted by the House that the time has come when it is exceedingly necessary that some fair inquiry ought to be made into the state of affairs. Well may the Prime Minister say that the expenditure is alarming, when we see that in 1853 and 1854—when the last inquiry took place—the annual expenditure of India was £28,000,000, whereas now in 1893 and 1894, excluding everything connected with public works, railways, &c., we have an expenditure of £68,000,000, which means an increase of 140 per cent. upon the expenditure of 1853 and 1854 in 40 years. The question is, whether this expenditure is justifiable or not? No inquiry has been made during these 40 years, and it is time, with such an additional expenditure, that full inquiry ought to be made. And then we know, at the same time, that from the beginning of this century to the present day there has been a constant wail and complaint that India is poor; and when we remember that the latest Finance Ministers emphatically laid down that it is the poorest country in the world, even compared with Turkey in Europe, I think it will be enough to satisfy the House that there ought to be a proper inquiry. I will now take a few illustrations of the principles on which the Budget, as it were, is built up, and consequently ~~with illustrations~~ an indication of the principled nearly a of the whole administrative expenditure of here the Colonial Office, 00,000 he contri- pense of £100,000; British Exchequer which is paid from which I can assure the I have the India ~~at grateful, not also~~ about £500,000; the money ~~and policy~~ is taken out of ~~justice, and policy~~ from the Revenue that ~~ation~~. I have in the world. do with ~~a built at an ex-~~ given in the ~~, if it dr~~ every farthing of £168,000; ~~ear from I~~ every farthing of paid from ~~the first~~ the British Exchequer in the India ~~by the~~ every farthing of which thing like ~~Minister~~ the Indian Exchequer which is taken ~~in the~~ of the poorest country

The Colonial Service is finance accounts as about very farthing of which is British Exchequer. The of establishments given of

But there is one item which, small as it is, is peculiarly indicative of the curious relations between England and India. I refer to the examinations that take place in England to send out young men for service in India, where they get a splendid career. They inflict upon us, rightly or wrongly—I am not discussing the justifiableness of such an injury—injuries of six different kinds. They take the bread from the mouths of the natives; they take away from the natives the opportunities of service in their own country which they otherwise would have. That is the material welfare we lose. They take away also esteem and the wealth of experience, because when an English official of 20 or 40 years' experience leaves the country all his accumulated wisdom is utterly lost to us, and we do not get the benefit of the wealth of that wisdom which we have a right to from the experience of those who are serving in India. The result of that again is that we have no opportunity of exercising our faculties, or of showing our capacity for administration. So that I think, as a law of nature, our capacity is stunted, we lose and wither, and we naturally become, as it were, incapable in time of showing that we have capacity for government. And what follows? You add insult to injury. After stultifying our growth, our mental and moral capacity, we are told that we are not capable. Well, Sir, I cannot, of course, enter into the details of these various injuries we suffer; but I say that here are these English youths who are to go out to India urged—~~and a career~~, and yet for their independent Ruler, ~~her education~~ in this would have been necessary ~~£18,000~~ have entered into the war ~~example of~~ for a ~~specimen~~ examination and ~~for~~ ~~country India~~ must be ~~cha~~ ~~one~~ a year. This is a significant ~~has~~ the relations that exist between ~~and~~ and England. Lastly, I will ~~give~~ more authority. Lord Hartington ~~He~~ put the case very significantly. He once said—

"There can, in my opinion, be very little doubt that India is insufficiently governed. I believe there are many districts in India in which the number of officials is altogether insufficient, and that is owing to the fact that the Indian Revenue would not bear the strain if a sufficient number of Europeans were appointed. The Government of India cannot afford to spend more than they do on the administration of the country; and if the country is to be better

governed that can only be done by the employment of the best and most intelligent of the natives in the Service."

I want to point out this as an illustration of the relations that subsist between England and India. I need not say anything about the saving of £2,000 in the salary of Lord Kimberley, by appointing him also as the President of the Council. Much has been said on this point, so I will not add to it. By one stroke of the pen about 10,000,000 rupees additional burden is put on the poor taxpayer of India by giving a British exchange of 1s. 6d. to the European officials. This means this, that the starving are to be starved more in order that the well-fed may have their fill. I think the House will ask whether such should be the relations between the two Revenues? To come to the next proposition. Another illustration of what I am saying is charging India with half the expense of the Opium Commission. I will not say much upon that subject, because I find that almost the whole of the English Press, as well as the Indian Press, have condemned that proposal, and have used strong words, which I should be unwilling to use—that is to say, the English Press has used very strong words against that proposal, and I will only use the softer and milder word—that it is unjust. It was the English people, in the interest of what they consider their own morality, who proposed that this Commission should be instituted, and it must be remembered that it was this House that had settled that such a Commission should be given. Under such peculiar circumstances, to ask the people of India to pay half of this expense is anything but just. And what is still more striking is this—that in 1870 the same question was before this House, and then the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, and in 1891 the Leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith), laid it down distinctly that India should not suffer in the slightest way; that unless the House was prepared to give to India the surplus of £6,000,000 of 1870 to make up the deficit of every year in Indian Revenue, neither the Prime Minister nor the Leader of the House in 1891 (Mr. W. H. Smith) would proceed any further, or would listen to any representation about it. After such just protest against any movement of that kind, that the Prime

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Minister should now agree to this proposition is, I must confess, altogether beyond my comprehension. The next illustration, and a very significant one, is one upon which I need not dwell long, because only a short time ago a Debate took place in the House of Lords on the subject of military expenditure, when Lord Northbrook, who has been Viceroy of India; the Duke of Argyll, who has been a Secretary of State; Lord Kimberley and Lord Cross were present, and it was the unanimous opinion of their Lordships that the Treasury and the War Office had treated India very unjustly in respect of the military expenditure and upon expeditions. I will read one extract from Lord Northbrook to show the manner in which India is treated in that respect. The whole Debate is worth a very careful perusal, and if hon. Gentlemen of this House will peruse that Debate they will get some idea of what highest Indian officials think of the relations of England with India. I will read one extract of Lord Northbrook's speech, which is very significant. He said—

"The whole of the ordinary expenses in the Abyssinian Expedition were paid by India, only the extraordinary expenses being paid by the Home Government."

I may interpose that, had it not been for the agitation I raised on that occasion, there is no doubt that the Indian Government would have been saddled with the whole of that expense. As it is, they had only to pay the ordinary expenses, and the British Government to pay the extraordinary expenses, though we had nothing to do with that. Lord Northbrook goes further. He goes on to say—

"The argument ~~being~~ that India would have to pay her troops in the ordinary way, and she ought not to seek to make a profit out of the affair. But how did the Home Government treat the Indian Government when troops were sent out during the Mutiny? Did they say—'We do not want to make any profit out of this?' Not a bit of it. Every single man sent out was paid for by India during the whole time, though only temporary use was made of them, including the cost of their drilling and training as recruits until they were sent out."

I think this is a significant instance of the relations between England and India, and I hope the House will carefully consider its position. In regard to the injustice of the military expenditure, even a paper (*The Pioneer*), which

side of the Government against the Indians generally, has expressed the opinion that the sum now imposed is an injustice, and that the expense is a large item annually increasing. It gives the whole—I think £2,200,000 in all—and then says—

“This sum is a terrible drain on the resources of India, and might well be reduced.”

One more significant instance of these things. When the Afghan War took place it was urged upon this House that it was an Imperial question; that the interests both of England and India were concerned in it; and it was right and proper that this House and this country should take a fair share in the expenditure of that war. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister accepted the view which Mr. Fawcett put forward, and he said—

“In my opinion, my hon. Friend the Member for Hackney has made good his case.”

And he says again that it is fair and right to say that, in his opinion, the case of his hon. Friend the Member for Hackney is completely made good, and that case, as he understood it, had not received one shred of answer. Well, Sir, the case was then that this war had taken place in which both India and England were equally interested; that as it was an Imperial question, and not altogether an Indian question, a portion of the expenses ought to be defrayed by this country. And the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, true to his word, when he came into power, did contribute a certain portion on that ground. We might have expected that he would have contributed half of it, but he contributed nearly a quarter; out of an expenditure of £20,000,000 or £21,000,000 he contributed from the British Exchequer £5,000,000, for which I can assure the House we are most grateful, not so much for the sake of the money, but because the principle of justice was admitted. It was admitted that this country had something to do with India; and if it has its rights, if it draws millions and millions a year from India, it has also its duties. And the first time this was ever admitted was on the occasion I have referred to by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister. We regard it as a great departure in the administration of

the country. Now, I urge that there is a large Military and also Civil expenditure upon Europeans. It is avowedly declared—over and over again we have been told—that a British Army and some British Civil Service in India are necessary for the maintenance of the British power, as well as in the interests of India. That in order to maintain British power there must be a certain amount of British Army nobody denies; but the question is whether the employment of this British Army is entirely for the interests of India alone, or whether it is not also necessary for the maintenance of the British power in India? In other words, are not the two countries equal partners in the benefit to be derived from the European Services; and, if so, should not England pay for this as well as India? I urge the consideration of this upon the House. I say that part of the military expenditure is for the interests of the British Empire; that the maintenance of this Army involves the interests of Great Britain as well as India, and that both should equally share the expenditure for the maintenance of the British power in India and for the protection of British interests there. I may have to say a great deal upon this subject, but considering the time we have at our command I will be very brief. I would only say this: that on the discussion which formerly took place the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition took an opposite view to the view held by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister. Among the other reasons this was one of the reasons urged—that if India had belonged to an independent Ruler, like the Mogul, it would have been necessary for him to have entered into the war precisely as the Indian Government had done, and for precisely the same objects. There was no doubt, therefore, that Her Majesty's Government were following out a right line of policy in throwing the whole of the cost upon Indian finance. For these reasons he gave the Government his cordial support—that is to say, for throwing the whole expenditure on India. The right hon. Gentleman, however, forgets altogether that when the Mogul was the Emperor, and when the natives were a self-governing people, every

farthing spent in the country on every soldier returned back to the people, whilst at the present time, in maintaining a foreign distant Power, you are drawing considerable amounts of money from the Indians for the Europeans, every farthing of which is completely taken away from the people under the present circumstances. That makes it entirely different. When a foreign domination compels the people to find every farthing for the sinews of war, then the money does not go back to the people as it would under a Home Ruler. That is not the position of Britain. Britain is 5,000 miles away from India, and sends thousands of Europeans and foreigners over to India in order to support her power. We have to find every farthing of the cost, and then we are told it is only what the Mogul would have done. It is as different as the poles, as the House will recognise. It may be remembered that a few months ago a Petition was presented to this House from a public meeting in Bombay. In the Despatch quoted from the Government of Lord Lytton to the Secretary of State, he put the question in such a form that I shall be perfectly content to leave his words before the House. After making certain preliminary remarks, the Despatch goes on—

“We are constrained to represent to Her Majesty's Government that, in our own opinion, the burden now thrown upon India on account of the British troops is excessive, and beyond what an impartial judgment would assign, considering the relative material wealth of the two countries and the mutual obligations that subsist between them. All that we can do is to appeal to the British Government for an impartial view of the relative financial capacity of the two countries to bear the charges that arise from the maintenance of the Army of Great Britain, and for a generous consideration of the share to be assigned by the wealthiest nation in the world on a dependency so comparatively poor and so little advanced as India.”

I hope these few words will bear weight. I do not ask for a share of the Military and Civil expenditures of the European Services simply as a beggar on account of being poor, though that is a great hardship; but I ask it on the ground of justice, on the ground that our interests and British interests are practically identical, and that both have an interest in maintaining the British rule in India. The British people have a great

advantage, and in justice to the Indians they should be willing to pay their share. Now, I wish to say a little about the administration. I will say it in a very few words. As an illustration, may I remind the House that there are 37,000,000 people in the United Kingdom, and that an Income Tax of 1d. in the £1 produces above £2,250,000. India has a population of seven or six times the number in Great Britain, and yet on the 1d. in the £1 she can hardly pay, I think, £200,000. If this be not an indication of the condition of the people of India I do not know what else is. A short time ago I heard with very great interest the Statement on the Budget by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He spoke in very warm terms of the marvellous way in which the Income Tax increased in this country, although merchants and traders were complaining of a very bad state of trade. The Chancellor of the Exchequer rejoiced that, notwithstanding this, the Income Tax was jumping on year after year. I was very anxious to hear his explanation of this paradox. I would like to give a little explanation upon it. I do not know whether it may be an exact statement of the facts, but still I will venture to give it. Under ordinary circumstances, it is estimated that Britain draws something like £20,000,000 a year from India. I know that much more is said by some people, but I want to put it at the lowest. On the testimony of one gentleman who is generally antagonistic to the Indians—namely, the late Member for Oldham (Mr. Maclean)—£20,000,000 is about the amount. Therefore, we may take it that something like that sum is annually drawn from India. I would welcome this annual wealth being taken from India by you if we benefited as well as you. I take it as a matter of fact that with all this wealth flowing into Britain the Income Tax is increased. I think if the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer can see his way to agree with me on this point he will show a greater sympathy with India in his dealings with the financial aspect of the Empire. I will give another illustration which will bring the matter home to the mass of the English

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people themselves. In India you have a vast country inhabited by people who have been civilised for thousands of years, and capable of enjoying all the good things of the world. They are not like the savage Africans, whom we have yet to teach how to value goods. But here you have 300,000,000 people to trade with, and for 100 years you have ruled them administratively by the highest-paid Service in the world. What is the result? What does England get in the shape of commerce? England sends her exports to various countries, and there are countries which shut their doors to her trade. But in India the trade is free; it is entirely under the control of the British themselves, and yet what profit do all the masses of the people receive? Very little. The total export of British produce to India is not worth 2s. 6d. per head per annum. If India were prosperous, if you allowed India to grow and make use of its own productions, then if you could export, say, £1 per head per annum, you would have a trade in India as you have not now in the whole world. It is a great loss to you and to us. If the present principles of administration were reformed and changed, and brought into a more natural condition, the result would be that the trade of England would grow to an extent of which we have no conception. You would have a market with 300,000,000 people, whereas, at the present time, you are spending hundreds of thousands in finding markets which will produce nothing approaching this. But here is a market at your own doors, and you are not able to sell of your produce more than 2s. 6d. a head per annum on the population. We know that in Native States native industry is prospering under the protection of British supremacy. The Native States have not foreigners going in and eating up their productions. They are gradually progressing in prosperity. I hope the time may come when important changes will be made in the administration of the country. I will not go into any further illustrations, but I would remind the House that Lord Salisbury has said what this policy is in the most significant terms. He has expressed it not in the hurry of a speech, but in a deliberate Minute made as Secretary of State for India. I hope

his words will be digested by the House. He thinks that India only exists to be bled, and that now only those portions should be bled which are capable of giving blood. He says—

“As India must be bled, the lancet should be directed to the parts where the blood is congested, or at least sufficient, not to those which are already feeble from the want of it.”

An hon. MEMBER: Where does he say that?

*MR. NAOROJI: It is in a Minute made by Lord Salisbury in connection with the Famine Commission Return, No. 3,086—1, 1881, page 144. Those singular words cover the whole present policy of administration, and I do not think I need add anything to them. I will use a few words of our Prime Minister, and of other great and eminent statesmen, as to what sort of relationship there should be between England and India. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister on one occasion, in 1858, quoted these words of Mr. Halliday approvingly—

“I believe our mission in India is to qualify the natives for governing themselves.”

But I would lay most stress on the words he recently expressed in this House in connection with the Irish Home Rule Bill. He says—

“There can be no nobler spectacle than that of a nation deliberately set on the removal of injustice, deliberately determined to break not through terror, and not in haste, but under the sole influence of duty and honour, determined to break with whatever remains still existing of an evil tradition, and determined in that way at once to pay a debt of justice, and to consult by a bold, wide, and good act its own interest and its own honour.”

I appeal to no other sentiment of the British people, but leave it to their justice. It is necessary, in putting this matter properly before the House, to show how the present principles of administration in India are destructive. I appeal, therefore, to the Government, and say that an inquiry is absolutely necessary to ascertain whether it is or not that the administration of India is based upon a principle not only destructive, but very much mistaken. This is my view. I appeal to this House to give us an opportunity of proving that the present system of administration is an unfortunate one, and that certain changes

of reform would be a blessing. With regard to the extract from Lord Hartington's speech, which I have read, I may say that that clearly shows that India is not properly governed. It is not sufficiently governed, for you cannot have the requisite number of men to govern it except from the Indians. I will read a few words from a speech of Mr. Bright's which are very expressive of our opinion regarding Indian government. He said—

"You may govern India, if you like, for the good of England, but the good of England must come through the channels of the good of India."

This expresses what is desired by the people of India. Mr. Bright further says—

"There are but two modes of gaining anything by our connection with India: the one is by plundering the people of India, and the other by trading with them. I prefer to do by trading with them. But in order that England may become rich by trading with India, India itself must become rich."

He also says—

"We must in future have India governed, not for a handful of Englishmen, not for that Civil Service, whose praises are so constantly sounded in this House."

On this point and in these words you have the whole Indian trouble, what the principle of the administration ought to be, and what alone will benefit both England and India. I will just read a few words by Sir Stafford Northcote when he was Secretary of State; I have no hesitation in saying that he endeavoured to do the best for us. He tried his best to see what justice he could do to the Indians, and he expressed himself in words like these—

"If they were to do their duty towards India they could only discharge that duty by obtaining the assistance and counsel of all who were great and good in that country. It would be absurd in them to say that there was not a large fund of statesmanship and ability in the Indian character."

I might quote something similar by the hon. Member for Kingston (Sir R. Temple). Sir Stafford Northcote further says—

"Nothing could be more wonderful than our Empire in India, but we ought to consider on what conditions we held it, and how our predecessors held it. The greatness of the Mogul Empire depended upon the liberal policy that was pursued by men like Akbar availing themselves of Hindu talent and assistance, and

identifying themselves, as far as possible, with the people of the country. He thought that they ought to take a lesson from such a circumstance."

Now, I do not think I need say more. I think I have made out a *prima facie* case that the Indian problem is a very serious problem. As Sir William Hunter once said, it is a problem which might in 40 years become an Irish problem, but 50 times more difficult. I hope and trust that time will never come, and that such a contingency will never arise. I hope the time is coming when the natives themselves, educated and learned men, will have a voice and due share in the government of India. Everything is promising. If the statesmen of to-day will only overhaul the whole question and have a clear inquiry by independent and responsible men acting with English sense and honour and justice, then the time is not far distant when both England and India will bless each other.

*SIR G. CHESNEY (Oxford): I think, Sir, that the first condition imposed upon those who make a proposal such as we have just heard should be that they should put forward some sort of case for the establishment of an inquiry. I have listened with great attention to the hon. Member who moved this Resolution, and also to the hon. Gentleman who seconded it. And I am bound to say that, having listened to them, I have been unable to discover anything whatever which can be taken seriously to justify the course which is proposed—namely, the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into the economic condition of the people of India, and which, apparently, is not only to cover the whole ground of the administration of the system in that country, but also to deal with various matters civil, military, political, and financial. Sir, the hon. Gentleman who moved this Resolution gave the only sort of support to it that he could by assuming a constantly-increasing poverty among the people of India. As regards that very startling and novel announcement, he offered the House no sort of evidence whatever, except so far as to misstate by about £20,000,000 the Expenditure of the

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country. As to the constant cry about increased poverty, he was, no doubt, supported by the hon. Member (Mr. Naoroji) who supported his Motion. That has been the key-note of a great deal the latter hon. Gentleman has said both in and out of this House. He has taken up the position as a sort of general Representative of India. Well, on that point I would venture to remind the House there are a great many Members who have had a much larger and much more recent experience of India and Indian affairs than the hon. Gentleman who represents Finsbury (Mr. Naoroji). Moreover, I would venture to remind the House that the hon. Member, who speaks with such confidence, and assumes such a knowledge of the country, has spent only a comparatively small time in India, and that, too, in one corner of the country. There are Members in this House who have spent a much longer time in the country, and who have had opportunities which have been denied to him of serving and living in various parts of India. Many of us have lived in almost every part of India. We have thus had an opportunity of knowing intimately the native races with whom the hon. Gentleman is entirely a stranger. I entirely sympathise with him in his desire that the wants of India should be made known, but I would remind him that as regards the people of India he belongs to an alien race which has spread over that country solely and only as a result of British occupancy. Where the English have found their way, there also the Parsee community, a highly respectable and enterprising community, have followed in their footsteps; but they are no more natives in the proper sense of the word than Englishmen. They are aliens separated from the people of India by religion, by race, by caste, by tradition, and by history. If English domination, as it is called, or English government in India, were to come to an end, then that community, which is a much smaller community than the English, and they would assuredly be driven out of India at the heels of the latter. So much, therefore, with regard to the claims of the hon. Gentleman to pose as the Member representing India. But, at the same time, I admit it is satisfactory to find the case of the

people of India advocated in this House. No one can spend his life in India who does not acquire a real regard, and I may say a real affection, for the people of India, and who does not feel that his interests have become their interests, and that it is his duty, after he has left the country, to consider the welfare and happiness of the people with whom he has lived so long and to whom he feels he owes so much. I think all hon. Members who have served in India share that feeling. But when it comes to proposals of the kind now put forward I venture to ask the House what is the connection between the desire that the people of India should have a Government which will give them a just measure of happiness and prosperity, and a proposal that there should be a Royal Commission to gather evidence and to make, apparently, some indefinite proposals. Sir, I cannot conceive anything calculated to do more mischief in the present state of things than to set on foot an inquiry in the form which has been proposed. I am quite prepared to agree that inquiries made in a proper sense may produce a reasonable result, but to carry the Motion which has been proposed to inquire into the economic condition of the people of India, with the suggestion thrown out that the condition of these people has deteriorated, and that the deterioration is due to the action of the British Government, is a most monstrous proposition to be made by British legislators. Both hon. Gentlemen who have spoken have assumed without any sort of evidence that poverty in India is constantly increasing. They have, as I say, no sort of evidence whatever in support of such an assertion; the real evidence which is in our possession entirely disposes of that assumption. When you have an increasing trade and an enormous traffic on the Indian railways which have entirely sprung up of recent years, and further a large increase not only in population, but in the great mercantile centres, you have most indisputable proof that the wealth of India is, on the whole, largely increasing.

It being half-past Five of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

COMPANIES (WINDING-UP) BILL [*Lords*].

Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment ; Bill read the third time, and passed.

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1887.

Copy presented,—of Return, for year ended 31st March 1893, of Army and Navy Officers permitted to hold Civil Employment of Profit under Public Departments [by Act] ; to lie upon the Table.

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE (COUNTIES AND BOROUGHES).

Further Return presented, — relative thereto (Part II. Counties) [Address 2nd February ; Mr. Storey] ; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 422.]

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION, 1892.

Return presented, — relative thereto [Address 2nd March ; Mr. Carvell Williams] ; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 423.]

DRUNKENNESS (CONVICTIONS) (ENGLAND AND WALES).

Return presented, — relative thereto [Address 29th August ; Mr. Parker] ; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 424.]

ALIENS.

Return presented, — relative thereto [Address 4th September ; Mr. H. L. W. Lawson] ; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 425.]

ARMY (MILITIA).

Copy presented,—of Further Regulations relating to the Militia [by Act] ; to lie upon the Table.

ARMY (PENSIONS OF SOLDIERS, AND PAY OF YEOMANRY).

Copy presented,—of Further Regulations under the Yeomanry Pay and Pensions Act (Pensions of Soldiers) [by Act] ; to lie upon the Table.

ARMY (RULES OF PROCEDURE).

Copy presented,—of Rules of Procedure [by Act] ; to lie upon the Table.

AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS (IRELAND).

Copy presented,—of Agricultural Statistics of Ireland, with detailed Report on Agriculture, for the year 1892 [by Command] ; to lie upon the Table.

AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS (IRELAND) (MIGRATORY LABOURERS).

Copy presented,—of Report and Tables relating to Migratory Agricultural Labourers (Ireland) 1893 [by Command] ; to lie upon the Table.

CRIMINAL AND JUDICIAL STATISTICS (IRELAND).

Copy presented,—of Report on the Criminal and Judicial Statistics of Ireland for the year 1892 with Tables [by Command] ; to lie upon the Table.

NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND).

Copy presented,—of Appendix to the Fifty-ninth Report of the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland for the year 1892 [by Command] ; to lie upon the Table.

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made, and Question, "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Mr. Marjoribanks*,)—put, and agreed to.

House adjourned at twenty-eight minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 21st September 1893.

QUESTIONS.

LAND PURCHASE ACT, 1891.

MR. JACKSON (Leeds, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state, up to the end of August, the number and aggregate amount of applications for land purchase under the Act of 1891 already sanctioned; the total amount of Land Stock issued; and the amount of Land Stock which has been exchanged for Consols under the powers given by the Act of 1891?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. J. MORLEY, Newcastle-upon-Tyne): The number of loans applied for was 4,424, amounting to £1,492,278. The number of loans sanctioned was 2,486, amounting to £880,141. The number of loans issued was 1,648, amounting to £577,359. The amount of Guaranteed Land Stock taken by the Bank of Ireland in exchange for Consols down to August 31 was £202,734 19s. 9d.

DUBLIN ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT.

MR. J. BURNS (Battersea) (for Mr. FIELD, Dublin, St. Patrick's): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether anything has been done to raise the rate of wages in the Ordnance Department of Dublin proportionately to that paid in other places?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. WOODALL, Hanley): Yes, Sir.

CIVIL SERVICE CLERKS.

MR. THORNTON (Clapham): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, with reference to the promises of amelioration in the conditions of service of the clerks of the Second Division of the Civil Service which were made by the Government on 1st May last, whether the Memorials from those clerks which are now before the Heads of Departments have been considered; and when

an answer to these Memorials may be expected?

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: No promise of amelioration of the conditions of service of Second Division clerks was given. Those conditions are laid down in the Order in Council of the 21st of March, 1890, based on the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Civil Establishments, and there is no intention of reopening them. The other points in the Memorials referred to are under consideration.

FISHGUARD NATIONAL SCHOOLS.

MR. EGERTON ALLEN (Pembroke, &c.): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he is aware that great disturbance and agitation has arisen at Fishguard consequent on the proposed dismissal of Mr. J. F. Drew, the Head Master of the National Schools, by the Vicar, on the ground (as Mr. Drew alleges) that he refused to be a party to a misleading Return to the Education Department in connection with a pupil teacher; and whether he will cause inquiry to be made into the truth of these allegations?

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Mr. ACLAND, York, W.R., Rotherham): I am informed by the Managers that Mr. Drew does not regard the notice of dismissal served upon him as a legal notice. Otherwise, my only information as to the circumstances referred to by the hon. Member is derived from statements in the Press. The Education Department have no power of intervening to prevent the dismissal of a teacher; but they have power to require accurate Returns from the Managers; and I will cause inquiry to be made as regards the allegation that the Return mentioned was incorrect, and that the teacher, therefore, refused to be a party to it.

THE ALLOTMENTS APPEALS ACT, 1890.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS (Birmingham, Bordesley): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Local Government Board whether he is aware that the Herefordshire County Council received a Memorial from certain labourers at Upton Bishop who seek allotments, and that the said Council failed to hold a local inquiry as directed by "The Allot-

ments Appeals Act, 1890," although the Memorial has been before the Council for over six months; and whether the Local Government Board will take such steps as may be necessary to secure the carrying out of the provisions of the Act?

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Sir W. FOSTER, Derby, Ilkeston): It appears from the communication which the Local Government Board have received from the Herefordshire County Council that a Petition was received by the County Council in February last, signed by seven persons in the parish of Upton Bishop, alleging that the Rural Sanitary Authority had failed to acquire land for allotments in that parish. The Petition was considered by the Standing Committee on the 22nd of February; and as they were satisfied that the Rural Sanitary Authority were doing their utmost to comply with the demand, they resolved that the question of proceeding on the appeal should be deferred pending the result of negotiations then taking place between the Rural Sanitary Authority and the landowners of the parish. Communications have been received from the Sanitary Authority to the effect that the negotiations are still proceeding. The subject will again be considered by the Committee on the 27th instant, when a further communication from the Sanitary Authority is promised. The Local Government Board have no jurisdiction whatever with regard to the proceedings of the County Council in this matter.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS: Though they have no power, can they send a special communication to the Local Authorities pointing out their duties under the Acts?

SIR W. FOSTER: Unfortunately the Allotments Acts do not give the Local Government Board jurisdiction in the matter, but all representations that can be made to the County Council in the interests of the labourers will be urged by the Local Government Board.

MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE (Hereford): Is the hon. Member aware that to some extent the reason why the authority in that particular parish do not act is because there is a difference of opinion among the labourers there as to the pieces of land that should be acquired?

Mr. Jesse Collings

SIR W. FOSTER: I am not aware of that.

THE SKELETON ARMY.

MR. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the disturbed condition of Egham, in the County of Surrey, through the action of a body known as the Skeleton Army; and whether steps will be taken to afford adequate protection to residents in the district?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. H. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.) (who replied) said: The matter is one for the Local Police Authorities, and the Chief Constable states that he has sent additional constables to Egham, and will continue to take all necessary steps.

CHARGE AGAINST A FARMER.

MR. J. O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on Friday, the 15th instant, a girl named Metcalf under 16 years of age appeared before three Magistrates at Baltinglass, and swore a serious criminal charge against a farmer in the district; and if he can state on what grounds the Magistrates refused to grant criminal informations against the accused?

MR. J. MORLEY: I understand that informations were refused by the Magistrates, in this case, on the ground that the girl's evidence was uncorroborated. However, I have referred the matter to the Law Officers for opinion as to whether any further action is called for.

MEETINGS IN TRAFALGAR SQUARE.

MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE (for Mr. BUTCHER, York): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to a report in *The Times* of 18th September, 1893, of a speech alleged to have been delivered on 17th September at a public meeting in Trafalgar Square by Mr. H. Samuels, with reference to the present crisis in the coal trade, from which it appears that Mr. Samuels in the course of his speech said that the miners had to follow the example of the Polish Jews, who had shot down Frick, Carnegie's manager at Pittsburg. If the

workers did not go in a body and fight, let them do it individually with the torch, knife, and bomb; whether the Regulations respecting the use of Trafalgar Square for public meetings permit of such language being used; and whether the Government contemplate taking any action in the matter?

MR. H. GLADSTONE (who replied) said: The Regulations respecting the use of Trafalgar Square for meetings relate only to the time at which they should be held, the notices to be given of the holding of such meetings, and the particular places from which speeches are to be delivered, but do not refer to the subject-matter or contents of such speeches, which remain to be dealt with according to law. I am of opinion that any attempt to make the person who delivered the speech in question liable to criminal proceedings would be attributing an undue importance to his conduct.

JAFFRA, CEYLON.

MR. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the late Secretary of State for the Colonies received in 1891 a Memorial from some of the leading inhabitants of Jaffra, Ceylon, with reference to a new tax on the principal markets, legalised as Ordinance 19 of 1891, and what answer has been given to it; and will he explain on what grounds the agent of the Northern Province of Ceylon, who has passed the age at which Civil servants are called upon to retire from the service in Ceylon, has been allowed to remain at the same post without being promoted or retired for nearly 40 years?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. S. BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): A Memorial was received before the passing of the Ordinance referred to, asking that it might be disallowed. The answer given was that—

“The Ordinance would be carefully considered when submitted for the expression of Her Majesty’s pleasure thereon.”

The Ordinance was subsequently received, and after full consideration allowed. There is no rule that Civil servants in Ceylon shall be called upon to retire at any particular age (they may be required to do so at or after 60). Mr. Twynam, the agent for the Northern

Province, is past that age, but successive Governors have requested that he may be allowed to remain in Office, as his efficiency is in no way impaired, and his services are specially valuable. He has held his present post for 24 years, and has not been promoted, because there is no more valuable or responsible appointment in his department of the Ceylon Civil Service than that which he occupies.

OFFICERS OF CUSTOMS.

SIR R. TEMPLE (Surrey, Kingston): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether a Memorial was presented to the Treasury virtually appealing against the Board of Customs on behalf of certain officers last January who had been rejected in a *vivâ voce* examination after they had already passed a high standard; and, if so, what decision has been arrived at?

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: Yes, Sir; the Memorial was received by the Treasury and referred to the Commissioners of Customs for their observations. Their Report has not yet been received.

WESTMINSTER HALL.

MR. A. C. MORTON: I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether he can now see his way to allow the public to go through Westminster Hall?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE, Bradford, Central): I have not yet had time to consult my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary, and I must ask my hon. Friend to postpone the question until I have had an opportunity of doing so.

GENERAL REGISTER OF SASINES.

MR. R. WALLACE (Edinburgh, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether it is the case that writs given in May to be recorded in the General Register of Sasines are still not ready for delivery; whether the present staff, notwithstanding the Treasury’s Supplementary Grant, is insufficient to so overtake the work as to allow of the delivery of the writs to the public within a reasonable time; whether, in view of this, it is his intention to still further reduce the staff; and what steps he proposes taking to remedy the present unsatisfactory state of matters?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR, Clackmannan, &c.): My right hon. Friend the Secretary for Scotland gave a very full reply to a question on this subject only a few days ago, to which I would refer my hon. Friend. I have not had time to ascertain whether there are any May writs still unregistered, but if the pressure at the November term cannot be duly met I feel sure that the Secretary for Scotland will give the matter his careful consideration. I may add that there are various points connected with registration upon the consideration of which the possible further reduction of the staff and other changes will depend.

MR. PAUL (Edinburgh, S.): Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the desirability of introducing the seven hours' system?

MR. J. B. BALFOUR: I will consider it.

THE MERCHANT SERVICE.

MR. MACDONA (Southwark, Rotherhithe): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, with reference to the proposal made in a Circular of the Board of Trade to the Mercantile Marine Service Association, to confer the rank of Captain, Commander, and Master upon members of the Merchant Service who had passed special examinations for each of the said ranks, in order to raise the status of this important National Service, whether the Board of Trade has dropped the matter; and, if so, would he explain on what grounds; and whether he will in the next Session bring in a Bill to carry their proposal into effect?

THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BURT, Morpeth): I am not aware that any such proposal as that referred to by the hon. Member has been made by the Board of Trade. In a Circular Letter, dated August 28, 1891, which invited observations upon a letter received from the Shipmasters' and Officers' Federation, the Board of Trade stated that a suggestion had been made to the Department that, in addition to the present grade of Master, two higher grades should be constituted giving to those who were able to pass the appropriate examination the right to style themselves Commander and Captain respectively in the Mercantile Marine. The suggestion was not favourably

received, and I would remind the hon. Member that Masters can, under existing Regulations, obtain an extra-Master's certificate upon passing a higher standard of examination, but that comparatively few Masters avail themselves of this opportunity.

CHEERING LORD SALISBURY.

MR. MACDONA: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is a fact that the Magistrates of Lurgan on the 19th instant fined a man 40s., or one month's imprisonment, for cheering Lord Salisbury at an Anti-Home Rule meeting held there; and, if so, whether he will take steps to remit the fine, inasmuch as the man was guilty of no crime or offence?

MR. J. MORLEY said, that the man in question was fined 40s., or one month's imprisonment, by half-a-dozen Magistrates sitting at Lurgan Petty Sessions, on the 19th instant, for calling for three cheers for Lord Salisbury in Church Place, Lurgan, within 20 yards of a Roman Catholic Institution, the windows of which had been smashed by a Protestant mob the previous evening. This man was charged on a summons by the Town Commissioners with riotous behaviour, inasmuch as the crowd at the time was a mixed crowd, and that a riot had been very narrowly averted a few minutes previously. No meeting was being held; but a drumming party of Unionists had just passed round the church in streets where a crowd of persons of different political and religious opinions was assembled. This man had appealed to the Quarter Sessions.

THE QUESTION OF THE LEGALITY OF AN ARREST.

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR (Dumbartonshire): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether Abraham Mitchell, recently tried at Dumbarton, who was arrested in England upon a warrant issued in Scotland at the instance of the Procurator Fiscal, and not indorsed by the English Authorities, was accordingly brought to Dumbarton, bailed out, and remanded for trial, before any authority or sanction for these proceedings was received from him, or from the Crown Office; and whether such proceedings were regular and usual; and, if not,

whether he will take steps to prevent the recurrence of such irregularities?

MR. J. B. BALFOUR (who replied) said: The proceedings mentioned in the first part of the question were taken before the case was reported to the Crown Office. It was reported to that Office for the first time when the pre-cognition was complete. It was within the power of the Procurator Fiscal to take these proceedings, including the obtaining of a warrant to arrest, without previously getting the authority of Crown counsel. The failure to have the warrant endorsed in England seems to me to have been an irregularity, but for this failure no one in Scotland was responsible. After the warrant for arrest was granted, it was handed in at the office of the Dumbartonshire police to be executed. These police had information that Abraham Mitchell was at Bacup, Lancashire, and they forwarded the warrant to the Bacup police, adding in the letter that the warrant would require to be endorsed by a Magistrate at Bacup in the usual way. The Dumbartonshire police afterwards received from the Bacup police a telegram, intimating that the arrest had been made, and, thereupon, an officer was despatched to Bacup to bring Abraham Mitchell to Dumbarton. This officer, upon receiving the warrant from the Bacup police, observed that it was not endorsed, and drew their attention to this, but they said it was too late to endorse it, as Abraham Mitchell was actually in custody.

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR: Am I to understand from the right hon. Gentleman that the conduct of the Procurator Fiscal with regard to this arrest meets with his approval?

MR. J. B. BALFOUR: The question is whether there was anything irregular, or any excess of power in the proceedings, and that I have answered.

THE NEW RIFLE.

SIR C. W. DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether the Government of India possesses the usual and necessary reserve of the new rifle?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (MR. G. RUSSELL, North Beds.): Seventy thousand Magazine -303 rifles have been sent to India. This

number includes one-third for reserve, the usual proportion. The established strength of the British Infantry in India is 52,017 non-commissioned officers and men.

THE SANITARY CONDITION OF SOUTH HETTON.

MR. PAULTON (Durham, Bishop Auckland): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Local Government Board whether any Report upon the sanitary condition of South Hetton and neighbouring colliery villages has been received from the Medical Officer of Health for the district; and, if not, whether the Local Government Board intend to take any action in the matter?

SIR W. FOSTER: The Local Government Board have received a Report from the Medical Officer of Health of the Easington Rural Sanitary District as to the sanitary condition of South Hetton, and have also received from the Durham County Council copies of the Reports made by the Medical Officer of Health of the county as to a large number of the colliery villages, including South Hetton. The County Council have been in communication with the Sanitary Authorities of these districts with reference to the Reports of their Medical Officer, and the Board will be glad to assist the County Council in securing improvement in the sanitary condition of these places. There is no doubt that energetic action by the Sanitary Authorities is required in the case of many of these villages.

GOVERNMENT EMPLOYÉS.

MR. E. J. C. MORTON (Devonport): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether notice of dismissal was given last Saturday to four men at present employed under the War Office at the Gun Wharf at Devonport; whether he is aware that these men have been continuously employed at the Gun Wharf for over 13 years, 12 years, three years, and two years, respectively; whether he is aware that three of these men are members of a Trades Union recently established among these men, one being secretary and the other two committee men; and whether he will undertake that these men shall not be dismissed?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. WOODALL, Hanley): At the War Office we have no official information with regard to the first three paragraphs of the question; but the hon. Member may rely upon it that the assurance given to him on the 14th instant will be strictly adhered to.

QUARANTINE AGAINST GREAT BRITAIN.

MR. LODER (Brighton) (on behalf of Colonel HOWARD VINCENT, Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if, with a view of saving British shipping as far as possible from needless quarantine in foreign ports, Her Majesty's Consuls in the ports where it is imposed will be telegraphically advised of the official declaration on 19th September of the British Minister of Public Health that with the exception of three or four ports on the Eastern Coast all the ports of Great Britain have been throughout the year absolutely free from cholera, and that there is no general epidemic of cholera in any part of the United Kingdom, and be instructed at the same time to make every effort to obtain pratique for British ships?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir E. GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): Application has already been made to the Local Government Board to furnish a short statement on the whole case. The substance will be telegraphed to Her Majesty's Representatives directly it is received.

LEEDS POST OFFICE.

MR. JACKSON (Leeds, N.): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works if he can state what is the cause of the slow progress being made with the new Post Office buildings at Leeds; how many men have, on the average, been employed during the last month on the building; what is the total amount of the certificates given to the contractor for work done since the 1st of April; when he expects the buildings to be completed and ready for occupation; what is the date for completion inserted in the contract; and whether there is any penalty if not completed within the specified time?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: The principal reason why more rapid progress has not been made with the erection of the new Post Office at Leeds has been that difficulty is experienced in obtaining a sufficient number of skilled masons, and some delay has arisen in obtaining the delivery of the steel and iron work. About 117 men have been employed at one time, on an average, during the past month. The total amount of certificates to the contractor for work done since the 1st of April is £9,600. The buildings may be expected to be ready for occupation in about 18 months or two years from the present time. The date fixed for the completion in the deed of contract is 8th August, 1894, subject to extension of time under specified conditions as to extra works and weather. Penalties are provided for in case of non-completion by the time allowed.

MR. JACKSON: Arising out of that answer, may I ask the right hon. Gentleman, will it not be possible to afford additional facilities to the contractor in one of two ways, or in both ways—namely, by exercising the powers which the right hon. Gentleman has got under the Post Office Sites Act for taking the land on the west end of the building, and by obtaining from the Corporation the power to use the land at the east end of the building in order to afford additional facilities to the contractor to get on with this work?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I will make inquiries to see if that is possible. Of course, we are desirous of completing the work in the quickest possible time.

THE NEW HEBRIDES.

MR. HOGAN (Tipperary, Mid.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, having regard to the reports that large areas of the best land in the New Hebrides have been either claimed or acquired by French Trading Companies, he will communicate with the Admiral in command on the Australian Station with a view to obtaining the latest official information as to the extent and character of the land in the New Hebrides under French and British ownership respectively?

SIR E. GREY: A careful Report on this point was made less than two years

ago, and, in view of the fact that Treaty relations as regards the New Hebrides remain undisturbed, it is not thought necessary to have another special inquiry.

MASHONALAND.

X The following question appeared on the Paper :—Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT : To ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to a letter in *The Times*, of 20th September, from Lord Gifford, a representative of the British Chartered Company of South Africa, in which Lord Gifford condemns the uncertain policy of Her Majesty's Government with regard to Mashonaland, and to veto which has been placed by Her Majesty's Government upon a forward movement against Lo Bengula ; and whether Her Majesty's Government will now give the responsible authorities in Mashonaland a free hand in dealing with the Matabele attack ?

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT not being in his place,

MR. PAUL (Edinburgh, S.) asked : Should I be in Order in putting a question on this subject ?

SIR J. GORST (Cambridge University) : I intended to put a question on this subject at the end of questions, and perhaps I may put it now. It is to ask the Under Secretary whether, in view of the statements which are continually appearing in the newspapers regarding an apprehended attack by Lo Bengula on Mashonaland, he can state to the House the position which Her Majesty's Government have taken up on this subject and the policy they intend to pursue ?

MR. PAUL : Before my hon. Friend answers that question, perhaps he will say whether it is not the fact that the British South Africa Company are at perfect liberty to deal with an attack of the Matabele or anybody else in any way they please ; whether the only thing the Company have been forbidden to do is to invade Matabeleland without the leave of the High Commissioner ; and whether Lord Knutsford, when he was Secretary of State, did not inform the Company that they would not be protected by the Government, but would have to protect themselves ?

MR. S. BUXTON : The reply I have prepared to the question of the hon.

Member for Sheffield, who is not in his place, will cover the question of my hon. Friend behind me, and I am very glad to have the opportunity of making it, although I am afraid it is somewhat extended. The policy which Her Majesty's Government have taken up in regard to affairs in Mashonaland has been neither uncertain nor variable. Any grave disturbances in Mashonaland would almost certainly involve the peace of Bechuanaland, and have far-reaching results throughout South Africa. Her Majesty's Government are, therefore, bound to take care that a war is not lightly entered into with Lo Bengula, and so, acting under Clause 10 of the Charter, they required that their previous assent should be obtained before any aggressive movement was undertaken by the Chartered Company. No such assent has been asked, and, therefore, no such assent has been refused. This action the Government took because they believed that an aggressive attack on Lo Bengula on the part of the Company would then have been neither justifiable nor successful. The Company have entire freedom to take all measures they may think fit for resisting any attack that may be made by the Matabele, and they are now, both for defence and offence, in a far stronger position than they were six weeks ago ; and while we insist that, under present circumstances, our assent must first be asked to an offensive movement being made against Lo Bengula, it is clearly understood, as I stated on Tuesday, that if such an attack is made by the Matabele the Company will be justified in undertaking any offensive operations that may be necessary. We believe that Mr. Rhodes, who is the responsible representative of the Company, is in accord with Sir H. Loch in regard to the position which has been taken up by Her Majesty's Government. Certain it is that we have received no official remonstrance from the Company on the matter, nor any request that they should be allowed a freer hand. As regards the question of compensation, to which reference has been made, Her Majesty's Government, directly they heard that a claim for compensation from Lo Bengula was contemplated, stated that that demand should not be pressed, on the ground that the impi had acted contrary to Lo Bengula's orders, and that they had been quite

sufficiently punished by the heavy loss of life inflicted on them. Two telegrams which would have made the matter clearer were omitted from the Blue Book as being confidential; but I see no reason why they should not be presented, and I have, therefore, to-day laid them on the Table. Throughout the anxious desire of Her Majesty's Government has been, if possible, to preserve peace, and if war, unfortunately, becomes inevitable to be clear that it can be carried to a successful issue.

SIR HENRY NORMAN.

SIR J. FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether it is the fact that Sir Henry Norman has withdrawn his acceptance of the Viceroyalty of India?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby): Yes, Sir; I understand that is so.

UNCOVENANTED CIVIL SERVANTS.

SIR J. FERGUSSON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for India whether Memorials have been received by the Secretary of State in Council from European members of the Uncovenanted Service in India concerning their unfavourable position in respect to furlough and leave; and whether such Memorials are under the consideration of the Secretary of State in Council?

*MR. G. RUSSELL: The supposed anomaly to which my right hon. Friend refers has recently been under the consideration of the Secretary of State; and his decision, which is in accordance with the recommendations of the Public Services Committee, will be sent to the Government of India in a Despatch which leaves by to-morrow's mail. It would be contrary to usage to lay it on the Table before it is received by the Governments to whom it is addressed; but if the right hon. Gentleman will accept a copy of the Despatch I shall be glad to hand him one.

LABOURERS' COTTAGES.

MR. MAGUIRE (Clare, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Kildysart Board of Guardians unanimously adopted a resolution six months ago in favour of a new

Mr. S. Buxton

labourers' scheme in their Union, all the formalities of which have been complied with; if he is aware that the Local Government Board, though requested, have not summoned the local sworn inquiry required by the Act; and whether he will call upon them to do so?

MR. J. MORLEY: I am informed that the Board of Guardians of this Union, at their meeting on the 5th January last, made improvement schemes under the Labourers' Acts for the erection of 12 cottages, but that the schemes have not since been submitted to the Local Government Board for confirmation. On the 17th August the Guardians passed a resolution requesting the Board to expedite the holding of the local inquiry into the schemes, and it was pointed out to the Guardians by the Local Government Board that the schemes had not yet been submitted to that Department.

CONTEMPT OF COURT.

MR. MAGUIRE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that Richard O'Donnell, of Clobane, County Clare, a tenant on the Stackpoole Minas property, has been in prison since 6th March, 1893, for retaking possession of his farm; and that the farm is now in the hands of the landlord's agent; and whether he could see his way to directing his release?

MR. J. MORLEY: It is a fact that O'Donnell has been in gaol since the 6th March last, having been committed for contempt under an Order of the Court of Chancery. The hon. Member is aware that the discharge of prisoners in contempt cases is not a matter in which the Executive can interfere, but rests with the Judge who made the order of committal. There are, however, some matters of detail—apart from the committal—in the present case, into which I am making inquiry.

EVICTIONS IN IRELAND.

MR. KILBRIDE (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary a question of which I have given him private notice. It is: whether his attention has been directed to the circumstances in connection with the eviction of Thomas Tynan, of Castletown; whether it is a fact that Joseph Cuffe, salesman, obtained a writ for possession in July, 1892, and that the

full amount of that debt was paid on the 8th December and a receipt given to the tenant; whether these facts were explained to the Sheriff before he carried out the evictions; whether the police acted as bailiffs and hunted the tenants' cattle off the field; and whether the right hon. Gentleman can explain under what authority the Sheriff so acted, and also by whose authority the police acted as bailiffs?

MR. J. MORLEY: I think the hon. Member gave me notice of this question last night, and I have directed inquiry to be made. He will see that I could not be able to answer so many minute points of detail without adequate notice, but I will inquire into the matter.

MR. SEXTON (Kerry, N.): I wish to ask the Chief Secretary this question: If it should turn out that the debt had been paid before the Sheriff came, will the Executive Government see that the cattle, which are the property of the tenant, are returned if there was no legal debt due for them?

MR. J. MORLEY: Of course, my hon. Friend will see that this is a matter which, for all I know, raises points of legal difficulty. I shall be in Ireland to-morrow, and I will make inquiries.

THE BALLYMOTE CASE.

MR. SEXTON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary another question—namely, whether, in reference to the Ballymote case, under the Statute of Edward III., which the right hon. Gentleman undertook should be postponed for further inquiry, the trial has been proceeding to-day in Ballymote?

MR. J. MORLEY: I told my hon. Friend yesterday that through the Attorney General I had directed that the proceedings should be postponed. But, after I had given my hon. Friend that answer, I received a communication from Ireland to the effect that the representatives of the Departments urged very strongly—in fact, to the point of insistence—that the case should not be postponed, so that, under these circumstances, we could not postpone the case.

ADJOURNMENT (WINTER SITTINGS).

Resolved—

That this House do meet To-morrow at Ten o'clock, and at its rising do adjourn until Thursday, the 2nd of November next, and that Mr. Speaker, as soon as he has reported the Royal Assent to Bills agreed on by both Houses, do adjourn the House without Question put.—*(The Chancellor of the Exchequer.)*

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

EAST INDIA REVENUE ACCOUNTS.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Main Question [20th September], "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

*SIR G. CHESNEY (Oxford): When the Debate was adjourned last night I was about to remark that, whereas the Mover of this Motion and those who seconded it had alleged as their reason for making it the constantly increasing poverty of India, the whole of the facts which furnish criteria on the point are absolutely and entirely opposed to that assumption. Tried by every test which can be applied either to India or any other country, it will be found that the progress of India in wealth and material prosperity is steadily progressive and large. One test of the prosperity of a country is the condition of the large towns and cities. I do not know any country in the world—perhaps not even the United States—which presents such a remarkable instance as India does of the rapid increase of great towns. The City of Bombay, which 40 years ago might almost be described as a collection of huts, is now a city of 1,000,000 people, and is one of the most beautiful and wealthy cities in the world. Then there is the great Imperial City of Delhi. Delhi for the last 40 years has been increasing and expanding its trade in every direction. I might quote many other cases: but are these not sufficient evidence that the country in which these things take place must be a country increasing in wealth, and not increasing in poverty? Well, then, Sir, to take the test of revenue. I will not refer to revenue derived from the imposition of new taxes. I will take taxes levied for a long series of years, and in the method of the assessment of which there has been no alteration. These taxes will be found steadily giving a larger return year by year. Can there be a more sufficient gauge of the increase of wealth in a country? I need only turn again to the trade, both foreign and inland, and to the enormous development of Indian railways. Forty years ago,

when I first went to live in the Punjaub, there were no roads whatever, and you would not meet 50 travellers in a day's march. Where, then, you met travellers by tens and scores, they are now travelling by railway over the same track in hundreds and thousands per diem. Can people go on paying every year a largely increased sum for railway travelling if they are constantly growing poorer? And it has to be observed that the great traffic of the Indian railways, apart from their goods traffic, is almost entirely a third-class passenger traffic—the traffic of very poor people. Nevertheless, it produces to the Indian railways an income of a great many millions sterling a year; and it is a remarkable circumstance that at the present moment, although the sea trade is so depressed, and when vessels are lying in harbour waiting for cargo, never were the great Indian railways so prosperous as now, thus showing how enormous is the inland trade, and how independent it is, to a great extent, of the trade with foreign countries. I might go on to quote other criteria to show that the country is increasing in wealth, but I will only ask those gentlemen who talk so lightly about the distressed condition of the Indians to refer to the records of a few years back; let them compare the state of India then, under Indian Government, to what it is to-day, under British Government. I would ask these gentlemen to read a well-known work by a very high authority—by a man unconnected officially with the Indian Government, and who, by his position, might rather be assumed to be in opposition to that Government; I am referring to the late Sir James Macintosh's *Diary and Travels in India*. Let any man read Sir James Macintosh's account of the Bombay Presidency, now one of the most prosperous parts of India, and I venture to say that man would not have the hardihood to get up and say India is getting poorer. I admit, Sir, that while almost all classes of the country are improving, while wages are increasing even more rapidly than prices, that, nevertheless, there is one class of whom the same satisfactory account cannot universally be given. I refer to the great agricultural population who do not earn wages, and who live on the produce of their own fields. Undoubtedly these people, in many parts of India, are pressing hard

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upon the means of existence. But why is that? It is because the population is increasing at so great a rate. As long as India was liable to the ravages of war and pestilence, and famine, then, no doubt, the population was kept down to a point at which it was not more than the land could supply. But we have substituted for war a reign of universal internal peace; we have managed to grapple successfully with famine, and, as a consequence, the population is increasing in some agricultural districts at a rate which undoubtedly offers great cause for anxiety in the future. But, I may ask, what proposals have ever emanated from the Party which the hon. Member for Finsbury (Mr. Naoroji) professes to represent? What proposals have they put forward which shows they have the smallest idea of how to grapple with that great subject? And what useful result, I may ask, would follow from the appointment of a Roving Commission to inquire into circumstances which are perfectly well known, and which are fully understood? Have we succeeded yet in this country in grappling with the poverty we find, on a very much smaller scale, at our own doors? With our failure to deal with that, are we with a light heart to put forward proposals to take up the consideration of the case of more than 200,000,000 agricultural persons with the expectation that such a process and such machinery as a Royal Commission would give us any sort of assistance? There is one class, however, in India which is specially and extraordinarily prosperous, and whose presence in India is entirely due to British rule. I refer to the great Indian middle class. In the old days you had the ruling Prince and a few persons who pandered to his pleasures, and you had a large Army, ill-paid and ill-disciplined, which overran the country; but you had no trade, you had no roads and no means of communication, and, therefore, no trading middle class. That prosperous middle class you now find in India is entirely due to the British Administration, and to the peace and prosperity which they insure in the country. And not only is there a prosperous middle class, many of them belonging to the same faith and race as the Member for Finsbury, but some of them have amassed enormous fortunes in India. Can you amass fortunes out of a country that is

constantly growing poorer? How have these fortunes been amassed? By taking advantage of these poverty-stricken agricultural classes; by buying produce from them as cheaply as you can, and selling it at as high a profit as you can make. I am not finding fault with them for pursuing a legitimate trade, but I think complaints of poverty come with very bad grace from those who have made fortunes out of the poverty of the persons they are talking about. I do not want, however, to take the hon. Member for Finsbury too seriously, but I would rather turn to the hon. Baronet the Member for Banffshire (Sir W. Wedderburn), who has resided recently in India, and who belonged to the India Civil Service, of which he was a distinguished member. It may be said that if you find a person who was himself a Member of the Administration of a country turn round and say that that Administration is bad that there is then a case for inquiry. But I submit that a phenomenon such as the occasional appearance of a person holding the opinion of the hon. Member for Banffshire is not in itself at all remarkable or extraordinary. In every class or condition of life you will always find some eccentric person who takes an entirely different view from everybody about him. We all remember the case of the scientific gentleman who wrote a book to prove that the world was flat, just as you will find in every society or club someone to tell you that the committee are worthless, and that the club itself is the worst in the world. In the same way in the vegetable world: if you sow seeds you will find now and then springing from them plants of an entirely different kind from the plant that produced the seed. These exceptional kinds are known among gardeners as sports, and so, Sir, among all classes of officials you will find an occasional official sport. And it would not be unreasonable to expect that in such a large Service as the Indian Civil Service there should not be some one man who was afflicted with political colour blindness, and who is incapable of seeing facts as they are. Therefore, the circumstance that one member of the Civil Service can be found to take these extraordinary views is not to be regarded as proving anything except that he is one of those exceptional cases which you

must expect to find among such a large body. One reason advanced for this inquiry is that it should be appointed to ascertain whether the condition of the people of India is not due to the excessive Civil and Military expenditure. Well, as regards Civil expenditure, I do not know whether the House is aware that while the business to be performed by the Civil Service in India goes on increasing year by year, the number of European officials who have to do the work has remained for a very large number of years almost stationary, and that at the present time the Service is worked harder than any other body of public servants in any part of the world. And so far from there having been an increase in the rate of emoluments, the tendency has been to cut down salaries, and the process has been very largely accelerated by the rapid course of the depreciation of the rupee. The Indian Civil Service, considering the duties performed, and comparing those duties with the duties performed at home, is, I say without fear of contradiction, distinctly underpaid, as compared with the Civil Service at home. The hon. Member for Finsbury seems to think one of the great remedies for the distress in India is to be found by substituting in a greater degree natives for Europeans in the Civil Service. I think he used the expression that these young civilians sent out to India were taking the bread out of the mouths of the people of India. I would ask the hon. Member, if the British had not gone to India, would there have been any Civil Service to administer? He says the natives of India should be more largely employed. I go with him so far as to say you should employ natives in India as largely as you can; and I venture to add that no one connected with the Government of India has pressed that more than I have done myself. But there is a practical limit to this. The people of India do not love us, perhaps, but they certainly respect us, and they are prepared to obey us; but they are not prepared to obey other people of India who have no feelings in sympathy with themselves, who are divided from them even by the most hostile feelings. Sir, I think we had sufficient during the late riots which have taken place in what were thought to be the most pacific parts of India, in the feelings which

were raised on that occasion, to indicate that extreme care should be taken in lessening in any sensible degree at the present moment the number of official non-natives. The process should go on as far as is safe, but I believe that at the present moment the point of safety has nearly been reached. And if you were to substitute natives for Europeans, where, I ask, would be the financial saving to the people of India—where the gain to the agricultural classes? As regards military expenditure, I would ask the House to consider this fact: that the Indian Army is now, considering the circumstances of the case, on the most extraordinarily small and economical scale. In Bombay, with a population of 1,000,000 people, the garrison of that great city, with its forts and harbours and the great interests which are to be defended, consists of four weak companies of British Infantry, a weak battalion of Native Infantry, and a handful of Marines. That is the garrison of one of the largest cities in the world. Then take the Imperial City of Delhi, which is the residence of some of the most dangerous classes in India. There, again, the whole and sole garrison of that great city is only four weak companies of British Infantry and a handful of natives. At this moment the Army in the British Isles is more than one-half the strength of the Army in India—that great country which has a frontier of several thousands of miles occupied by warlike or hostile tribes. So small, Sir, is the garrison of that country that if, at any moment, a force is required, as is almost constantly happening, for active service on the frontier, you can only gather that force together by moving the troops from one obligatory point to another over the whole country. The British Army in India at the present moment is actually smaller than it was 40 years ago, and within that time our Indian territory has been increased by several hundred thousand square miles. When Burmah was occupied the other day not a single soldier was added to the garrison, so desirous was the Government of not increasing the burden of taxation on the Indian people. That has put a very great strain upon the already over-worked Army of India. I mention the circumstance to show that, so far from this Army being on an extravagant

footing, it has been reduced to the smallest point possible. The Indian Army is a very efficient Army, but its efficiency must be understood in this sense—that it is efficient only so far as it is understood to be a peace Army, which will have to be very largely reinforced on the outbreak of any war. Subject to that reservation, the Indian Army is undoubtedly efficient. It is an over-worked Army, and an Army very much smaller than it was years ago. These are the two great items of expenditure with regard to which it is assumed that a very great variety of useful information can be obtained by further inquiry. And that is the claim put forward for this Commission. Now, the general use of a Royal Commission, no doubt, is to obtain information on points upon which information is needed. In this respect I venture to say that there is absolutely no need whatever for an inquiry of the sort. As regards information, the Records of India are already on the fullest scale, and there is perhaps no country in Europe where statistics upon every conceivable subject have been so completely worked out. You have the most detailed statistics already available on Public Works, Civil and Military Expenditure, and on the condition of land settlements in different parts of India, and about everything else. No country has such ready and complete records of desirable information. The hon. Member spoke of the inquiries which took place in former years. In previous times it was, no doubt, customary to make an investigation every 20 years; but in those days there was a complete want of information about India. That want no longer exists; and to suppose that, having got your information at the end of 40 or 50 years of the most careful and elaborate labour, therefore a Roving Commission wandering about the country would be able to throw any further light upon the matter is absurd. What is wanted, I would venture to suggest, is to come to a conclusion—to form an opinion, and to lay down a policy with regard to the matter. That, Sir, is not the duty of a Royal Commission; it is the duty of this House. I go so far with the hon. Member for Finsbury (Mr. Naoroji) as to say that with regard to the distribution of charges between India and England

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great injustice is very often done. The hon. Member, in saying this, is not bringing forward anything new. It has been said many times before, and we do not want any further inquiry by an irresponsible body. What is really wanted is the action of this House; for it is the action of this House alone that can perform this act of justice satisfactorily to the Indian people. A Joint Committee of the two Houses, or a Select Committee of this House, might carry out this very useful work, but short of the highest authority of the land—the authority which controls the Treasury—nothing useful will be done to India by this inquiry. In the original Motion proposed, the hon. Member went on to speak of having representative Members on this Commission. I suppose by representative he meant representative of the people of India. If you are to have the people of India represented on the Commission your Commission must not be counted by units or tens; you must have a Commission composed of scores. You will need a great number indeed to obtain any representation of the diverse, and often hostile, views of the people of India. What, however, I apprehend to be contemplated is that the representation should have that peculiar and very partial representation which is signified by the view of the National Congress. For a good many years past the National Congress has been sitting, and I will defy any person to produce one single useful suggestion which that Congress has brought forward. So far from representing the people of India, I will say this of the National Congress: that for one man who believes in the Congress a hundred despise it. They have never attempted to deal with matters which have the real sympathies of the masses of the people, such as the poverty of the agricultural class. The representation of the National Congress has been for the most part connected with the representation of the small and special class who desire to get a larger share of the official loaves and fishes. They desire, for example, to reduce the Income Tax, which is the one tax that the middle classes of India pay. Amongst other things, the National Congress has made two very silly and useless proposals. One proposal they make every year is that the people of India should be allowed

to re-arm themselves. Now, our small Army in India maintains the peace over 300,000,000 people, only and solely because the people of India have no arms. I ask the House to consider what would have been the effect of the late riots at Bombay and at Rangoon, and at other places, if the rioters had been, as they were 40 or 50 years ago, in possession of weapons? Nothing could be more preposterous than the proposal to re-arm the masses of the population of India. Another proposal made at the same time is that native Volunteer corps should be established. We have Volunteer corps here in England because we have a very small Army, and we are surrounded by other nations armed to the teeth. We have enormous wealth close to our sea-boards, and we are in danger of invasion, against which a Volunteer Force becomes a valuable safeguard. But, I would ask, if a Volunteer corps was established at Calcutta or Bombay, what would be the use of it if there was an invasion from the North-West Frontier? The only certain result of a Volunteer Force would be to increase the taxation of the people of India. Yet these two supremely ridiculous proposals have been put forward year by year by the National Congress. If representation on this inquiry is to be similar to the representation on the National Congress, I do not think any good will be got from an inquiry. But I submit to the House that absolutely no case is made out for this inquiry. We do not want to gather information that is already available, while if any action is to be taken it must be by this House; a Commission of any sort would be extremely offensive to the Government of India, and would greatly increase its present difficulties.

SIR W. WEDDERBURN (Banffshire): I desire to speak in support of the prayer of my hon. Friend the Member for Central Finsbury for an independent inquiry into the condition of the people of India, and I wish to bear personal testimony to the deplorable condition of the masses of that people. I wish to lay before this House some facts, which I think will show that the cause of that deplorable condition is the system of official administration which now exists in India. I do not wish to say anything against any individual or any class, but I am firmly convinced that this official

system is the direct cause of the present condition of the people. Not only is it the cause, but I cannot see how it could be otherwise, because practically we have now in India an administration in which the people have no voice at all in the management of their affairs. We have an official class who have absolute authority, who are practically uncontrolled, whose professional interests in many important respects are directly adverse to the interests of the great body of the people. I say that the people have no voice in the management of their own affairs, and, practically, there is no means of obtaining redress when they are in official disfavour. And what do we ask? We ask simply for independent inquiry in order to learn the true state, and in order to do justice. Some hon. Members, I believe, will say that there is danger or inconvenience in such an inquiry, but I say the danger consists in the refusal to make such inquiry. There is no people more loyal, more law-abiding, or more docile than the people of India, but the one thing which may drive them to despair is the fear that an inquiry into their grievances may be refused. I would like to speak with regard to the condition of the masses of the people of India. I am glad to say that my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Oxford admits that the condition of the agricultural population of India is not at all satisfactory. That agricultural population includes about nine-tenths of the whole population of India. It is a peasantry not unlike the peasantry of Ireland, and a great part of India is in the condition which in Ireland is known as the congested districts. In this inquiry I have great hopes of obtaining the sympathy and support of the Nationalist Members from Ireland. They know what their own countrymen in similar conditions have suffered. The iron has entered into their soul, and I think they will be very sympathetic to my hon. Friend (Mr. Naoroji) in his endeavour to bring the case of his countrymen before this House. He has worked very hard and grown grey in the service of his country; he speaks with difficulty in a foreign tongue, and I think this House will be very anxious to understand the case that he wishes to make out on behalf of his unfortunate countrymen. It has been said by one hon. Member that

my friend is a foreigner and a Parsee. I think the hon. Member is a little mistaken when he says that the Parsees depend for their position upon the existence of the British Government. They have been there for many hundred years, and it might as well be said that the Nationalist Members are not representative of Ireland because, perhaps, their ancestors went over with Strongbow. The Parsees have been nearly 1,000 years established amongst the people of India, and are to all intents and purposes true inhabitants of the country; but the value of what a man has to say should be valued not by his race, but by the confidence which he enjoys amongst the people and amongst his fellow-countrymen. The hon. Member for Finsbury enjoys the confidence of the great body of his fellow-countrymen, and that has been expressed again and again in every way in which the people can express their opinions. With regard to the question of class prejudice, I shall have something to say. If the official records are correct—and I have no reason to doubt them—it would appear that one-fifth of that population are rarely able to enjoy more than one meal in the day. That means that one-fifth of the population—say 40,000,000 people, as many as the whole population of these Islands—go through their lives without having their hunger satisfied. The hon. Member for Camberwell (Mr. Bayley) yesterday stated what the average income of the native of India is—1½d. per day. That is not a very large income to tax, yet the taxation that is placed upon these people is two or three times in proportion to that of this, the richest country in the world. And, to give an example, there is a terrible Salt Tax, which is at the rate of about 2,000 times the cost of production. That is a very cruel tax, because the people are vegetarians, and the poor man must have his pinch of salt. The tax falls as a cruel one upon the very poorest class of the population. I do not wish to trouble the House with figures, but I can speak from what I have seen with my own eyes of the condition of the great body of their peasantry. As a matter of fact, they live so completely on the very verge of existence that one failure of rain, one bad crop, is sufficient to cause widespread starvation. They

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have absolutely no savings; they can save nothing, because the greater part of the peasantry is hopelessly in debt. The consequence is that in one bad harvest they die, not in hundreds, not in thousands, nor tens of thousands, nor hundreds of thousands. In the famine of Bombay and Madras there were reported to have died 5,600,000 men, women, and children—industrious, frugal peasantry. I say that that fact proves that the people are in a most desperate condition, and my belief is that the land has become exhausted, and that, instead of things getting better, they are going from bad to worse. I say that that condition of things is directly produced by the system of government by officials in India. My hon. and gallant Friend (Sir G. Chesney) referred to me personally in a very flattering way, and I will not enter into any defence of the personal views I take, because I consider that unimportant. But I would only say that I have the honour of the Service as much at heart as anyone, and I may say that since the beginning of the century my family have served the Queen in India, and my wish is not to say a word against the Service, but to place it in the proper position. The Members of the Indian Government are not to be the masters and tyrants of the public, but to be the servants of the public, and work for their interests. Therefore, I do not wish to come forward to impeach the Service or individuals. I say that our Government in India is an administration through the officials, by the officials, and for the officials, and that in many important respects their professional interest is directly antagonistic to the interests of the great body of the people. It is highly creditable to them that in spite of this they have, in a great measure, worked with self-sacrifice for the good of the people. Yet, at the same time, I say that the system is a bad one which puts into antagonism such opposite interests. It is easy to know how much their professional interests are antagonistic to the welfare of the people. We know that in this country and elsewhere the great reforms we want for the people are peace, retrenchment, and reform. That is the basis for the welfare of the people. Now, with regard to the great Official and Military Service, their professional interests are strictly antagonistic to all

three. ["No, no!"] The greatest military longing is for active service. We do not blame the Army for desiring to distinguish itself, but I do not think it will be denied that the interests of the Army are opposed to peace. ["No, no!"] At any rate, its aim is to distinguish itself in every possible way. Then there come the Departments. How can they be expected to regard with favour reforms which mean the destruction of themselves? With regard to reform, how can we expect them to take the initiative in acts of reform, which mean putting a limit and control on their own arbitrary powers? Reform also means, as my hon. Friend the Member for Finsbury (Mr. Naoroji) has said, more power for the people of the country, and the employment for high objects of the people of the country is directly opposed to the ruling classes, who naturally wish to keep those appointments for themselves. I admit a great deal has been done in the way of giving employment to the people of India, and so far it is creditable that it has been done; but the interest of the dominant class is adverse to the interests of those over whom they rule. The experience in this House of the last few days would show how difficult it is for this House of Commons, sitting in London, to control the great spending Departments of this country—to prevent extravagance, and to prevent waste. Here the taxpayer is the master, and yet the taxpayer as master, acting through the House, finds it very difficult to control waste and extravagance. What is to be expected when the condition of affairs is exactly reversed—when, instead of the taxpayer being the master, it is the tax-consumer who is to be the master? He settles how much is to be paid; he fixes practically his own salary; and what is to be expected when he is absolute and uncontrolled master—when the only duty of the taxpayer is to pay his taxes—what can you expect as regards anything like a reasonable administration of public affairs? We can see what the result is. I will trouble the House with one single figure with regard to that—namely, the increase in the Civil and Military expenditure of India during the last 10 years. It has increased by £10,000,000, while the Civil and Military expenditure of this country has increased £2,500,000.

SIR W. HARCOURT signified dissent.

SIR W. WEDDERBURN : The Chancellor of the Exchequer shakes his head. Perhaps he will kindly tell me what the figure is, if it is not £10,000,000. According to the figures, as far as my limited capacity of examining figures goes, making a comparison of the same class of expenditure, I make out the Indian expenditure has increased by four times what the British expenditure has increased. If I am asked why is that increase, the answer is an easy one—namely, because in the case of the British Exchequer we are spending our own money, and in the case of the Indian Exchequer we are spending somebody else's money. I do not know any other reason why the expenditure has mounted up in the degree it has done. I say that the whole class of officials are not so impartial in these great questions that the public and the House should leave to them absolute and uncontrolled management of the finances of India. As a matter of fact, we know that these affairs are of a very urgent character. We know the Government are told that unless a certain remedy—what I would call a quack remedy for closing Mints—is adopted there will be very great difficulty in paying current expenses. That remedy has been adopted, and even in that remedy there is a taint of the selfishness I deprecate so much from the ruling powers—namely, that its direct effect is to raise the exchange value of the rupee, and in that direction the personal and pecuniary interest of every official in India is more or less involved. I do not wish to lay great stress on that matter, but I wish to say that the Government of India is in very great straits. The people are taxed up to the utmost limit that the people can bear taxation ; they do not know where to turn ; and I say that under these conditions it is the absolute duty of this House to cause independent inquiry to be made by those whom they trust. I do not ask the House to take our statements for gospel. I say I have seen pretty well the inner workings of the Government, and I approve of them. As far as the voice of a single individual will go, I ask for an inquiry. I say that if reasonable inquiry were made it would establish

entirely the points we now ask to be inquired into. I now return just for a moment to the question of the official government of India. It is not only that the officials generally have interests adverse to the people of India, but that the government does not rest with the rank and file at all ; it rests with cliques — with official cliques — at headquarters ; they are the people who are the real authority in India, those who hold the positions of heads of great Departments. My proposition is that it is impossible for anyone in the Government Service out in India to reach these high positions if they hold independent convictions ; if they are not willing to tell unpleasant truths to the authorities, there is not the least chance of their ever reaching those high positions. I take an illustration that will make that clear to everyone. We have Viceroys of very different complexions. At one time it is a Viceroy like Lord Lytton, whose high ability commends itself to gentlemen opposite. At another time we have a Viceroy like the Marquess of Ripon, who recommends himself to persons on this side of the House. It is quite evident that any man in the Government Service who holds a calm conviction either in favour of Lord Ripon's policy or against it could only expect promotion when the Party was in power which he approved of ; therefore, the one side would get a step when Lord Ripon was in power, and the other side would get a step when the other side was in power. But the gentleman who carries out orders of any sort gets two steps to one by the other man—the men who walk up the ladder of promotion two steps at a time are the gentlemen who are not weighted with these painful convictions which force them to tell Governments unpleasant truths. But those men who get up are those who can prophesy smooth things. It always reminds me of a great historical character—Doeg the Edomite. The King of Israel told his servants to slay the priests, and when his servants refused Doeg came forward and slaughtered them very readily. That is the man likely to get rapid promotion without any seniority of service. Therefore, the Government of India is really the Government of a clique. How are they to be controlled ? It is said they are to be

controlled from the India Office, but I say that control is absolutely fallacious, because it consists of Her Majesty's Secretary of State, who, perhaps, is in Office for six months, surrounded by members of that very clique against whom the complaints are made. It is said that when a good American dies he goes to Paris, but when a good official dies in India he goes to the Indian Council, and there he sits. I say that in some cases there is practically no redress for any wrong that may be done, or any wrong that it may be thought is about to be committed. The stereotyped answer which we get to questions in the House about matters the details of which are, perhaps, buried in the India Office is always that "the Secretary of State sees no reason to interfere." Nobody can get redress if treated unjustly in India. My hon. and gallant Friend challenged me to mention any case in which the Party which I favour—what is called the International Congress Party—had brought forward and promoted any practical scheme for the good of the people. We approve of the International Congress because it is the best expression that can at present be given of the public opinion of India. If anyone will suggest a better way of getting at the public opinion of India we shall be very glad to adopt that. The members of the Congress are all collected in open meeting; they are sent there from long distances; they assemble, there is debate and discussion, and resolutions are passed which are circulated among the Members of this House. I think that my hon. Friend hardly gave a fair description of the nature of the results attained there. But I will give an instance. As has been said, the Indian cultivator is in a desperate condition of poverty and debt. The reason that he has fallen into this state of debt to the Indian money lender is on account of the extreme severity with which the Revenue is levied on the Indian cultivator. The other reason is because there have been established Civil Courts which force them into the power of the money lenders, so that they are practically made insolvent. That is a state of things of a most serious kind. The peasantry are being sold up by the money lenders all over the country, and are being divorced from the land. Those who think with

me devised this remedy—that there should be a composition between these people and the money lenders, and that there should be established agricultural banks such as we find in every country where there are peasant interests, in order to furnish a fund at reasonable rates of interest and so help them out of their difficulty. This is a scheme which was accepted by both the natives and the money lenders. It was approved by the Government of Bombay. It was accepted by the Government of India that Lord Cromer, who was then Financial Minister, was willing to advance funds necessary to start this composition. The Government of India wrote home to the India Office recommending that a very small experiment should be tried in one or two villages, so that the practical outcome of the scheme might be witnessed. If we could have found out a way of making one village prosperous and contented we had the clue to making the whole of India prosperous and contented. Well, Sir, it is very difficult for any person to understand why such an experiment, approved of by all classes of people, approved by the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, and other Public Bodies—I say it is almost incredible that anybody should be found to object to such an experiment being tried. We have been working at this matter for 10 years. We had Government assent to carry it out. But when this scheme entered the portals of the India Office it never left them alive. It was stabbed in the dark, and to this day I do not know why the Government of India, the Viceroy, and Council were forbidden to try this limited experiment by which we might have found the means of restoring prosperity to India. Now, as regards the inquiry, I can only urge that it is much needed. I affirm that every good thing done for the people of India has arisen out of an inquiry in this House for reform; every kind of progress accepted and carried into effect in India has been under the direct orders this House has given in opposition to those of the officials. What we ask is that the orders given by this House should be carried out, and above all things that a Commission should inquire whether those orders have been carried out. If they have not, then steps should be taken to put them in force. I say,

Sir, that it is the duty of this House and the country to do this. It would be our duty even if it meant a loss to this country. But so far from there being a loss to the country there would be an enormous gain. As my hon. Friend the Member for Finsbury (Mr. Naoroji) has pointed out, the whole trade of India comes to only about 2s. a head per year. With reasonable prosperity, if India took, say only £1 per head of our goods, it would amount, as has been pointed out, to as much as the whole trade we have with the world. Therefore, if these steps are taken, I say that this inquiry is the only means by which they can be accomplished. It is the duty of this House to order the Commission, and it would be beneficial to the people of India and to the people of this country.

*SIR C. W. DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): The Motion which has been moved and supported is one which cannot actually be put to the House. It, however, no doubt meets with a great deal of sympathy on this side of the House of Commons. If the Motion had been put to the House, I should have felt bound to go into the opposite Lobby to that taken by most of those with whom I usually act. Now, Sir, the Motion as it stands on the Paper to-day is very moderate indeed. The Motion as it stood on the Paper yesterday was much stronger. It has been toned down, and has been improved in such a way as to lead many reasonable Members of the House to give it their support. But, Sir, the speeches we have heard—especially the speech of the hon. Baronet—have travelled beyond the terms of the Motion, and the words which have been expunged from the Motion have re-appeared in the speeches. Therefore, I think that we must deal with this Motion not as the mild Motion which appears on the Paper, but as the far stronger Motion, which has been supported in the speeches we have heard. Now, Sir, as I hold views with regard to India and its government as extreme as those of the hon. Baronet who has just spoken, I must, nevertheless, say that I cannot at all associate myself with the views of my hon. and gallant Friend who has spoken this evening upon the other side of the House. Sir, the hon. Baronet who has just sat down spoke of the deplorable

condition of the people of India. He said that only despair lies before them. He has stated in general terms that he gathers such impressions not only from his own distinguished career in India, but also and especially from Government Returns which from year to year have been laid before this House. Sir, it is impossible to deny that in those Government Papers and Returns there are many facts which go to show that the population of India is very poor. No one can for a moment deny that fact. But, Sir, it is hardly fair to quote from Returns and official Despatches without also quoting from the Annual Statement of the *Moral and Material Progress of the People of India*, to the effect that there is constant improvement. The two statements should be taken together. This Motion will, of course, be telegraphed to India in its stronger form. No doubt means have already been taken to communicate to the papers of India the stronger form of this Resolution, and if at any time this House should be led to adopt the milder Resolution, the result to India will be as if the stronger Resolution had been adopted. On this matter I am bound to say that I agree with the speech of the hon. and gallant Member who addressed the House this evening. I think that, as regards the government of India, the appointment of a Commission is calculated to weaken the Government, and therefore that a Commission is extremely dangerous. I have myself a strong objection to Royal Commissions of any kind in the abstract. But if there is to be an inquiry it would have to be on a very large scale and very searchingly into both the military and civil administration of India. Such Commission should be able, by the strength of its constitution and the terms of Reference, to go into the foundations of Government in India. I say that such a proceeding would greatly weaken the Government. At the same time, if there is reason to believe that the condition of India demands a very large change in the civil and military administration, or in both, then it is the bounden duty of the Government for the time being to carry out these alterations, and for the Prime Minister and Cabinet to make those proposals to the House which they think it necessary to make. There is one particular point to which both my hon. Friend

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the Member for Finsbury and the hon. Baronet have directed the whole of their speeches. They dwelt largely—indeed, my hon. Friend the Member for Finsbury dwelt almost exclusively—upon one particular portion of the expenditure of India. No doubt as regards the home charges the objections which have been raised are based on satisfactory ground, and if these were to be inquired into I do not think the House would be opposed to instituting an inquiry. As must be universally admitted by all who have given their attention to this subject the home charges of the Government of India are increasing, and there is high authority to show that India is not always fairly treated. But, Sir, we have not only to deal with the speeches which have been made and the earlier form of this Resolution, but we have also to remember that Papers have been circulated to Members of the House in support of the Resolution, or rather in support of the earlier form of the Resolution. It is, of course, not desirable to discuss documents which have been circulated to Members. No doubt Members who have perused the documents recognised in full their duties to the people of India. But those Papers have received a very wide circulation, and hon. Members are very naturally inclined to feel strongly on the subject. I cordially admit that we have a very high duty in respect to India. No one can deny that, and I may add that, with respect to the government of that country, it might almost be said that we have even a greater responsibility than to our own constituencies, because the people of India are unrepresented. I admit a great many of the details of which the hon. Baronet has just spoken; I admit the great pressure of the Salt Tax, and I can bear testimony to it being a cruel tax. All taxes are more or less cruel, but the Salt Tax is no doubt severe upon the poor, and is in that sense specially cruel. Unless there is reason to suppose that there can be large economies in the Government of India we cannot attack all our means of resource. I believe that some moneys might be curtailed in India, but not enough to put down the Salt Tax, while the education expenditure must increase. You should not attack the Revenue of India unless you know from where you

are to get other revenue. Something might be raised from tobacco, and India is the only important country which raises no revenue from tobacco. No doubt there are many people in India who escape having to pay taxes, but, on the other hand, there are large Services in India which, so far from giving us room for economy, demand, indeed, an increase, and I am sure the hon. Baronet will agree with me that even with regard to the police, our agents are insufficient to remedy the evils that take place at the present time. The hon. Baronet attacked the Council of the Secretary of State. I agree wholly with him in that particular. I believe with Lord Palmerston and Mr. Bright as to the creation of the Council of India. The Council was set up for special and temporary reasons. It was set up in order to find—I will not use an offensive term—but it was set up to secure a transition from the old form of government in India to the modern form of government of India by England. The reasons for that have, however, passed away. The Council is, of course, wholly unrepresentative of the people of India. It would be easier to sweep it away altogether than to make it representative of the people of India. It would be far better if the Secretary of State was directly in communication with Parliament instead of having a Council as a buffer which, instead of offering resistance in cases of importance, often offers resistance in the wrong case. I thoroughly agree that there might be reduction in the cost of the India Office, and also a reduction of the expenses of India in the purchase of stores. They might be obtained a great deal cheaper than they are at the present time. There are heads of expenditure in which a reduction might take place. But these are matters upon which I do not believe any Commission would be able to enter. The hon. Member for Finsbury made a suggestion to the House. He suggested that it might be the duty of Parliament to pay the white soldiers employed in India. He said that we had our Native Army in India which would serve for the defence of the country, and that we sent our white troops to support our own rule.

MR. NAOROJI: I said pay a fair share.

*SIR C. W. DILKE: I did not catch the words "fair share," and the argu-

ment had seemed to go the whole way. The hon. Member who has just spoken was silent on that point. Now, I wish to protest against the mixing up in any way of British and Indian Expenditure. It has never been done, and I hope never will be done. The late Mr. Fawcett, although he was so strong an advocate of the claims of India, always protested against anything of the kind in the strongest possible way. When a question of applying the revenues of this country to India in connection with famine arose it cost him—a man who was prepared to sacrifice even his career in this House for the sake of the natives of India—a great deal to oppose the proposal which was then made by his friend, but he did oppose it. He did so on the ground that he would never be a party to confusing the Revenues of the two countries, and to making this country contribute to expenditure taking place in India itself. The hon. Member for Finsbury and his friends say that a large part of the expenditure is Imperial, and that a portion of it is for aggressive purposes. But it seems to me a dangerous delusion and absolutely inadmissible—this idea that expenditure for the defence of India is in any sense non-Indian, and that the taxpayers of Great Britain should contribute to it. The hon. Member who has just spoken holds, I know, the view that what is called the aggressive frontier expenditure of India might be avoided; but, in my opinion, so far as there has been aggression it has been directed against India. The recent events in the Pamirs—the operations of Russia in that quarter—may be cited. Our frontier expenditure is really a small proportion of the military expenditure of India, and the main expenditure is for the purpose of keeping up the ordinary British and Native Forces. I do not think that it is possible to reduce the expenditure on those Forces except by a complete change of system, which would involve, not only the military arrangements in India, but here also. If you appoint a Commission to go to India to take evidence on that point you will not be able to make changes if you desired it as regards India alone, such as would be necessary to produce any real economy in the Revenues of India. The hon. Member for Finsbury

has spoken in like manner of the Civil expenditure. He has suggested that we should make a large contribution towards the white civilians in India. I do not think that this would be possible. To both these great branches of Expenditure the same argument applies. Certainly you cannot by means of a Commission bring a change about which would strike at the foundations of the present system of government in India. If you are to make a change on such a scale as to produce a large effect it can only be done by the Government, and on the responsibility of the Government. I now come to the pleasanter task of stating briefly points on which I am disposed to agree with the hon. Member for Finsbury. I do think that it would be possible to secure the present military force at a cheaper rate, or to secure a larger force at the present rate; but, as I said, it could only be by a very great change of system which would affect the conditions of enlistment of the whole of the Forces of this Empire. There is this remarkable fact—that the gallant General opposite (Sir G. Chesney), and authorities like Lord Wolseley and Lord Roberts, although they differ on points of detail, all agree that it would be possible so to modify the military system of this country as either to give India a larger force at the present rate or to reduce the military expenditure of India. In respect to Civil expenditure, changes might, in my opinion, gradually be made, which would be of advantage to the finances of India and to the prosperity of her future. The remarkable advances in local and native government which have been made by some of the States of India under our protection go to show that there is an opening for the future in that direction. It is impossible for us to part as long as we are in India with our military system, and with the control of the main public finances of India. But I do believe that it is possible—compatibly with our rule and those great military and financial objects to which I have referred—to give more local freedom. The extraordinary progress which Mysore has made since it was restored to native rule is an evidence of what may be done. A very large financial debt upon the State of Mysore has been paid off, modified representative institu-

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tions have been established, and now Mysore is a model to the rest of the States under our rule. There has been similar progress in the States of the Punjaub. There is a very interesting book on the subject, written by a gentleman who is Chief Secretary to the Government of the Punjaub, whose career I may, in passing, say is a striking disproof of the statement made by the hon. Baronet (Sir W. Wedderburn) that a man could not rise in India unless he wrote smoothly of the powers that be. Mr. Tucker has declared that the Native States are progressing more rapidly than the more directly governed parts of the country. These facts, coming as they do from a great official of the Government of India, are facts which we ought to reflect upon. I think that there is a chance that in future Government will progress in this direction rather than in the direction of a highly centralised system. There are suggestions which have been made for the greater development of our Provinces in India on the elective system, and there are suggestions which have been made by the hon. Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Paul) and others as to the selection by competitive examination of Natives for employment in the Government of India. I do not believe much in either of these steps. As to the competitive examinations, the great variety in the populations of India, the differences in religion, race, and tongue, place difficulties in the way. It is, however, possible by the other means at which I have hinted to more and more employ native administration, providing the main points—the control of the Army and finance—remain entirely unrestricted in our hands.

*SIR A. SCOBLE (Hackney, Central) said, he desired first to say a word by way of remonstrance to the hon. Member for Banffshire (Sir W. Wedderburn) as to the language he had used with reference to the Civil Service and the Supreme Government of India. Speaking from personal experience, he (Sir A. Scoble) assured the House that, so far from the interests of Civil servants in India being dissociated from the interests of the great body of the population of that country, they were identified most closely, and had always been most intimately

connected. It was difficult to understand how it could be otherwise; and to suggest that the paltry consideration of their salaries made the Civil servants forget their duty to the land of their birth or of their adoption was to cast a slur which was as unwise as it was unjust. As to the Army, it was alleged that soldiers preferred fighting rather than anything else, and, therefore, their energies must always be directed to promoting quarrels in which they might have the chance of distinguishing themselves. That was a proposition which needed only to be stated to refute itself. But when his hon. Friend went on to say that the possession of a desire to benefit the people disqualified a man from obtaining promotion he stated what had simply no foundation. The career of his hon. Friend (Sir W. Wedderburn) himself was a proof of the contrary. As for there being an official clique at Simla, he (Sir A. Scoble) could speak with some authority, for he had been one of that so-called official clique, and he could only say that, so far from there being any black mark placed against a man who spoke freely and had ideas of his own, there was one constant unvarying desire to select from every part of the country the men best fitted to fill posts as they became vacant, and to promote those men. There could be no doubt of the complete honesty of his hon. Friend the Member for Finsbury (Mr. Naoroji) in the views he took, and there could also be very little doubt that in many of the views he entertained he was supported by gentlemen on both sides of the House. As to the poverty of India, undoubtedly India was a poor country, but the poverty was relative and not absolute. A man might be rich with 10s. in one country who would be poor in another with £5; and when it was said that the average income of the inhabitants of India was only £2, the natural inference drawn by ordinary English people who heard that statement would be that £2 was perfectly insufficient to supply a man, woman, or child with food, clothing, and lodging for 12 months. But that that was not so in India was proved by the fact that in ordinary seasons the mortality in India was not enormously great. A man could not get many luxuries upon the ordinary income of the Indian ryot; but, at the same time, it was perfectly

true that he and his family were able to eke out their existence more or less satisfactorily according to the seasons which prevailed. And though it was true that there was this amount of poverty in India, it was absolutely untrue that that poverty had increased during the government of India by this country, or that there had been any general, or indeed partial, retrogression of the population. His hon. Friend the Member for Central Finsbury (Mr. Naoroji) published some years ago a collection of pamphlets on the subject of the poverty of India. And what he said in that book was the subject of much discussion by the native newspapers of India. One of them—*The Indian Spectator*—a very able journal, was published in Bombay, and edited by Behramjee Malabari, a Parsee gentleman. After considering the arguments and statements of Mr. Naoroji, he said—

“We are not convinced that the country is from year to year sinking deeper in destitution. On the contrary, we think there are proofs to show that, on the whole, India is growing richer. The fact is, that there has been a revolution in the distribution of wealth. The labouring classes are much better off than they were previously. Their wages have increased. The purchasing power of money has become greater. A daily-increasing middle class is growing up. The savings of this class are largely to be found locked up in ornaments. The price of land and of agricultural produce has gone up. The standard of living has risen. The people are better housed, better clothed, and better fed. Even the staple food of the people in certain districts has changed for the better.”

Putting one Native authority against another, he thought the views of this gentleman were as worthy of consideration as the views of his hon. Friend (Mr. Naoroji), and the views of the former were based upon continued residence in the country of which he wrote. But he would take a still higher authority, and quote a gentleman who had filled the highest positions in the Native States, and whose death a year or two ago was lamented throughout the whole of India. He was a statesman of high rank, a Brahmin of the highest class, and a man well versed in political affairs. He referred to the late Sir Madava Row. Upon the occasion of delivering an address to the students of the Madras University in April, 1877, he made this statement—

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“The truth must be frankly and gratefully admitted that the British Government of India is incomparably the best Government we have ever had. It is the strongest and the most righteous and the best suited to India's diverse populations and diverse interests. It is the most capable of self-maintenance, of self-renovation, and self-adjustment in reference to the progressive advancement of the subject races. But it would be contrary to human nature itself to expect that the British nation should undertake the heavy duty and responsibility of governing and defending India without any advantage whatever to itself.”

Gentlemen opposite considered that those who were selected to take part in the Government of India by competitive examination were a great deal too highly paid for the work they had to do. Of course, it must be admitted that the Civil Service of India was a well-paid Service, and deservedly well paid. The members of this Service were not paid more than they were worth, and they were not paid more than the services which they rendered entitled them to receive. He supposed there were very few Members of the House who understood to the full extent the duty which devolved upon the British officials in India. There was one man placed in charge of a district as large as Ireland, larger than Scotland, almost as large as England itself; and, with very little European assistance, he had to be responsible for the peace, order, and good government of that great district. How well he had done his duty was matter of history. Peace, order, and good government had been maintained in India, whatever detractors might say to the contrary. It was not too high a price to pay for the tranquillity and the prosperity which India had enjoyed under British rule that the British officers who did their delicate, difficult, and dangerous duty should be amply remunerated for the services they rendered and the risks they incurred. His hon. Friend suggested that a greater amount of native talent ought to be introduced into the Service of the country. It was, however, a fact which was undeniable that the greater part of the administration of India was already done by natives, and all the European superiors had to do was to control, regulate, and supervise the work of these native subordinates. When they were told that a greater number of Native gentlemen should be admitted into the higher ranks of the Service they had

to consider what the view of the Natives themselves was with regard to such an increase. It was not as if India were a homogeneous country—a people of one race animated by the same interests. The country was full of the most diverse interests, and populated mainly by two great classes of persons whose religions were apt to lead them into perpetual conflict. It was one of the greatest and the most important duties performed by the British administration in India to prevent the Mahomedans and the Hindoos from flying at each others throats. He would remind the House of the riots that had recently taken place in various parts of India as the result of a special and particular religious agitation. Both at Bombay and in the North-Western Provinces the Governor (Lord Harris), and the Lieutenant Governor (Sir Charles Crosthwaite), had traced the origin of these disturbances to the operation of a Society for the Protection of the Cow. The Society had a very innocent name, and if it had limited itself to the object which its name had in view it would be a Society deserving of very considerable sympathy. But what did Sir Charles Crosthwaite say with regard to this Society? He said—

“Their object, as declared in their public documents, is excellent, praiseworthy, humane; but from protecting the cow they had gone on to attacking the Mahomedan, to interfere with his liberty, and to molest him in the enjoyment of his property.”

Supposing, in a district where this Society is carrying on its operations and molesting the Mahomedans, there was a Magistrate who was a conscientious and orthodox Hindoo, what part could he take in regard to the disturbances? On the other hand, if the Magistrate were an orthodox Mussulman who sympathised with that community, how was he to deal with the disturbances? Experience had shown that the only reliable man to have at the head of affairs under such circumstances—and such circumstances were constantly arising without the slightest notice in India—was a man who was neither Hindoo nor Mahomedan, but a man that had been brought up in the principles of fair play, who had the courage and readiness in an emergency which had been found to be the characteristics of Englishmen whenever they had been set in positions of responsibility.

The remedy proposed by his hon. Friend would not be an efficient remedy, but would be a cause of weakness, because it was perfectly clear that under circumstances of that kind no reliance would be placed by the Mahomedan community on a Hindoo Magistrate, nor would the Hindoo community place any confidence in a Mahomedan Magistrate. He had no doubt that Members of the House considered that it would be a concession to native opinion if native gentlemen in greater numbers were admitted to the Service. But he assured the House it was not so. Only the other day he was reading an extract from a native paper which was published in the neighbourhood of Calcutta, and which had a very considerable circulation. It had reference to this question as to whether a Baboo or an Englishman would be preferable. A correspondent of *The Burdwan Sanjiwani* of 29th March, 1887, said—

“Power exercised by the Baboo is perhaps more abused than power exercised by the European official, and that for the simple reason that the Baboo, being better acquainted than the European with the ins and outs of Bengali life, enjoys a position of greater advantage than the latter for the purpose of committing mischief.”

A more recent opinion had been expressed by a newspaper of even wider circulation, in fact the only Bengali newspaper and the only vernacular newspaper in India with a very large circulation. It had a circulation of 30,000 a week, and represented the orthodox class, who after all, were the most important class in India. Having regard to a Resolution recently, and he thought inadvisedly, adopted by the House, the newspaper of which he spoke said—

“We want genuine sahibs, and not excommunicated outcasts, or spurious sahibs such as those would be who went to England to pass the Civil Service examination.”

Therefore this proposed remedy of his hon. Friend of introducing a greater number of natives of India into the higher walks of the Civil Service would, so far from contenting the vast majority of these natives, offend and hurt them, and at the same time it would not conduce in the slightest degree to the stability or strength of the British Government in India. His hon. Friend (Mr. Naoroji) said that if there were a sufficient number of native gentlemen in

the Civil Service the average income of the natives of India would be raised to such an expenditure that, instead of spending 2s. 6d. a year on British manufactures, they would be able to spend £1. As £1 multiplied by 287,000,000 people came to a decent sum, he had no doubt the manufacturers of this country would be delighted to have their trade supplemented to that extent. But it was absurd to suppose that anything of that kind would follow. The only people who would be at all likely to buy goods of the character manufactured here would be the very small number of people who belonged to the middle classes, and whose numbers were increasing under the beneficent action of the British Government. He wished very much that exports from England to India could increase at anything like the same rate at which exports from India to England were increasing. But it would be necessary to revolutionise the entire habits and manners of the people before anything of that kind could take place. Men who lived on rice and curry did not want many of the luxuries of civilisation to enable them to eat their meals, and, at the same time, he regretted to say that they could get better and cheaper textile fabrics from native mills than they could obtain from the looms of this country. He did not think that any true friend of India would for one moment wish to discourage the progress of manufactures in that country in order even to benefit their fellow-subjects here. On the contrary, he thought one was bound in that respect, as in every other, to seek to do what was possible to promote the prosperity of India and of the Indians in their own country. He was perfectly convinced of this—that no tinkering of the kind proposed by the Resolution put on the Paper by his hon. Friend would have the slightest appreciable effect upon Indian grievances. He was perfectly sure that the discussion of Indian questions in the House, in the imperfect time and with the imperfect materials it was possible to bring to bear upon such discussions, so far from doing good, was apt to do mischief and harm to the governors and the governed of that country. He was at one with the right hon. Baronet (Sir C. W. Dilke) in thinking that if there was to be an inquiry it should be rather into the

financial relations between England and India. He thought England had taken, and was likely constantly to take, an unfair advantage of India. He should very much like to see an inquiry conducted in the House of Commons, or by a Joint Committee of both Houses on that subject. India was called upon to pay charges which the Colonies were not called upon to pay. As Canada was not called upon to pay towards the maintenance of Her Majesty's Minister at Washington, he saw no reason why India should have to pay towards Her Majesty's Ministers at Peking and Persia. He believed that with regard to Home Charges something might be done, but he did not believe those reductions could be as great as some people imagined. The cost of the India Office was not as disproportionately great as some people believed. The transactions with the India Office came to £22,000,000 sterling annually, and he did not think £120,000 a year was too much to pay for carrying on a business which involved so much expenditure. However that might be, there was no doubt a great deal of soreness felt in India on the subject. If instead of moving for a Commission, which could only have the effect of weakening the Government of India—which he believed in his conscience to be as honest and good a Government as existed in any country in the world—his hon. Friends would assist those who, he ventured to think, took as true an interest in India as they did, in obtaining some remission of the burdens India was called upon to bear, they would be doing better service to those whom they wished to serve.

MR. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.) congratulated the House on the vigorous interest which was now taken in Indian questions. The hon. Member for Finsbury (Mr. Naoroji) had, as a Member of the House of Commons, discharged his duties not only to the people of India, but to his constituents, in a manner which met with the general approval of the Members of that House. The hon. Member opposite (Sir G. Chesney) had taunted the hon. Member for Finsbury with being a Parsee, and with therefore not being able to feel a true interest in the sufferings of the people, and had suggested that he was not really a representative of the people.

Sir A. Scoble

He would ask the hon. Member opposite to keep his attention on Calcutta when the hon. Member for Finsbury (Mr. Naoroji) paid a visit to Calcutta. If he did so, he would see that the hon. Member was received with the acclamations and effusions of the people, and then the hon. Gentleman opposite would be able to calculate by the feeling expressed whether he was in sympathy with the natives. In Ireland they had similar instances. It had always been said that the agitation was a bogus agitation; that it was got up by bad men who looked after their own interests; but they knew that when Lord Aberdeen left Dublin the route was lined with people grateful to him for his sympathy with the Irish people. It was only by instances like these that they could really judge what was the popular feeling. Now the measure for the conducting of simultaneous examinations in England and India was carried this Session by a Party which might almost be called the Indian Party in that House. He thought these were achievements which proved that benefit could be worked to India through that House; but the necessity for the Royal Commission was proved by the remarks they had heard that afternoon. They had heard a party who considered that everything in India was carried on for the best for the Indian natives by the officials, and they had heard a party who maintained the contrary. That seemed to him to show a *primâ facie* case that this House should appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into this difficult question. As was known, the Opium Question was one upon which contrary opinions have been expressed, and at the present moment a Commission was going to start for India to weigh the evidence on both sides. They wished the same system to be applied to this matter. If the Government would undertake such an inquiry as had been pointed out by the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean, he was perfectly certain (he spoke after conference with his Colleagues), they would accept that as a very large instalment of what they were asking for. Therefore, if it was at all in the mind of the Secretary for India, or if he would accept the advice of the hon. Gentleman opposite who came from India, who had pointed out many questions where he was in agreement with

them, and where he thought those changes might be made, they should be pleased to see him form a part of that Commission, and they should give the greatest weight to all he said, because they fully endorsed what fell from him, knowing that Indian Civil servants were of the highest class. They did all in their power to improve the position of those over whom they were called upon to rule; but, at the same time, they thought that sometimes these Civil servants were lacking in sympathy. Much had been said about the military expenditure in India, and he much regretted to hear it announced in the papers that morning that Sir Henry Norman was not going out as Viceroy to India, because his ideas were largely in the direction that we ought to lessen as much as possible the forward movement on the frontiers of India, and that the present time was one certainly not for extension, but for retrenchment. This word retrenchment was not a pleasant word in private or in public life; but, at the same time, there arrived moments when such considerations must be the uppermost ones; and he believed that that moment had arrived for India, and that, at any rate, the position of the people of India, their resources, and their finances were matters which ought to occupy the minds of the English nation and of that House. At this moment, when they had the question of the interest of 300,000,000 of our own subjects in the East to discuss, it was to be regretted that the question was relegated to the fag-end of the Session, when there was only a sparse collection of Members present; but, for his part, he rejoiced to see that even at that late hour so many had remained to show their interest and to prove the feeling of responsibility that they had to their fellow-subjects in the East. He desired to take that opportunity of referring to two other subjects which might be looked into by the Royal Commission, or the Governmental Commission, should such a Commission be appointed. He trusted Her Majesty's Government might be able to solve the questions to which he desired more particularly to refer, even before such a Royal Commission issued; but he felt it his duty to bring these subjects before the Committee, because he believed this was the only oppor-

tunity when they could be mentioned; and he had long felt a desire to bring these subjects before the House. He referred especially to the coolie migration to Assam. Most Indians and those interested in Indian affairs would know that abuses had for a very long time now existed under the system of coolie labour in the Assam tea-gardens, and he regretted to say that at the present day they still existed. He did not wish to take up the time of the House in discussing the primary question as to whether contract labour of the character of that employed in the Assam tea-gardens was permissible or not. He believed himself that, with such a deprivation of personal liberty as was connected with that service as it unfortunately existed in the Assam tea-gardens, it was utterly unpermissible and absolutely wrong to allow such contracts to be carried out, and to have the support of the law. The United States of America settled that question after a bloody war some years ago, and the same question confronted us in the question of the employment of Kanaka labour in Queensland; but he trusted that the Queensland question would receive the same solution which they might expect from the Government in the case of the coolie question. He considered that the coolie labour in Assam was practically a state of slavery. But he did not wish to base that assertion entirely on his own opinion, because his information had been acquired chiefly through reading, and from conversation held whilst he was in India with many who had carefully considered the question. But that was the opinion of the Chief Commissioner of Assam, Mr. Ward, who said some years ago that the coolie was practically a slave for the whole period of his contract. Now he ought, perhaps, to explain to the House, for the benefit of those Members who might not have studied the question, that the coolie labour in Assam was divided into two classes. The first class was the Act labourers, or those who had signed contracts for five years under the special Act of 1882, and the second class was non-Act coolies, or those who were free labourers, or who had signed a contract for a very brief space of time. He would just read, very briefly, the words of Mr. Stevenson, Deputy Commissioner of Sylhet, who explained the nature of the contract

which existed between the Assam tea-planter and the coolie labourer. He said—

“In this matter the law appears entirely one-sided. Everything is in favour of the employer. A labour contract purporting to have been signed by the coolie, but either not executed by him, or, if executed, executed under a misapprehension, is sent in for registration under Section 111, and registered. It may not be verified for a year afterwards, and suppose it is then cancelled, what compensation does the unfortunate coolie receive? He has been, one may say, in wrongful confinement for a year, forced to labour for a master who had no claim to his services, and liable, if he tried to escape from his state of *quasi*-slavery, to be pursued, arrested, and sent up for trial like a common criminal, or worse, as these even cannot, in all cases, be arrested without a warrant.”

That was the opinion of a gentleman who, he thought, might be relied upon to state the true facts of the case without any exaggeration. Now it was very strange, but it was a fact, that all the non-Act labourers—that was to say, the free labourers, or those who had got a very short contract—were employed at the healthy plantations; but that all the Act labourers—that was to say, the coolies who were bound for five years under very penal circumstances and laws—gravitated to the unhealthy districts, and to the estates where there was very grave danger to life and health. This was, perhaps, not to be wondered at, for it was only quite natural that the free labourer, if he should arrive by chance or by mistake on a plantation which had these unhealthy conditions attached to it, should at once, not being bound to any extent, free himself, and, as soon as his short contract was out, return to his native land. But that was not so with the contract coolie. He was bound to carry out his five years, and to undergo all the risks which the unhealthy conditions of the estate exposed him to. The mortality, therefore, amongst the labourers on those estates which were worked under the Acts was very considerable indeed. In some isolated estates of a very unhealthy character the death rate amounted to as much as 500 per mile. Of course, admitted those were very exceptional cases, but yet the average of the estates which were healthy and which were worked by non-Act labourers was much below the mortality of those estates which were worked by those who were contract labourers. The chief things that they suffered from were, of course, the unhealthy situation of the estate, poor food, and

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over-work. It was true that by Section 115 of the Act of 1882 these coolies, or contract labourers, and the estates on which they laboured were supposed to be subject to the inspection of a Government Inspector. But he was sorry to say that the Government Inspector had a very large amount of ground to cover, and very often he was only able, perhaps, to appear on the estate once a year; and, therefore, the moment his back was turned, it was very possible for the planter to make exacting demands for labour upon the coolie. But he would have scarcely ventured to refer to this subject were it not that a very recent case had occurred in Assam, which showed the dangers which the coolie ran and the hardships which he was bound to endure at the present day. He referred to the case of Mr. Murray, and he would like to draw the attention of Members of the House to the judgment of Justices Prinseps and Trevelyan, the latter of whom, he believed, was a relative of the right hon. Gentleman who held the Office of Secretary for Scotland in Her Majesty's Government. Mr. Murray had appealed against the decision of the Deputy Commissioner of Jalpaiguri, who had convicted him under Sections 341 and 342 (wrongful confinement) of the Indian Penal Code, sentencing him to one month's simple imprisonment, and a fine of Rs.500; and the Judges, in upholding the conviction, remarked—

"That the evidence showed that particularly the coolies employed on this tea-garden were always in a state of durance; when off work they were kept within a guarded enclosure, and even when they were at work on the tea-garden they were watched by guards; that the manager dealt with his labourers in such a manner as completely to deprive them of any freedom of action, and thus practically reduce them for the term of their engagements to a state of slavery; that Mr. Murray had the assistance of the police, and that the circumstances of this case went to show the necessity for efficient inspection of the gardens."

He had no doubt they would hear that the very fact that Mr. Murray was brought up and convicted for a month showed that the inspection in Assam was very complete; but when they read the judgment of the Justices through it became evident that the malpractices on the estate of Mr. Murray were of long continuation, and it was that which caused him to be brought up and to receive judgment. The papers of India had

teemed with cases of children who had been cajoled away—sometimes girls under the promise of marriage, and sometimes the elder sons of widows had been cajoled by coolie recruiters to leave their homes, and take service under these contracts in Assam. The fact was that these Acts were absolutely unnecessary. There was no necessity why both these Acts, or, at any rate, the penal portions of them, should not be swept away. The Deputy Commissioner of Kámrúp said that the Act of 1882 was no longer wanted in his district—

"As only 11 gardens had availed themselves of its provisions, the improved communication rendering access to Bengal a matter of only two or three days' journey."

The Deputy Commissioner of Nowgong said that—

"The Act is not unpopular in his district; that the majority of gardens work outside it; and that the repeal of the Act would affect only a few unpopular gardens, which would then have to spend more money to get coolies to go to them;"

for, of course, the effect of the Act was to supply the proprietors of unhealthy estates with coolies who would otherwise probably demand a higher price or wage for the conditions under which they worked and for the risks they ran, or they would have to go to other estates. He believed it was the duty of the Government and of the English nation to insist upon the employment of free labour and cheap labour without any injustice being perpetrated either in India or in Queensland. He thought, then, they could ask the Government to do all that was in their power to influence the Indian Commission and a very powerful body of cultivated opinion in this direction. He was afraid that would not meet with the approval of the hon. Gentleman who spoke last, who seemed to think any Commission of Indians was highly reprehensible, and who had read to them some old wives' tales and selections from the low-class journals in India, which could be easily matched in sane England at the present time, if they liked to take some low-class journals in London, and make excerpts from them which bear on the present Government, and even on many other subjects. He did not think that such extracts should have the slightest weight with that House, unless they came from some very responsible autho-

city. There was another matter to which he wished to call the attention of the Under Secretary of State for India. That was the question of the combination of the Executive and the Judicial Courts and work in India. In Ireland they had often seen many drawbacks of the government of one nation by an alien nation, or of a different nation; they had seen there the ill-effects of the Executive and Judicial functions being combined in one and the same man. It was impossible for a man to set up compartments in his mind, and for him, when he was on the Bench, to use only one special compartment of his brain, and when he was acting as a police officer to use another compartment of his mind. The fact was that, where you had a combination of this character, either the police officer must be lax or the Judge must be prejudiced. It might be thought necessary to bring such a proposition home, but the recent case of the Rajah of Marinasingh and the conduct of Mr. Phillips, which had been brought before that House on several occasions, drew attention to the condition of things arising from such a combination in India, and he thought he could say that they pointed the moral and adorned the tale. The Rajah whom he had just mentioned was, unfortunately, under the jurisdiction of Mr. Phillips. The Rajah was much esteemed in his own country and in his own district, and had given most munificent gifts to all charitable and public matters. He had been publicly thanked by more than one official on leaving the government of their districts, and he was a man who was a thoroughly estimable and splendid citizen, and one whom he should have thought it would have been the last desire of anyone to insult. He would not weary the House with a recapitulation of the full details of the case, which had been discussed in another place, but he would state the main facts briefly. It appeared that while the Rajah was building his new palace he, unfortunately, interfered with one of the drains of his neighbours. The Rajah was not at home at the time, but Mr. Phillips gave instructions to his subordinate Magistrate to summon the Rajah before the Court. Directly the Rajah heard that this was taking place, as he was a man of honour and did not wish his good name to be

besmirched at all, he at once made an offer to the Municipality that he would build an absolutely new drain which was to cost 4,000 rupees, and he forwarded his cheque for 4,000 rupees to show his *bona fides* in the matter and his intention of carrying out the offer he had made. When the action came on Mr. Phillips insisted upon the Rajah being brought into Court, and upon his being placed in the dock beside a Mahomedan of low caste. There was no greater insult which could be offered to a Hindoo of high caste than to ask him to come into near connection with a Mahomedan of low standing, but Mr. Phillips insisted upon this being done; and even finally when the Mahomedan had been sentenced and the subordinate Magistrate asked him to leave the dock the Rajah insisted on staying where he was, because he felt it was an insult which he could not condone in any way. But while the trial was taking place, what did Mr. Phillips do but send some soldiers and policemen and actually pulled down the walls which had been erected without any more ado, and took the law entirely into his own hands. That he thought pointed the contention that it was not a wise thing to combine the Executive and Judicial attributes of office in one man; and as bearing upon the point he would just read to the House the judgment, or rather the remarks, passed by Sir Charles Elliott on this case on the 31st of December, 1892. He said—

“In respect of the latter question—whether a sound discretion was exercised or not—Sir Charles Elliott must at once say that he considers that the prosecution of the Rajah need not have been instituted. Looking to the position and status of the Rajah Bahadur in the district, to the fact that the Rajah has been honoured by the Government, and has been a great benefactor of the town of Mymensingh, it was the obvious duty of the Magistrate of the district to have exhausted every means in his power of amicably settling a matter of such a nature as the obstruction of a drain before resorting to the extreme measure of prosecuting the Rajah in a Criminal Court, and it does not appear that he did exhaust all such amicable measures, or even accept them when proffered. Mr. Phillips' indiscretion was aggravated by the fact that he instituted the prosecution of his own motion, without consulting any medical authority or sanitary expert, and without complaint having been made to him that the filling up of the drain had caused a nuisance. His subsequent procedure was not less unwise. After the prosecution had been instituted, but before process had been taken in Court, the Rajah arranged with the Municipality to construct a pucca drain to carry off the water which had been obstructed,

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and actually deposited 1,000 rupees with the Chairman for this purpose. The Municipal Commissioners, in meeting, then thanked the Rajah for his action. Mr. Phillips did not, however, withdraw from the prosecution, but recorded an order that he would do so if the Rajah would knock down the wall which obstructed the drainage, reopen the obstructed drain all along the bye-lane, and then build the pucca drain above referred to. Moreover, after the prosecution had commenced, although the counsel for the Rajah proposed to make a temporary drain within a week to carry off the water, and then to complete a pucca drain according to any plan which might be approved, and although it appears that the Chairman of the Municipality was prepared to accept this proposal, Mr. Phillips rejected it at once, and on the same day, while the prosecution was still pending, caused an opening to be made in the obstructing wall, and re-excavated and restored the bye-lane drain. It appears to the Lieutenant Governor that throughout all these proceedings the action of Mr. Phillips was indefensible, and characterised by a regrettable want of that discretion, suavity, and common sense which the Government has a right to expect from a District Magistrate of his experience and standing in the Service."

Mr. Phillips was severely reprimanded, and since then he had been removed from Mymensingh; but he had been removed to a district which was far more agreeable and pleasant, though he believed he was receiving a slightly reduced salary. The question of the principle of whether Judicial and Executive functions in India ought to be divided was pretty well settled at a very early stage—namely, in 1860, shortly after the transfer of the government of India from the East India Company to our own Government. One of the principal enactments of the Commission of 1860 was set forth in these terms—

"The golden rule to be borne in mind was that the judicial and police functions were not to be mixed up or confounded. That the active work of detecting or preventing crime was to rest entirely with the police, and was not to be interfered with by those who were to sit in judgment on the criminal."

Now, fortunately, they had had an expression of opinion in another place. They had the opinion of Lord Kimberley and Lord Cross, who both admitted very fully the correctness of the principle, and the only question was whether it could be carried out. He believed the House would agree with him that it was a question which ought to be brought home very fully to the Government, and that they ought to take means, if possible, to introduce the principle into India. The objections to it, of course, were as to the

District Magistrates, and the question was where they were to get the officers from. The plan which had been suggested was to practically divide the offices in each district between a district officer and a Judge. He would add to what he had said that, according to the suggestions made in 1884 to Lord Ripon by Mr. Richard Gough, this was an elaboration of that proposal. The Under Secretary of State for India had given this matter his attention. It would cause no additional cost by the re-arrangement. The places of collectors could easily be taken by professional Excise officers who were now specially occupied in collecting the Excise alone. He regretted, in the Indian Councils Act, that they had not seen any enlargement of the representative principle in India; but, at the same time, they were grateful to the Indian Government and to the Home Government for the advantage which at present existed in having in the Legislative Councils Indian gentlemen who were able to express exactly the wishes and aspirations of their own people. He trusted the way might be found to get more of this native advice, and to increase the loyalty and advantages to be gained by the presence of those gentlemen in the various Legislative Councils. He hoped the Government would be led to increase their numbers, and possibly, in the near future, to give a more thoroughly representative system to the Indian people.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. G. RUSSELL, North Beds.): Having regard to the fact that we have now been discussing Indian problems since the commencement of Public Business to-day, and that the whole of the financial business of the year has to be considered this evening, I hope I may be permitted to make a few observations in respect of, and in reply to, the speeches which have been already delivered. I will deal with the speeches in the inverse order to that in which they were delivered. I should like to associate myself with the remarks of the last speaker, and express regret that we have lost already the eminent services of Sir Henry Norman, whom we had hoped to see placed in the greatest of all positions of responsibility and power under the British Crown. In associating myself with these remarks,

I will say that Sir Henry Norman's withdrawal from that great trust is not, as has been foolishly reported in various sections of the Press, due to any disagreement or difficulty with any of his colleagues or the Government at home, but is simply and solely due to the personal reasons which have been assigned in the newspapers published to-day. I pass now to two points which my hon. Friend the Member for Manchester (Mr. Schwann) made; and first with regard to the simultaneous examinations. I would lay stress upon this point, as it was the point to which the hon. Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Paul) wished to call attention. It may be in the recollection of the House that in my official capacity it was my duty, earlier in the Session, to oppose a Resolution in favour of simultaneous examinations; but the House of Commons thought differently from the Government. That once done, I need hardly say that there is no disposition on the part of the Secretary of State for India or myself to attempt to thwart or defeat the effect of the vote of the House of Commons on that Resolution. We have consulted the Government of India: we have asked them as to the way in which the Resolution of the House can best be carried out. It is a matter too important to be carried out without the advice of the Indian Government, and it is at present impossible to state explicitly what will be done. As to the coolies in the tea gardens of Assam and contract labour, the decision of the Secretary of State has not been actually given; but when the House meets in November I think I shall be in a position to lay the whole of the Correspondence on the Table. I may say now that the Secretary of State will instruct the Indian Government in a sense favourable to the coolies, and in a sense pointing to the ultimate extinction of contract labour. With regard to the union of Judicial and Executive functions in India, there we are at one with the hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Schwann). As at present advised, I am not acquainted with any reason against separating the two functions except that of expense. My hon. Friend said that the word "retrenchment" is not pleasant, but it is a great deal pleasanter than "bankruptcy"; and, as we have always been threatened

with bankruptcy in India, it is not the moment to increase public expenditure or public charges. I now come to the speeches delivered earlier in the evening, and I take leave to group together the speeches of the hon. Member for Camberwell (Mr. Bayley), the hon. Member for Finsbury (Mr. Naoroji), and the hon. Member for Banffshire (Sir W. Wedderburn), as being practically speeches tending to one and the same end. I desire, in the fullest way, to associate myself with the expressions of cordiality and respect which have been accorded to the hon. Member for Finsbury (Mr. Naoroji) from all parts of the House. He has fought what has appeared at times to be a single-handed fight with singular gallantry. The speeches of these three hon. Members were all based upon the hypothesis that the poverty of India is not only great, but is increasing. I will not spoil a good cause by exaggeration, and I am not going to say that the pecuniary position of India is altogether satisfactory. We can hardly say our fellow-creatures are as well off as we could wish to see them, when we note that the occurrence of a single bad season reduces them to a state in which there is a terrible mortality. But I am bound to part company with hon. Members when they speak of the poverty of India as an increasing poverty. I have here actual masses of statistics upon this point, and, so far as it is possible to judge, the condition of the poorest classes in India is better than it was 10 years ago. And this is true even of the districts which have been most desolated by famine. There is more irrigation, the natives cultivate more land, build better houses, and furnish them better. They seem to have more meat and more salt; they travel a great deal more than they did; and they enjoy much greater facilities than formerly of procuring medical and surgical assistance in times of illness. That, so far as it goes, applies to the mass of the cultivators of the land, and I consider it a satisfactory view of the state of India. Of course, it is not wholly satisfactory; one would wish to see greater advances in these directions, but it is a contradiction to those who contend that India is going from bad to worse. The hon. Member for Banffshire (Sir W. Wed-

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derburn) referred in rather animated language to the Service of which he was once an ornament, and I think I may, with prudence, leave him to settle matters with the hon. Member for Hackney (Sir A. Scoble).

SIR W. WEDDERBURN: I specially stated that I made no objection to individuals. I objected to the system, but I complimented the Service on the way in which it had performed its duty.

*MR. G. RUSSELL: If I have misrepresented my hon. Friend I am extremely sorry, and I will only add that what he has to say in derogation of the Public Service in India can best be met by the hon. Member opposite. My hon. Friend the Member for Banffshire (Sir W. Wedderburn) spoke with some contempt of the practice of the India Office with respect to Memorials and appeals from India. He said it was a common thing at the India Office for it to be said that the Secretary of State saw no necessity to interfere. I admit that that form of answer has sometimes escaped my lips, but it was not lightly uttered. Every case is simply investigated at the India Office on its merits, and the decision which is arrived at is based on a careful consideration of the facts. Even I have been instrumental in saving the life of one of our fellow-subjects in India since I have been at the India Office, and the interests of the native population of India are constantly brought under the view of the Secretary of State, and as constantly receive his thorough and careful attention. Now I come to the main object of this discussion—the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into the financial condition of India. I agree with my hon. Friend the Member for Peterborough (Mr. A. C. Morton) in the extremely racy remarks he made in regard to getting up Royal Commissions. Royal Commissions are all very well when the scope of inquiry is strictly limited, and when there is genuine ignorance of the facts. But often they are used merely for dilatory purposes. In the year 1871, a Committee of this House was appointed to consider the pecuniary affairs of India, and it sat for four Sessions. It asked 30,000 questions, and received considerably more than 30,000 answers, because some of the questions were answered more

than once. At the end of the four years that Committee reported something like this—"The question which is referred to your Committee is beset with difficulties. Your Committee can make no practical recommendation, but only express a hope that the Government will find means of reconciling views altogether divergent." The one practical recommendation which they did make was this—"No financial arrangement in England can hope to be satisfactory to India until and unless the Indian Budget is presented in the first three weeks in every Session." That was the one practical admonition which that Committee gave, and my hon. Friends know how loyally that recommendation has been acted upon by successive Governments. No, Sir; we are not able to consent to the appointment of the Royal Commission. We are absolutely willing to inquire, with the means already at our disposal, into any grievance, any question of overcharge or extravagance, misuse of public moneys, or undue burdens for which a *primâ facie* case can be made out, either here or in India. We regard the appointment of a Committee or a Commission as altogether too vast an undertaking, and one that is not likely to lead to a practical result; and I cannot, therefore, consent to the appointment of either a Committee or a Commission.

*MR. A. C. MORTON: Will the hon. Gentleman make an inquiry into the extravagant expenditure in India, and especially the home charges?

*MR. G. RUSSELL: I think the Chancellor of the Exchequer would concur with me in saying that there would be no unwillingness on our part to enter, with the means at our disposal, into grievances relating to the finances of India, where a *primâ facie* case has been made out. Something has been said in disparagement of the Indian Council, and it was suggested that the Indian Council might be disestablished with a saving to the purse of India. I have only to remind the House that, whatever the merits or demerits of the Indian Council may be, it has one great and useful function, and that is that it is an absolute check upon any extravagant tendency on the part of the Secretary of State. In anything which concerns charges the Indian Council has an absolute veto, which it is not slow to

exercise, and, so far at least, it makes for pecuniary righteousness. I have said all I have to say on the various points raised. I could, of course, have entered into them at much greater length, but the time is not suitable, and I will reserve anything else I have to say for my more detailed discussion on the Budget.

SIR J. GORST (Cambridge University): Before the House goes into Committee on the Statement of the hon. Member, I hope they will allow me to make a few observations on this great and long-threatened attack upon the Government of India, and the observations I have to make need only be few, because every point brought forward by the hon. Baronet the Member for Banffshire (Sir W. Wedderburn) and the hon. Member for Finsbury (Mr. Naoroji) was answered, point by point, by the hon. and gallant Member for Oxfordshire (Sir G. Chesney) and the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Hackney (Sir A. Scoble); but I should especially like—having been some time in official connection with the Government of India—to associate myself with the remarks made by the learned Member for Hackney respecting the honour, zeal, and integrity of the Civil servants in India. I regret the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for India could not also have associated himself with those observations, and I hope that a longer experience in the administration of India will enable him to do so.

*MR. G. RUSSELL: I was hastening to dissociate myself from my hon. Friend the Member for Banffshire, when he explained that he had not said what I thought he had said.

SIR J. GORST: I am pleased to see the hon. Gentleman can already associate himself with the very just observations, not beyond the merits of the case, which were made by the hon. and learned Member for Hackney. Turning to the question of a Commission, it is quite evident that a Commission of this kind is not wanted for any purpose of information. The information already laid before this House upon the subject of India is ample and exhaustive, and there is no point in connection with the administration of the affairs of India upon which this House asks for information upon which the Government

of India is not always able and willing to furnish the most exact and the most exhaustive details. I confess I was a little surprised to hear the Royal Commission so energetically denounced by the Under Secretary of State. I should have thought that, after the Commissions which the present Government have set on foot, he would have spoken of that institution with more respect than the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean and myself feel for Royal Commissions. But this Motion is really made, not for the purpose of gaining information; it is made with the idea that the appointment of a Royal Commission would be a step in the revolution of the Administration of India. That is what I want to bring before the House. I am quite sure that both sides of the House—Members of the Government and those who sit on these Benches—will agree with the proposition so well stated by the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean (Sir C. W. Dilke)—that if there is to be any fundamental change made in the system by which India is governed, such a change would have to be proposed by the responsible Government of the day, and would have to be submitted to the House by them on their responsibility. It is impossible that we should allow so important and imperial a question as the administration of the greatest of our Dependencies to be referred to the chance of a Royal Commission, however carefully such a Commission be constituted. I will not go over the details, because time is very precious—I will not go into any question whether any case has been made out for such a revolution in the Government of India. I was very much surprised at the particular instance the hon. Baronet the Member for Banffshire (Sir W. Wedderburn) gave in the interests of the ryots or the cultivators of the soil, and he said that their position was the direct consequence of the European official administration of the country. Now, there I would venture to join issue most positively with the hon. Baronet. In Oriental countries there is nothing which protects the cultivator of the soil like the intervention of European officials. What the cultivator of the soil wants is the knowledge that the rent or revenue exacted from him shall be limited in amount, and shall not be increased by

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extortion of any kind. And everybody who has had experience of Oriental officials knows very well that it is most difficult to protect the cultivator of the soil from extortions and exactions of every possible kind. It is when the European Government undertake the administration of a country that the cultivator of the soil becomes certain of the enjoyment of the fruits of his labour, and is able to increase in worldly prosperity. If time permitted, I could point out the exact state of things which exists in Egypt; and the extraordinary prosperity which even at this moment is the lot of the Egyptian cultivator of the soil is directly due to the intervention of the English Authorities by whom his rent is fixed, and under whose protection he is well aware that nothing more than his rent will be exacted from him. There is another subject to which I may be allowed to refer, because it is a matter on which there are very often questions arising in this House, and that is the Salt Tax. Now, I think that the hon. Baronet the Member for Banffshire (Sir W. Wedderburn) spoke with great exaggeration when he said that the Salt Tax was 2,000 times as great as the cost of production.

SIR W. WEDDERBURN: Twenty times.

SIR J. GORST: It is, as a matter of fact, only 12 times; and, indeed, I have extracted figures from the *Moral and Material Progress Report of 1891*, from which it appears that the selling price is six times the cost. What I want to say is this—No Government has ever denied that the Salt Tax ought in India to be reduced to the lowest amount it is possible to reduce it. It was with the greatest reluctance and financial distress that the Salt Tax was slightly increased a few years ago. But when people talk about the dreadful burden this tax is putting on the country, they ought to remember that the tax really only amounts to 7d. or 8d. a head of the population in the year. That is what this terrific burden amounts to in the year. And there is another point which ought to be remembered when the Government of India is being denounced for this Salt Tax, and that is that owing to the improvement in the communication the price of salt (tax and all) has been greatly reduced in a great many

parts of India during the last 40 or 50 years. Since this country undertook, in 1858, the direct government of India, over immense districts of India the cheapening of salt by the improvement of communication has been so great that it has actually sold to the natives at a much lower price than it was sold before we undertook the government of the country. There is just one other point I should like to notice, and that is the necessity of protecting the Revenue of India in its relations with this Imperial Parliament. I have had the honour in former days of holding two official positions. At one time I had the honour to hold the Office of Under Secretary of State for India, and at another the position of Secretary to the Treasury; therefore, I could see both sides of the question, and I am quite sure I can appeal to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to say whether, in reference to the necessary negotiations which have to go on between the Imperial Treasury and the Indian Treasury as to the cost which each ought to bear in any joint matter, the Council of India is not an extremely valuable body for protecting Indian interests. It not only checks the extravagance, or the intended extravagance, of the Secretary of State; but it is also a fact that not a single rupee of the Revenue of India can be spent without the consent of the Council of India; they have the most absolute control over the whole of the Revenue of India. When I heard the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean (Sir C. W. Dilke) speak of the desirability of abolishing the Council altogether, I could not help thinking to myself how helpless the Secretary of State would be in any contest with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he were not supported by an independent body of that kind, which was able to control the whole of the finance of the country. In any project which is made for the alteration of the whole arrangements for the government of India, if you abolish the Council of the Secretary of State I am sure you will have to invent some other body, independent of Parliament and the Government, to whom you will be able to trust for this check over the expenditure of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I do not want to accuse the Chancellor of the Exchequer or the right hon. Member for the St. George's Division (Mr. Goschen)

of rapacity, but it is undoubted that both of them, in their duty to the British taxpayer, have to look carefully to see that the English taxpayer gets justice in any of these questions. In the same way, it is absolutely essential that there should be some perfectly independent body, which is not controlled by Parliament or the Government of the country, which should protect the interests of the Indian taxpayer. There has been an instance this Session of the facility with which burdens that ought to be thrown upon the Imperial taxpayer can be cast upon the Indian taxpayer. I refer to the expense of the Opium Commission. That Commission has been appointed in accordance with the wishes of some people in this country, and no native in India wanted or approved it. Yet half the cost of the Commission is to be thrown upon the people of India. This shows how necessary it is that India should have somebody to protect her financial interests in transactions in which this country is concerned. The attacks that have been made in this Debate upon the Government of India have proved how little ground there is for them. Of course, no one will say that the Government of India is a body so perfect that it cannot be improved; but these wholesale attacks and charges, these attempts to prove that our administration in India is something of which this country ought to be ashamed, are of no utility whatever. They only prove the unwisdom of those who make them. I do not think that speeches such as that made by the Member for Banffshire are really likely in any material way to contribute to the improvement of our Indian administration.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby): With regard to this preliminary discussion, I think my hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State has expressed the views of the Government, so that there can be no mistake as to what view the Government really takes on this question. The right hon. Gentleman opposite has just said—and we can agree with him—that because we are opposed to an inquiry it does not prove that we say nothing needs reform in the Indian administration, whether financial or economical. It would certainly be fatal to the system of Government in India were we to appoint an independent Com-

mission. Has anybody considered what these Commissions are? A Commission with such a vast task as that which is imposed would not be able to accomplish anything within several years. What would be the condition of the Government of India during the course of these years, when the Government of the Empire was put upon its trial? It would lose the whole of its authority, and would probably reduce the whole of the Indian people to a state of discontent and chaos. If it be true what has been said to-night, then all I can say is that the foundations upon which the statements are made have been of the most slender description I have ever listened to. The consequence would, as has been pointed out, lead to disastrous results. The Government has no desire to shirk its responsibility, nor to shuffle so great a task as this on to an independent Commission. An independent Commission, as I understand it, means a Commission principally composed of gentlemen who are not especially responsible. The task is not to be performed by an independent Commission, but by the responsible Government of the Crown. The Government of the Crown is responsible for all parts of the Empire, and probably more than anything responsible for the Empire of India. If it be true there is the slightest foundation for such sweeping denunciation of our Indian Government, it would be the last thing for us to permit referring such a matter to an independent Commission. The duty of the responsible Government of the day would be to take the matter in hand, and to propose a complete and radical change of the Government of India. That, I think, is a sufficient answer to the proposals that have been made on the subject of a Commission. Now, as regards grievances, if gentlemen who bring them forward are desirous of rendering public service, they are doing so by ventilating them before the public. The statements they have made have been asserted on the one hand and refuted on the other, just as in all Debates. This has been done in the manner in which we deal with our own Government. I remember Mr. Disraeli in this House saying, when there was a Motion to refer the Reform Bill to a Committee, that he was not prepared to refer the British Constitution to a Select Committee. I think that remark applies, in

the same way, to the Government of the Empire of India. It has to be dealt with on the responsibility of a Government. If my hon. Friend brings forward specific cases and abundant proofs of grievances existing in India, they will do a great service in making these things public, and they are certain to be redressed, either by the Government of India or by the Government of the Empire. I am not going to rise to the financial fly which was raised by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge. There is room, no doubt, for a great deal to be done in connection with the Exchequer. The Government of India is, no doubt, endeavouring to protect its interests. I, for one, think it is only natural that a Government should desire to see the Treasury expenses reduced, whilst, on the other hand, it is perfectly natural that the Treasury should wish to see the Indian expenses reduced. If they both operate in that direction, no doubt, they will render great service to the interest of the English taxpayer. These, however, are matters which we may leave to fight out for themselves. I hope that the House will now be disposed to proceed to the real business of the evening, and allow my hon. Friend the Under Secretary for India to make his Financial Statement.

MR. GOSCHEN (St. George's, Hanover Square): I was quite prepared to take part in this Debate, but I can say, not only for myself, but also on behalf of another hon. Member behind me, that after the remarks of the Chancellor of the Exchequer a great portion of the observations we might have been inclined to make may now be made in Committee in discussing the Statement of the Under Secretary. I had intended to take some small part in this Debate, for we have heard this evening some very excellent speeches, and I wish to congratulate hon. Members who have taken part in the Debate. The speeches have been worthy of all admiration, and the House may congratulate itself on the accession to its ranks of gentlemen who have taken a high position in the Administration of India. I think the preposterous suggestion of the Commission has been adequately dealt with by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and I may frankly say, after his declaration on the subject, that I think nothing more need be said in

support of his refusal to grant this Royal Commission.

*MR. SEYMOUR KEAY (Elgin and Nairn): I merely rise to say that I also desire to respond to the appeal which the Chancellor of the Exchequer has made. I do not intend, at this period of the evening, or at this period of the Session, to detain the House with a series of extremely alarming facts with which I had prepared myself. I will merely make one remark, which is that I think the Chancellor of the Exchequer is considerably mistaken as to the object of our Motion. We do not dogmatise for a Royal Commission; the chief thing that we desire to do is, that the real state of India, as ground down with poverty, should be known, and not merely, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer seems to think, that mere casual and petty grievances should be redressed. I am speaking from 30 years' personal experience, and I wish to press upon the House the necessity for an inquiry. However highly hon. Gentlemen may think of the qualities of the Government of India or its officers, supposing we adopt to the full the observations of hon. Gentlemen opposite with regard to the excellence of the Government, yet we are bound to take into consideration the fact that the economic condition of the people is getting much worse year by year, and that if we sit quiet the Government of India, excellent though it may be, will necessarily fall to pieces owing to the weight of its enormous cost.

*MR. EVERETT (Suffolk, Woodbridge): I intended to speak with regard to the changes being made in the currency of India, but I understand that I shall be able to do so on the Budget.

Question put, and agreed to.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

*MR. G. RUSSELL: I rise, under rather dispiriting circumstances, to open the Indian Budget of the year. The word Budget conveys the idea, perhaps, that I am about to make some new and original statement—to make some financial revelation to the public with which they were not previously acquainted. In that sense the word is a misnomer, considering that the main outlines of the

Statement I am about to make were made known as long ago as March last. It is also a dispiriting circumstance that I should have to address the Committee on so intricate a matter on the last night of a protracted Session. In order to keep my statement within reasonable limits, I shall be obliged to confine my remarks to the more salient features of the Budget, and in accordance with custom I am compelled to deal with the figures for the last three years, those of 1891-2, which are closed; of 1892-3, a revised Estimate of which is before the Committee; and of 1893-4, which constitute the Budget proper. In dealing with the figures I shall give them in tens of rupees, unless I specifically mention them in pounds sterling. The formal Resolution for 1893-4, which I shall place in the hands of the Chairman, and which is technically the Resolution of the night, is a mere statement of facts. The figures of my predecessors have been confirmed. The surplus has been improved by Rx.113,435, making Rx.467,000 altogether. When I come to 1892-3 there are some unusual variations. The net Revenue has increased by Rx.1,891,600; the net Expenditure by Rx.3,120,100, and the anticipated surplus has been turned into a deficit of Rx.1,081,900. As to the increase of Revenue, half of this is due to opium. For three years the crop was a partial failure; therefore the Government reduced the number of chests sold. This increased the price offered: and the increased price during the official year 1892-3 made an improvement of Rx.331,900. There is also less expenditure in production; so that, though it may sound paradoxical, the failure of the crop led to a total gain of Rx.971,600. The rest of the improvement in Revenue is made up by land, salt, stamps, Excise, forests, and other minor heads, making together Rx.920,000, which, added to the increase on opium, gives an increase of Rx.1,891,600 on the estimated Revenue. Of this sum, Rx.451,000 is credited to the Provincial Governments, and Rx.1,440,600 to the Imperial Government. Turning to the increase of Rx.3,120,100 in net Expenditure, I should state that a considerable portion is only a forestalment of charges which must have been incurred sooner or later, and is not really additional expenditure. (1) The

Government of India converted a large amount of $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. Debt into Debt bearing only 4 per cent. interest; but, while this effected a large saving, the dividend on the 4 per cent. Loan fell due at an earlier date than that on the $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. Debt, and thus payments of interest had to be made in 1892-3 to the amount of Rx.114,700, which otherwise would have fallen into 1893-4. (2) The Secretary of State had long been urged to issue furlough pay and pensions monthly instead of quarterly, as in India, and in English payments at the Paymaster General's Office; but the change was postponed owing to the heavy immediate cost involved. In 1892, however, it was decided to alter the system to monthly payments, and the result was to bring into the charges of February and March, 1893—that is, of the year 1892-3—a payment of about £300,000, or with exchange Rx.480,000, which otherwise would have been made in April or May, 1893—that is, in the year 1893-4. (3) The Expenditure of 1892-3 was enhanced by the settlement of the accounts with the War Office under Lord Northbrook's Commission. When the Budget for 1892-3 was being prepared it was known that the final award was coming, and provision was made in the revised Estimates of 1891-2 for the probable payment. In fact, the award was not delivered till March 22, when there was not time enough left to make the necessary adjustment before April; so that a payment of £175,000, or, including exchange, Rx.280,000, fell into 1892-3 instead of 1891-2, as had been expected. (4) On the other hand, there was an exceptional receipt of Rx.81,600 from the Bengal-Assam Railway; and, deducting this from the three exceptional payments, the Expenditure of 1892-3 was unexpectedly enhanced by Rx.33,100 in India, £475,000 in England, and Rx.285,000 in exchange, or altogether Rx.793,100. I must next speak of the fall in exchange. In the Budget for 1892-3 the gold value of the rupee was taken at 1s. 4d., the rate in force when the Estimates were under consideration. The rate realised on the drawings in 1892-3 was just below 1s. 3d. On the net expenditure in England this fall of about 1d. in the rupee enhances the exchange by Rx.2,055,500. Adding this to the sums just mentioned as exceptional pay-

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ments, of Rx.33,100 in India and £475,000 in England, there is a total of Rx.2,563,600 explained, leaving only Rx.556,500 to be dealt with. Of this, Rx.464,400 occurs in the military expenditure, owing to special expeditions, transport, and the higher price of food, and the remainder is distributed under various heads. I now approach the Budget proper—1893-4. In 1891-2 the Government had a surplus of Rx.467,000; in 1892-3 a deficit of Rx.1,082,000; and in 1893-4 the Budget shows a deficit of Rx.1,600,000. The gross Revenue is Rx.90,000,000, which is made up of Rx.29,500,000 from Departmental receipts, and Rx.60,500,000 from principal heads of revenue. Against this must be set Rx.10,400,000 cost of collection and Rx.81,200,000 of outlay, which gives an Expenditure of Rx.91,600,000, against Rx.90,000,000 of Revenue, showing a deficit of Rx.1,600,000. The principal heads of Revenue bring in Rx.60,500,000, and this Revenue has gradually increased during 10 years by Rx.8,500,000. The Revenue and Expenditure might be analysed as follows:—Revenue.—Land, Rx.25,200,000; opium, Rx.7,300,000; salt, Rx.8,600,000; stamps, &c., Rx.4,400,000; Excise, Rx.5,200,000; Provincial rates, Rx.3,700,000; minor sources, Rx.6,100,000. Expenditure.—Army, Rx.23,000,000; railway charges, Rx.21,500,000; Civil government, Rx.14,500,000; buildings and roads, Rx.6,100,000; interest on Debt, Rx.4,100,000; canals, Rx.2,900,000; Post Office and Telegraphs, Rx.2,600,000; miscellaneous, Rx.6,500,000—total, Rx.81,200,000. Applying these figures to the Budget for 1893-4, as expounded by Sir D. Barbour on the 23rd of March last, it will be found that the net Revenue—i.e., the principal heads, less the charges of collection—was Rx.50,100,000 and the net Expenditure—i.e., the expenditure, less Departmental receipts—Rx.51,700,000, giving a deficit of Rx.1,600,000. As in the previous year, nearly the whole of this, or Rx.1,426,000, arose under opium and exchange; and it is necessary to enlarge on these two heads. As regards exchange, only one exception will be seen to the steady fall which has lasted for 20 years, and that one is very suggestive. In 1890 the American Legislature took steps which led to a very sudden rise in the value of silver followed

by a yet greater fall, the consequent variation in the charge for exchange illustrating in a very pointed manner Sir David Barbour's remark in paragraph 31 of his Financial Statement—

“Our financial position for the coming year,” he said, “is at the mercy of exchange, and of those who have it in their power to affect in any way the price of silver. If we budget for the present deficit of Rx.1,595,100 and exchange rises 1d., we shall have a surplus; if it falls 1d., we shall have a deficit of more than three crores; if we impose taxation to the extent of one-and-a-half crores of rupees a turn of the wheel may require us to impose further taxation of not less magnitude; another turn, and we may find that no taxation at all was required.”

I will put the figures before the Committee in another way. In 1890-1, with a net sterling Expenditure of £15,177,000, the net charge for exchange was Rx.5,448,000. The Expenditure of the three following years in England had been rather higher; and if exchange had remained at 18d. per rupee the charge on that account would, in the aggregate of the three years, have been higher by Rx.730,000. But, according to the Account and Estimates, the actual charge for exchange in the three years was higher by Rx.11,649,000—that is to say, the Government of India had in those three years to pay very nearly 11 crores more than if exchange had not fallen. And now, Sir, I must approach the question of currency, which I do with much misgiving. One of the wisest men I have ever known is accustomed to say that mankind may be exhaustively divided into two classes: those who do not understand currency, and admit they do not; and those who do not understand currency, and pretend they do. This is the position in which the Government of India found themselves in 1892—the exchange value of the rupee falling 3d. in two years, which, at the then value, implies an addition of two-and-a-half crores or more to the charge each year; a strong agitation in the United States for the repeal of the Sherman Law, which would throw a vast quantity of silver on the market, and heavy imports of silver into India for coinage—far, apparently, beyond the requirements of trade; a Monetary Conference was about to meet at Brussels, but the expectations of an International Agreement on the joint use of gold and

silver in currency were very small, and the Government of India felt that if they waited till the deliberations of that Conference should be concluded before taking action in their own defence they would be in a very dangerous condition. Accordingly, they proposed that, failing a satisfactory agreement with the United States or other nations, the Indian Mints should be closed to the free coinage of silver for the public, and that arrangements should be made for the introduction of a gold standard into India. Lord Kimberley referred to a Committee over which Lord Herschell presided, and which included prominent representatives of both the mono-metallic and the bimetallic opinions, the consideration of those proposals with the view of their advising Her Majesty's Government whether they should permit the Government of India to carry their proposals into effect; and if they should consider that there was not sufficient ground for overruling the Government of India, but that modifications in their scheme might be desirable, of offering suggestions accordingly. In a closely-reasoned Report, dated May 31st, the Committee showed how great were the financial difficulties of the Government of India through the fluctuations in exchange, how strong was the probability that they might be increased by the action of the United States, and how little could be done to alleviate the burden of any immediate large addition to their charges, either by increasing the taxation or reducing the expenditure. Reviewing the proposals of the Government, the Committee considered the objections that might be raised to them, either on the ground that the object proposed was impracticable, or that the methods were inexpedient; they showed what course had been followed by other nations in recent years with respect to their currency, and what effect an alteration of the system in India might be expected to have on the trade, either with other countries or in competition with them. They examined other schemes which had been proposed, and decided that none presented greater advantages or fewer objections than that of the Government of India. But they held that the latter failed to make sufficient provision against a possible rise, at once great and sudden,

in exchange. Finally, they came to the conclusion that no sufficient reason existed for Her Majesty's Government to refuse to allow the Government of India to close its Mints against the free coinage of silver; but they advised that such a step should be accompanied by an announcement that the Mints would still be used by the Government to coin rupees in exchange for gold at some fixed ratio, such as 1s. 4d. per rupee, and that at the Government Treasuries gold would be received at the same ratio in satisfaction of public dues. The Committee's Report was sent to the Government of India, who concurred in the suggestion, the object being to prevent a further fall in exchange rather than to raise the gold value of the rupee. And, Her Majesty's Government having given their consent, an Act was passed on June 26 by the Government of India stopping the free coinage of silver on behalf of the public. At the same time, notices were issued authorising the reception of gold at the Mints and Treasuries in exchange for, or in place of, rupees, at a ratio of 1s. 4d. to the rupee, or 15 rupees to the sovereign. As some misunderstanding has arisen as to the declarations and intentions of the Government, it is important to notice that, however glad they would be to see the value of the rupee stable at 1s. 4d., they have in no way attempted to fix that rate. What they have done is to prevent its undue depreciation by the coining of silver into rupees in future, leaving the superabundance, which apparently exists, to be gradually absorbed, and to prevent any violent rise, which might be injurious to trade, by providing that it should be open to anybody who prefers to pay gold at the fixed ratio to do so and obtain rupees in exchange. The Committee foresaw that a sudden rise might occur in the value of the rupee, and they thought that it might be disastrous to trade if it should be allowed to go to 1s. 6d., the ratio indicated in the proposals of the Government of India as a maximum. But probably no one anticipated such a very rapid rise as actually occurred. Owing to a heavy speculation in rupee paper, of which the sterling value was improved by the measures adopted, there was a great demand for bills on India on June 26 and 27. They were sold, in accordance with the usual practice, at a rise of 1-32nd

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of 1d. per rupee for each five and afterwards for each three lakhs, the object of the Government being to avoid any step on its part which should force up exchange beyond what the natural competition of trade prompted. The latter force was, however, sufficient to raise the rate in 30 hours from 1s. 3 3-16d. to 1s. 4 1-32d. for telegraphic transfers. It was evident that the trade demand did not justify such a price; and accordingly, when tenders were made at 1s. 3 1-2d. on the following Wednesday, they were accepted in the usual manner. Since July 5 there have been either no tenders at all, or they have been usually for small amounts at reduced rates, which it is the ordinary practice to refuse. Recently, in the hope of preventing a further fall, it was decided, for at any rate a little while, to sell no bills below 1s. 3 1-2d., and the tenders accepted have been only at that rate, or a little higher; but the Secretary of State will on each occasion exercise his discretion according to his wants and the circumstances of the day. It is not surprising that the tenders for bills should have fallen off for a time. I have mentioned the large purchases of rupee paper. Some of that might be returned to India at a higher rate of exchange than existed when it was brought over. The stock of European cotton goods is low in India, and the better prices will naturally lead to large exports from Lancashire. Again, a very large quantity of silver has been exported to India during the later weeks of the Currency Committee's sitting, after its being announced that the Report would be made shortly, and until this has been absorbed it prevents further remittances. Moreover, owing probably to the cheapness of the metal, very large orders have been given for it, whether for ornament or for coinage at Native Mints, since the Indian Mints are closed. And, finally, while the change of currency is adopted at the moment when the monsoon season is imminent, and exports are at the lowest point, and, therefore, trade is least likely to be obstructed by a rise in exchange, it is the time when the demand for Government bills on India is very small. It is certain that the trade will effect its remittances to India in the cheapest manner possible; but there is no reason to doubt that,

the imports of silver for coinage being stopped, the demand for bills will again spring into activity, and when it does it will depend on the competition of the trade whether the rate of 1s. 4d. per rupee will be attained. The Government of India have not decided whether the ratio should be permanently fixed at 1s. 4d. the rupee, or what further measures they will adopt for bringing the gold standard into effective operation. Other nations have waited a long time after suspending free coinage, and have gradually accumulated a store of gold. If, through the working of the measures now taken, gold should be sent freely to India and paid to the Government, it might accelerate the time when gold could be coined and gold coins declared a legal tender; but the Government of India do not, for the present, make any promise as to their future action in this respect. Before passing entirely from the subject of exchange, I must refer to the case of the servants of the Government, who have long suffered from the constant fall in the value of the rupee, and who have, in a very large number of memorials and deputations, laid before the Government the hardships which they are suffering. While the question of currency was under consideration, it was impossible for the Secretary of State, fully as he sympathised with the officers, to deal with the subject, for until some idea could be formed of the probable future value of the rupee, it was not practicable to say whether the finances would bear the strain of the additional charge that might be needed to afford adequate compensation; nor was it possible to say what form such compensation ought to take. All that could be done was to say that, in the matter of furlough allowances and family remittances, the officers should not be placed in a worse position than before through the delay of a settlement on the currency question; and therefore, temporarily, payments were made at the exchange of 1s. 4 1-2d. applicable to 1892-3, although, in the meantime, the official rate had fallen to 1s. 2 1-2d. Family remittances at a privileged rate were granted as a boon to the East India Company's military officers some 60 years ago, owing to the difficulties experienced by them when on a campaign, and in the absence of banking

facilities in providing for their families ; but the reasons for the concession have long passed away, and it has for some time been considered doubtful whether it was right to give such a privilege to military officers and refuse it to the Civil servants of Government. On the other hand, the extension to the Civil officers would have greatly added to the home charges, and would have intensified the difficulties of exchange. Moreover, many officers might be desirous of providing for those dependent, or likely hereafter to be dependent, on them, and yet be unable to effect remittances through the Government if the persons to be benefited did not come within the relationship specified in the rules. Accordingly, a plan has been adopted which will supersede the system of family remittances for officers—unless, in a few exceptional cases, where contracts have been made ; and an exchange compensation allowance will be given to all civil and military officers in India, based on a rate of 1s. 6d. to the rupee. For example, if the market rate of the preceding three months should have been 1s. 4d., the officer would be granted an additional allowance, which would give him sufficient to make up one-half of his salary to a ratio of 1s. 6d. the rupee. The cost of this concession is estimated at 64 lakhs ; but, as 16 lakhs of this would be paid to officers employed by the Provincial Governments or on works chargeable to capital expenditure, only 48 lakhs (Rx. 480,000) will fall on the Budget of the year. Furlough allowances will be made payable at the same rate of 1s. 6d. the rupee, the cost of which is estimated at four lakhs (Rx. 40,000). The result of these measures is very materially to alter the Budget, which in March showed a deficit of Rx. 1,595,100. The following are the improvements anticipated :—Exchange, very uncertain, but estimated, if a rate of 1s. 4d. were maintained for the rest of the year, at Rx. 1,460,000 ; Civil Revenue, Rx. 30,000 ; railways, net, Rx. 150,000 ; total, Rx. 1,640,000 ; and the following are the expected points of deterioration :—Opium, net, Rx. 600,000 ; Army, Rx. 50,000 ; discount on loans in India and in England, Rx. 150,000 ; interest, Rx. 30,000 ; compensation for exchange, Rx. 520,000 ; total, Rx. 1,350,000 ; making a net im-

provement of Rx. 290,000, and bringing down the deficit, as now estimated, to Rx. 1,305,100. It will be observed that the deficit would have been very much smaller but for the reduction in the net opium revenue. On the announcement of the closing of the Indian Mints one of the first effects was naturally a great disturbance in the trade with China, as it was obvious that the gold value of silver was likely to be much reduced, and consequently merchants would be unable to give in India so high a price as before for articles for sale in China, chief among which was opium. Hence, at the auction at Calcutta on the 3rd of July, during the days of panic immediately following the closing of the Mints, the average price per chest, which at the beginning of June was 1,187 rupees, fell to 971 rupees ; it rose to 1,155 rupees in August, but fell again to 1,049 in September. In discussing the prospect of the opium trade with China, the Currency Committee assigned reasons for doubting whether the diminution in the receipts was likely to be considerable. The Government of India have, however, recently announced that the monthly sales at Calcutta, which had in October, 1892, been reduced from 4,500 to 3,642 chests, would be further reduced on the 1st of January, 1894, to 3,525 chests a month, so that they will receive in 1893-4 the proceeds of 351 chests less than they anticipated in the Budget. And, coupling this with the fall in price, they now expect a reduction of Rx. 600,000 in the net receipts this year. So far I have been dealing with the expenditure chargeable on the Revenue of the year. I must now speak of that which was incurred outside the Revenue account, and met from loans on accumulated balances. As a general rule, the outlay so incurred amounted to 350 lakhs, of which about 280 were allotted to railways and 70 to irrigation works. It must not, however, be supposed that this was all which was spent on such works. There was, usually, a considerable allotment from Revenue under the heads of famine insurance protective works, and of construction of railways, and there was also a large outlay by companies guaranteed by the Government, and, from the summary on page 23 of the Memorandum, it will be seen that, altogether, the Government have in the three years to which the

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statement refers sanctioned an outlay of 555, 675, and 755 lakhs, or Rx.19,850,000 on the whole. This has been done with comparatively little addition to the debt. In India it will during the three years have been increased by only Rx.3,406,000, and in England there has been an addition of £2,522,000, of which £1,357,000 is to discharge railway debentures. Taking the remainder, £1,165,000, as equal to Rx.1,770,000, the Government of India have been able to allot about Rx.9,000,000 from their balances for productive works without incurring debt for the purpose, besides guaranteeing the interest on Rx.5,500,000 spent by companies. In connection with this subject, I may point out that, as will be seen from the statement of assets and liabilities on page 23 of the Memorandum, the Government possess public works of improvement sufficient in value to balance the whole of its Debt and obligations, except about £28,000,000, so that the uncovered Debt is not greatly in excess of half a year's net Revenue. The Debt which is being incurred this year consists of two parts. In England a loan of £1,300,000 Three per Cent. Stock has been issued at an average price of £98 17s. 3d. per cent., in order to provide funds for the discharge of railway debentures to the amount of £1,249,200, which are bearing interest at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. As regards the Debt in India, there was in 1890 an amount of about 20 crores, bearing interest at $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.; by successive offers of conversion some $18\frac{1}{2}$ crores were converted into 4 per cent. Debt, and only about Rx.1,350,000 remained outstanding. The Government of India have given notice to pay this off on October 14 next, and, in order to provide funds for the purpose and for the construction of public works during the year, they raised on August 15 a loan of Rx.3,500,000, to bear interest at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. It was subscribed at an average rate of about $96\frac{1}{4}$ per cent., and the holders will receive about $3\frac{3}{8}$ per cent. interest. I have mentioned the outlay on railways, and I will now state what progress has been made during the past year in their development. Four hundred and ninety miles of new line have been opened, making the total mileage open on March 31 last 18,042. The first section of the East Coast Railway, from Bezvada to the Godavari river (91 miles),

was opened in February, and it was expected that two more sections, with a length of 171 miles, would be opened during 1893. An important bridge also was completed over the Kistna River at Bezvada, 12 spans of 300 ft.; it has been constructed to carry a mixed standard and metre gauge line, as it connects the Southern Mahratta metre gauge system with the standard gauge lines of the Nizam's and East Coast Railways. On the Western side of India the first sections were opened of the railway from Hyderabad to Umarkot, 59 miles, and of that from Godhva to Rutlam, 25 miles. In the South the section from Dharmāvaram to the Mysore frontier was completed, and in Burma the section of the Mu Valley Railway from Shwebo to Wuntho was opened for public traffic. The principal new work taken in hand was the Assam-Bengal Railway, with a total length of 742 miles, for the formation of which a company was formed in April, 1892, with a capital of £1,500,000 raised on a guarantee by Government of a minimum dividend of $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. till 1898, and of 3 per cent. subsequently. Further money will be supplied by the Government, unless they prefer to allow the company to raise it, and the profits of the line will be divided between the two parties according to their contributions. Taking the outlay on all the open lines, whether commercial or military, the average returns in 1891 were 5·80, and in 1892 5·45 per cent. On several lines the net earnings are between 5 and 10 per cent.; the East Indian gave 9·79, the Rajputana-Malwa 10·47, and the Jodhpore 11·11 per cent. Railway construction in India should, therefore, be sufficiently attractive for local capital, and it is the most satisfactory of all their forms of public outlay. Turning to the moral and material condition of the people of India, I can only reiterate what I have stated in my previous speech, that, in spite of the gloomy prophecies with which this subject is so encompassed, according to all the tests we have been able to apply, there is a distinct advance in the material prosperity of India. That material improvement is exhibited in the increase both of exports and imports; in the accumulation of treasure; increase of comforts, arts, and ornament in the houses of the people; increase in the quantity of food

consumed ; the prices given for land, and the amount of salt consumed. I cannot say as much when I turn to education, because, if not absolutely stationary, it is a great deal more nearly stationary than I should wish to see it. I can trace an improvement in the appliances for public health with beneficial results. There has been a Commission inquiring into the opium traffic and one on ganja, as well as one on the Cantonment Acts. Steps have been taken to restore to the people of India the right of trial by jury ; and in Local Councils we have provided the readiest means of redress against any grievances which could not be properly dealt with by reference to the authorities at home. My object has been to show the actual financial condition of India and what its state is likely to be in the near future ; and, secondly, to show in the briefest outline the various steps the Government have taken, are taking, and intend to take with the view of promoting the material, moral, and social well-being of the people. The object which every Indian Government must set before itself is the maintenance of a strong, orderly, and progressive rule ; but even the maintenance of such a rule is not quite an end in itself. It is a means to an end. The object of such government is, in my view, to blend the various races and faiths of India into one harmonious whole ; to raise the Indian people in the moral, intellectual, and social scale of nations ; to stimulate their progress in the sciences which prolong life and the arts which beautify it ; and in all those beneficent enterprises of well-ordered intelligence, where

"All men find their own in all men's good,
And all men join in social brotherhood."

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That it appears, by the Accounts laid before the House, that the total Revenue of India for the year ending on the 31st day of March 1892 was Rx.89,143,283 ; that the Total Expenditure in India and in England charged against the Revenue was Rx.88,675,748 ; that there was a Surplus of Revenue over Expenditure of Rx.467,535 ; and that the capital outlay on Railways and Irrigation Works was Rx. 3,500,000."—(*Mr. G. Russell.*)

*SIR R. TEMPLE (Surrey, Kingston): I am sorry that the Under Secretary of State for India has not returned in time to allow me to give him the customary congratulations for his interesting statement just before we adjourned for dinner.

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However, I must offer my congratulations even to the Green Bench in his absence, and I am sure that our friends the reporters in the Gallery will duly report to him the congratulations which are nevertheless offered in perfect sincerity. On the whole, the statement was as satisfactory as the circumstances permit ; and the circumstances of the time, no doubt, are grave. There was one thing which I did not quite understand in his statement. He showed us the amount of the deficit and how the deficit was caused, but he did not, so far as I gather, explain how that deficit was to be met. Subject to correction, I understand the Government are going to meet this deficit out of their cash balance, and not by the imposition of any new taxation. That may appear a very extraordinary thing ; but in India they do keep a very large sum in these balances, not necessarily in the Government Treasury, and it is quite possible—at least it was in my time—to meet a deficit of even £2,000,000 or £3,000,000 by drawing upon these cash balances. But I need hardly say that is a process which cannot go on for more than a year or two. Among the various points which the Under Secretary mentioned was that of the development of railways. According to the statement which he made, one would think that the railways in India, especially those which are now being constructed, were one of the most profitable investments in the world. A more rose-coloured statement I have never yet heard in regard to the railways, though I have no doubt that the hon. Gentleman states it on good authority. As regards moral progress, we never know how far the question of moral progress can be discussed in this purely financial debate, and I must remark, in reference to what the Under Secretary of State said about my having by my action precluded him from alluding to the matter of contagious diseases, that one hardly sees how this is to come within this debate. If I blocked the Motion it was for the reason that (in the absence of a block) it might have been discussed while the Speaker was in the Chair, and might have raised a very inconvenient debate lasting for some time—two or three hours, perhaps—all of which would have been deducted from this

purely financial Debate upon the Indian Budget. It was partly in order to prevent time being taken up in this way, and being deducted from the time that belongs to the Under Secretary of State and those who follow him, that I persisted in my blocking Motion; and, therefore, I hardly think I deserve any reproach from my hon. Friend. In fact, I have indirectly been conferring a benefit upon him, for surely no serious Member in this House on either side would say for a moment that such a subject as that being interpolated in the middle of a Debate regarding the government of India and the progress of the Indian population would be anything but a very unfortunate occurrence; and, therefore, I cannot, with all deference to the Secretary of State, take any blame to myself for such action as I have ventured to adopt. Now, I must say just a few words upon the subject of the closing of the Mints for the coining of silver. Although I do not mean to say that this action can be defended upon the strictest grounds, yet the Government of India had to do something, and those who criticise it and those who attack it most fiercely have never attempted to show what alternative was open to the Government. What were they to do? Its critics do not look to the other side. It is like the obverse and reverse of a medal. They look to the obverse and never think of the reverse, and suggest positively no alternative. What, I repeat, was the Government of India to do? I think we should show a generous consideration for all the difficulties which they had to encounter, and the gravity of the situation in which they found themselves. No doubt some injury—very indirect, remote, and hardly appreciable—has been inflicted upon those classes of natives who hold silver, but that cannot be fairly described as public plunder. Those Members on my side of the House who have applied such terms to the action of the Government were hurried, no doubt, in the heat of the Debate into expressions which could not, strictly speaking, be justified. I will ask the Committee for a moment to consider what exactly is the position of the natives in India in respect to this holding of silver? The quantity of this metal coined is far greater than is generally supposed; but, as regards uncoined silver,

what is the purpose for which the natives of India hold it? They do not intend to turn it into money; they intend to keep it. No doubt it serves in time of peace for ornament, and in time of trouble and danger it will serve for sustenance. But what is the kind of danger for which they will use it? When they get distressed for food they will endeavour to get food for this silver, and the burning question in their minds will be not so much the price of silver as the price of food. When food is raised four or five times in price they think less of the price of silver, but they think immensely of the price of grain. Therefore, as regards the use to which they put uncoined silver, I contend the action of the Government in India will have a most remote and inappreciable effect on the natives of India, and that thus they will not suffer in the manner that has been supposed by metallic authorities on this side of the House. But there is this further in the matter to be considered. Supposing that the difference of 1d. or 1½d. in the rupee, which has been produced by that action of the Government, did appreciably affect them, that is only a slight increase of the disadvantage which they have been suffering now for 10 or 15 years past; and if their prosperity had depended on the rupee remaining at par, that prosperity would have disappeared long ago. We have never heard all this time that the natives were supposed to suffer from the depreciation of the rupee. On the contrary, the difficulty was this—that you never could show that India herself was suffering or that the natives were complaining. And now, after all this has been going on from 10 to 15 years, when the rupee has fallen from 24d. to 16d. or 15d., when the value of silver is lowered another 1d., all this complaint is raised for the first time; all these dangers are conjured up, and the measure stigmatised as a public danger. I must say that is an exaggeration; and the same remarks apply to the ryots. It is said they are to suffer severely now because the rupee is depreciated by 1½d. or 2d.

MR. SEYMOUR KEAY (Elgin and Nairn): The rupee is appreciated.

*SIR R. TEMPLE: Allow me to put my case in my own way. I should have said that the rupee is appreciated by the action of the Government, but that silver

is depreciated. It is supposed that the ryots are to suffer because silver is to be depreciated by 1½d. or 2d. by the recent action of the Government of India; and I reply, if that were so, what must the ryot have suffered all these 10 or 15 years from the depreciation of the rupee from 24d. to 16d.? Has he been suffering? Has the Land Tax been going down? Have there been complaints by the ryots (the land tax-payers) of the depreciation of the rupee? Up to quite recently, I, for one, have never heard that the native landholders have been suffering all these years from the falling price of silver. Quite the contrary is the general opinion. Is it not strange that when no complaints have been made all these years, a complaint should suddenly be made at the eleventh hour of this assumed depreciation of uncoined silver? Now I wish to make a few remarks about the land taxpayers. I believe, Sir, that will come very properly within the scope of this discussion. My purpose is to address the Committee on the economic condition of the ryot, the land taxpayer, who forms 80 per cent. or more of the entire population. Now it has been asserted very often in this House, as well as outside, that the condition of the land taxpayer is very oppressed at the present time, and is getting gradually worse and worse, and that he is becoming poorer and poorer. That, I understand, is the sum total and effect of that allegation, which has been made in strong and strenuous language. If such a statement were at all true, it would, of course, be a very unhappy state of affairs; in fact, one cannot imagine a statement more damaging or more disadvantageous than that if there were any foundation for it. I am within the recollection of the Committee when I say that these statements were made with great stress; but beyond the bare allegation not one particle of proof is adduced; not one single fact that can be proved statistically, tested, or verified has ever been brought forward to support that view. I speak in the presence of several statisticians; and I should like to ask, supposing such a statement could be proved, what sort of proof would be necessary? What are the strong points it is necessary to know if you are to say that the condition of the peasantry is depressed? I

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propose for a few minutes to enter into these considerations, because they are at the very root and foundation of our Indian finance. If you are to prove that the peasantry are growing poorer and poorer, it should be inquired whether this depression is caused by the system of tenure. No; because they have tenure as good as anyone in the world. No small freeholder in England has a firmer tenure in his holding which he cultivates than the ryot has, and that has been secured by settlements based on cadastral surveys.

THE CHAIRMAN: This is not material to the Question. We have passed the stage at which it can be discussed.

MR. GOSCHEN: May I put it to you, Sir, that the power of the ryots to pay taxes comes from the resources of India generally to which attention is being drawn? When the Speaker was in the Chair the Chancellor of the Exchequer appealed to us to shorten the Debate, and we fell in with his view, and hon. Members on this side reserved their remarks with a view of making them at a convenient time. I put it to you, Sir, that the prosperity of agriculture must certainly form a considerable element in the power of the general population of India to pay taxation.

***MR. SEYMOUR KEAY:** With regard to what has fallen from the right hon. Gentleman, I would beg to say that I also was stopped in the Debate for the same reason as the right hon. Gentleman; and if you rule that the general question of the ability of the ryot to pay taxes can be raised, I shall feel it my duty to reply to any remarks of the hon. Gentleman.

***SIR R. TEMPLE:** I had said what little there was to be said about that point of the surveys. A large amount of the ability to pay taxes depends on the stability of the tenure. At all events, I presume it will be open to remark upon the number of the agricultural population. Now, if the agricultural population were depressed you would consider that the population would decrease. On the contrary; it is increasing at a most rapid rate. Why, during the last 10 years it has increased by more than 30,000,000—nearly 35,000,000. There is no proof of depression in that. Then it is said that this increase is pro-

ducing a sort of congestion ; but that is not so, because the increase of population has occurred not in the densely-populated places, but in outlying districts, which hitherto have been sparsely populated. Then proof might be found in the increase of the area of population. All the information given shows that the increase of population has been in the new districts which have been brought into cultivation. So there is no proof of congestion there. Is there any proof of depression in the produce ? Well, no ; not in the cereals, nor the oil-seeds, nor the produce. All the world knows that a population which is said to be starving is sending so much food to England as to astonish our British farmers. Is there any proof of depression with respect to the falling-off of the Land Tax ? On the contrary, that goes on, and is slowly but surely increasing. Is there any proof in the dwellings or the houses ? No ; on the contrary, the cottages are improving and the houses are far better than they have been at previous periods. Is there any proof in the falling-off in the quality of domestic pottery ? No ; on the contrary, brass is being substituted for earthenware. Is there any proof in wages ?

MR. SEYMOUR KEAY : Are you prepared to prove these things from Returns ?

*SIR R. TEMPLE : Yes, certainly. I am about to state how all this information is derived. Is there any proof in wages ? On the contrary, wages have increased. Why, they are double what they were when I first went to India. Is there any proof in savings ? On the contrary, so far as Savings Banks go, they are being developed from decade to decade. Surely every Member of this House will recollect our discussion on bimetallism, and the particulars that were given about the amount of silver specie and bullion in the hands of the natives. The arguments are turned one way or the other to suit the case. One day we are told that the natives have nothing, and another day we are told they have any amount of silver, whenever statistics of that kind have to be brought to bear on the currency. Is there any proof of depression to be found in their accumulations of food grain ? Certainly not. In that respect the natives are setting an example to most

nations. I venture to say there is no nation in Europe that has so large an amount of food stored as the natives of India. If such a calamity as the Indian famine occurred in this country, I am certain that it would be far worse for our countrymen than ever it was for the natives of India. I have been struck with the large accumulation of food in the hands of the natives of India, which is sometimes kept underground. Is there any proof of depression in their resources of irrigation ? No ; for in this respect the wells are ever increasing, and the works of irrigation are developed to such an extent that they are the admiration of every foreign nation. Is there any proof with regard to communication ? No ; for the district roads and the provincial roads are much improved, and they are slowly but effectually advancing, and the natives are crowding by thousands of passengers in every railway train, mostly drawn from the agricultural population. Then is there any proof as regards sanitation ? On the contrary, tanks for drinking water and things of that sort have been lately improved everywhere. In every small town there are waterworks.

THE CHAIRMAN : I am clear this is not in Order.

*SIR R. TEMPLE : Then I will delete that part of my argument. My point is that the material condition of the peasantry cannot be proved to be depressed, and therefore their power of paying taxes cannot be shown to have diminished, and consequently there is no fear for the Budget of India or for their finances on that account. And if this financial depression cannot be proved from the system of tenure and the other things I have mentioned, I want to know whence it can be proved ? Where can the proof come from ? If it cannot be found in these things, where on earth can it be found ? Take my argument, and I challenge all those who say that there is this financial depression to show me a single source from which the proof is derived. The hon. Member opposite asked how I knew all these things. I have no occult means of information, and I get my knowledge from the Returns and Reports which are accessible to every Member of this House, and any hon. Member can satisfy himself by a reference to the Libraries. I thank you, Sir, for allowing me to make these remarks about

the revenue from Land Tax. I must submit to this House that it is impossible to separate Land Tax from revenue; it is impossible to separate finance from revenue, and it is impossible to separate revenue from the condition of the taxpayer, and if the condition of the taxpayer cannot be entered into in this discussion, what is the use of having a debate at all? I do not know, Sir, whether you will consider me in Order if I allude to the indebtedness of the taxpayers. During all my time in India I was strongly of opinion that the law could be so modified as to offer considerable relief to this indebtedness of the taxpayers, and I did my best for the purpose, and effected some good; but I fear I left a great deal of good to be done in this respect by my successors. A great deal of the indebtedness of the peasantry is caused in this way. Men of humble means will insist upon expensive festivities upon the occasion of their marriages. They have many ceremonials of a *quasi*-religious character, when considerable sums of money are spent, and upon the priests and the priestly classes. Upon all such occasions these poor people simply outrun the constable. And debt is so easily contracted, because we have given these people the means of mortgaging their property. Many cases of indebtedness could be, to some extent, avoided by improvements in the law. Our law gives too great facilities to the money lenders.

MR. SEYMOUR KEAY: I rise to Order. Is the hon. Baronet in Order in his present remarks?

THE CHAIRMAN: I think the hon. Gentleman is perfectly in Order.

*SIR R. TEMPLE continuing: Of course, it will be urged on the other side that one cause of the indebtedness is that the Land Tax is too high. But that has been constantly lowered, although prices have not fallen in the way they have in this country. Perhaps the system of cash payments may be given as a cause. But of all the reforms we have introduced into India, the greatest is this—that we have substituted payment in cash for payment in kind. And now there is only one remark I desire to make, and it is this. A comparison has been drawn between some of the Native States, and it is asserted that some of these States are advancing in pro-

sperty more rapidly than the Government territories. Some of the Native States are, no doubt, in abundant prosperity, and that is a fact, I think, upon which we ought to congratulate them, especially as they have largely imitated. But anyone who knows what Northern India and the Deccan once were will feel that nothing but British rule could have effected the change we see in those regions. I hope the Secretary of State will be able to make some statement about moral improvement, and to convey a gracious message from the House of Commons to the vast population of our Indian Empire.

*MR. SEYMOUR KEAY (Elgin and Nairn): It struck me, Mr. Mellor, that the hon. Member was absolutely and diametrically in error with regard to the whole course of the argument with which he sought to inform the House on a previous occasion. He said that there was no diminution of the prosperity of the people of India, because of the international depreciation of the rupee which has taken place within the last 12 or 15 years. I am prepared to admit more or less that that is the case. There is no doubt whatever that if we accept this proposition that the depreciation of the rupee which has taken place has not injured the people of India perceptibly it must follow that any artificial appreciation of the rupee might have the effect of producing injury. The hon. Baronet seemed to think that the purpose the Government of India had in closing the Mints to free coinage of silver was to still further depreciate the rupee. He said, if his argument meant anything at all, that as the rupee falling from 2s. to 1s. 4d. has not injured the people of India, therefore, how could anyone say that a further depreciation of the rupee beyond 1s. 4d. could injure them? I ventured across the floor of the House to suggest to him that the only idea and view of the Government of India in closing the Mints to free coinage was not further to depreciate the rupee, but to appreciate it. The hon. Baronet somewhat hastily accused me of discourtesy, and appealed to the protection of the Chair. The only object the Government of India avowedly have in closing the Mints to the free coinage of silver is to appreciate the rupee artificially. Ap-

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preciation is always made by scarcity, and when we want to appreciate any coin we do it by making the coin scarcer. The Government of India cannot stop the depreciation of uncoined silver, and, therefore, they appreciate the coined silver. Whenever they artificially restrict the output of rupees they not only do, but they intend to appreciate that coin as against international exchange, and as against gold and everything else in the world. I do not suppose that the late Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) will for a moment dissent from that doctrine. The hon. Gentleman (Sir R. Temple) went on basing his argument upon the absolutely false assumption with which he started—namely, that because it could not be shown that the past depreciation of the rupee had injured the people, therefore no injury could possibly be inflicted by closing the Mints. That is the point which compels me to rise to-night and detain the Committee for a few moments. I have had a more extensive experience of international banking and Indian Exchanges than any other man in this House, and I can inform my hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State that closing the Mints to coinage would have a very early, a very enormous, and a very severe effect upon the general population of India. By appreciating the rupee the Government depreciate all produce. Let me take a general all-round figure to illustrate the matter to the Committee. Supposing that at this moment, with free coinage of silver, the Indian ryot or cultivator cultivates 10 acres of land. He has got to pay the Government, say, 10 rupees for Land Tax. He is at present able to raise the 10 rupees by selling 100 lbs. of rice. What will be the effect of the Government of India's edict? By artificially appreciating the value of the rupee you bring about this position—that the man will have to sell 125 lbs. of rice instead of 100 lbs. in order to enable him to pay his Land Tax. But his land will not grow a single ounce more of rice, and, therefore, the outcome of artificially raising the rupee, and making it scarce, will be that that man's wife and children will simply have to eat 25 lbs. of rice less than they did the year before. I do not think I can venture to detain the Committee by entering into some of the general subjects

alluded to by the hon. Baronet. Some of them were in Order, and some of them were not. I must say that I got a little confused as to which of the hon. Baronet's subjects I might venture to reply to, and which I might not. The hon. Baronet wanted to convince this Committee, and indicated that he could give chapter and verse showing the prosperity of India in 15 or 20 ways. When I ventured to ask him if he was quoting from official Returns, he declared that I must not interrupt him. I would call the attention of the Committee to the fact that when he sat down he had not given the Committee one single proof in support of the statements he made.

MR. GOSCHEN (St. George's, Hanover Square): There are only two points connected with Indian finance on which I would ask the Committee to allow me to say a few words. At an earlier period of the evening the home charges of the Indian Government were discussed to a certain extent. It is clear that the amount of the home charges would seriously affect the Budget of our Indian Empire. Those who have been connected with the administration of India, I know, take a particular view. My hon. Friends behind me seem to be under the impression that India has been harshly treated with regard to those charges which are imposed upon her in connection with the home Government. Possibly there may be some hon. Members who think that the British Executive Government is in a position to impose on the Indian Government a settlement with regard to disputed points of finance. Now, I think it is important that impression should be removed. I think it has been pointed out by several Members opposite that the belief prevails in India that there is much injustice in connection with home charges. I have had some experience in which the Indian Government, supported by the Indian Council, have defended the interests of the British taxpayer. My right hon. Friend beside me has already said a few words upon that subject, and I can only emphasise what he has said—namely, that the Treasury find it extremely difficult to come to any arrangement with the Indian Government as to what the Treasury think it fair to the British taxpayer. The hon. Member for Hackney

alluded to the want of equity with regard to the charges exacted from India in connection with the Persian Embassy and with regard to the representation of this country at Canton. I think everybody will admit that India is deeply interested with Persia, and is deeply interested in the Chinese Empire. Therefore, at sight, it would seem only equitable India should pay some proportion towards the maintenance of these Embassies. The hon. Member for Hackney said that Canada had not to pay for the maintenance of the Embassy at Washington, although Canada was eminently deeply interested. That may be an argument for impressing upon Canada she ought to contribute towards the Embassy at Washington, but it is not an argument that you should not ask India to pay towards the Embassies in Persia and at Canton. The position of the British taxpayers is that they are generally called upon to pay the whole of the Imperial charges of the country. I think it is to be regretted that arrangements have not been made for our Colonies to contribute on a more systematic and broader plan a portion of the expenditure in which they are clearly deeply interested. The Empire is deeply interested in many portions of our foreign policy. I am glad of the opportunity of pointing out to those who are specially charged in their consciences with the defence of Indian interests that, having had some experience in the matter, some of these questions are dealt with with extraordinary care by the Representatives of the Indian Government to defend their taxpayers. I do not know what may have been the experience of my successor at the Treasury, but I can assure the Committee that the permanent officials at the Treasury considered the Indian Government is far stronger and more obstinate in insisting upon the rights and privileges of the Indian taxpayers than the Representatives of the British taxpayer. I do not think it is wasting the time of the Committee if I dwell for one moment on details which illustrate the system. The Indian Government quite properly, from their point of view, and following the Members who are eminent Representatives of the Indian Government who have spoke this evening, and object to a portion of the cost of the Embassy at Teheran. The Treasury thought they were not paying enough.

Mr. Goschen

There was a long controversy. Neither the Treasury nor the Indian Government would give way. A compromise was, however, effected. The Prime Minister requested the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Secretary of State for India to meet. We were supported by certain permanent officials of the Treasury, and the Indian Government were supported by some of the most eminent Members of the Indian Council. The matter was threshed out in the presence of the Prime Minister, and a compromise arrived at. The question of the cost of the representation at Canton was dealt with in the same way. I mention this to show that the Indian Government presses upon the Treasury precisely as hon. Members would wish the Committee of this House to press it. The Imperial Parliament have not power to impose any charges upon the Indian Government, as some Members of this House may be inclined to believe. I am quite certain that the taxpayers of India are defended with precisely the same amount of energy as by those who represent the British taxpayer. I agree with the observation made at an earlier period in the evening by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean, who said we ought to be particularly anxious that in our relations with India we should treat them with no want of generosity, and no want of appreciation of the situation. When I was Chancellor of the Exchequer, it was my duty vigilantly to defend the English taxpayers in controversies with the Indian Government, and I can assure the Committee that I feel confident the present Government do not wish to press unduly upon an Empire of fellow-subjects, with regard to whom we have such a grave responsibility. That I am certain will be the spirit in which every Government would wish to approach this question. There is one charge from which the Indian Government is almost entirely free, and one subject with reference to which the English taxpayer has some cause for complaint. I think the British taxpayer has his rights in this matter equal with the Indian taxpayer. While we are discussing whether we bear too hardly upon India, it is right to consider whether in some matters India pays sufficient towards the cost of this Empire. India has a coast which is very

expensive. India has to be protected by sea as well as by land. The contribution which the Indian Empire pays towards the maintenance of the Navy is quite a trifle, quite a bagatelle. That must be looked upon as a set-off with regard to many of the home charges my hon. Friends are likely to think excessive. Supposing India was a self-contained Empire: think of the cost India would have to incur in order to protect her coasts. I think I am right in saying that India pays £100,000 a year towards the maintenance of our Navy. It is a question whether that amount should not be increased. We have the greatest difficulty in getting the Indian Government to pay it. The British taxpayer is charged with the Navy, which is to defend our Colonies, India, and Dependencies, and the amount of contributions in return is insignificant. The whole weight of taxation really presses upon the British taxpayer. It is one of the reasons why the cost of the Navy seems so excessive in the eyes of many persons. We have all this immense responsibility, and the contributions made by other portions of the Empire are absolutely insignificant. Therefore, I would entreat hon. Members, when they consider whether India is unfairly treated by this country, to bear in mind that for a most trifling contribution Britain incurs an immense expense of guaranteeing, as we believe we guarantee, the naval safety of India. Now, the second subject on which I would like to touch is that of the closing of the Indian Mints. Mr. Mellor, I have received a number of letters, and also personal representations have been made to me expressing surprise that I have not spoken at length upon a subject with which I am supposed to be more or less specially cognisant. I have been asked why I have been reticent with regard to this matter. I will be perfectly frank with the Committee. I will say at the outset that when I read the resolution of the Government to close the Indian Mints it was a most startling announcement to me. I was extremely surprised. I think it was a most serious step to take. But I admit the extreme difficulty of the situation and the seriousness of the crisis, and the great difficulty which anyone, however cognisant with the subject, would find in presenting any remedy for

an undoubtedly difficult and most complicated condition of affairs. I remember the composition of the Departmental Committee which had made this recommendation. On that Committee there were some of the ablest men connected with finance with whom I am acquainted. There were men upon it of a most orthodox view with regard to the currency. They were men whom I am sure would never have put their names to a Report of that character unless they all felt that some heroic remedy, or some remedy at all events, was absolutely necessary. I did not wish to embarrass the experiment by any premature declaration on my part, if it would have any influence at all on the public mind; but I wished the resolution at which the Government had arrived to have the fairest possible trial. Therefore, I thought, as I had no counter remedy to propose, that no public advantage would be served at that time by any hostile criticism of the measure which, at the same time, greatly surprised me. It was a bold step to recommend, and it was a bold step on the part of the Government to adopt it. I do not know to what extent the Indian Government are satisfied with the result. All I can say is, she has wished it success; but it would be difficult for anyone to say whether success is being found. The measure is on a more gigantic scale than has ever been tried before. You have an enormous currency, which is practically a conventional currency, and which does not represent in any degree the value of the metal in that currency.

SIR W. HARCOURT: What about France?

MR. GOSCHEN: The Chancellor of the Exchequer mentioned France, but France is not in the same position. France has her double currency and some £50,000,000 of gold in her possession. France is a gold and silver country; India is only silver. But I do not wish to enter into a controversy with the right hon. Gentleman, or any gentleman, because I do not wish to lay down the doctrine that the Indian Government have done wrong. I think they have taken a very serious step. Much has been said with regard to the damage that may have been inflicted upon India. Whatever changes are introduced, either one interest or another

must suffer. You cannot, of course, by law touch a currency without its having some effect either upon one class or another. I do not say whether it is right or wrong, but the whole action of the Government is rather to the advantage of the creditor than to the advantage of the debtor. Those who have to pay find that the value of the coin with which they have to pay has been artificially raised. That, of course, is satisfactory to the creditor, but must be unsatisfactory to the debtor. So far the artificial increase given to the value of the rupee has not been great. I am perfectly prepared to listen to arguments on the part of those who recommended this measure. You might say, notwithstanding the disadvantages at which the debtor would be in consequence of this large measure having been passed, it might possibly be proved an advantage to the interests of the Indian Empire as a whole, and so, at the disadvantage of a certain class, compass the general welfare. If the general welfare of India is promoted by this step, possibly the debtors might put up with being hampered by the payment of their debts by the appreciation of rupees, and find advantage in the general prosperity of the country, which may compensate them in some respect. I make no charge against this measure which has been introduced, but it is a scientific fact that the effect must be to assist the creditor rather than the debtor. As to whether the experiment may succeed, I think the Indian public ought not to be too impatient. They have accepted, apparently, that the rupee should be kept at 1s. 4d. This has led to the expectation that the Government would keep the rupee at 1s. 4d. I confess I did not read the declaration of the Government in any sense of the kind. It was, however, an expectation which I thought sanguine at the time. With such enormous transactions it would be an immense task to keep the coin at a particular value.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I said it was rather an arrangement to prevent the exchange rising too rapidly. The Government never had the idea that it would keep up the price.

MR. GOSCHEN: I was rather defending the Government on that point. I do not know that the Government hoped to keep it up to that point, but I

gathered from all I read there was a kind of expectation, which had been disappointed. The Government certainly said that 1s. 4d. was to be the point beyond which artificial action should not come in. This was interpreted by a great portion of the Indian community to have meant 1s. 4d. was to be the fixed value. This expectation was founded not upon any economic truth, but probably upon misreading Government Despatches. I have seen a great deal of blame has been attached to the Secretary for India for selling below that price. When the Secretary for India cannot get 1s. 4d. he is obliged to take 1s. 3½d., or even less. Whatever may be the result of this experiment, it appears to me there are limits, or the action of the Government may wreck the Indian currency. Whether the general expectation will be realised is a matter of opinion. Even the most sanguine advocate of the means cannot but think it is only a makeshift and temporary solution of a very great difficulty. I think that must be patent to all. What I say is in no spirit of criticism, either to those who drew up the Report or of the Government of India. I acknowledge the very great difficulties, and I only hope that by these means, as preliminary means, the Indian Government may surmount their financial difficulties, and in the meantime they may possibly be able to make further proposals, which may settle this extremely difficult question upon a more permanent and more satisfactory footing.

*MR. EVERETT (Suffolk, Woodbridge): The right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down has addressed us with his usual caution. There is no one in this country who more thoroughly understands the currency question than the right hon. Gentleman. But I sometimes think he owes it to his country to pronounce more decisively as to what he really thinks ought to be done, rather than to spend his time in giving sitting-on-the-hedge kind of speeches such as he has given us again to-night. It seems to me that in this long Session we have left the greatest question to the end. Although it is a great question we are discussing we can only now make short speeches upon it for lack of time. I desire to congratulate the Under Secretary of State for India on the able

Mr. Goschen

and comprehensive speech he has delivered with such ability and clearness, and with his customary modesty. His is, perhaps, the most interesting Financial Statement for India that has ever been made in this House, for it proposes a great change in relation to one of the most important matters affecting the welfare of the country. Enormous is the responsibility of those who have devised a change such as this, and of those who assent to it. I rise to speak because I am deeply impressed with the fact that we are perpetrating a grave wrong upon the people of India, who are comparatively unable to speak for themselves, and who are helpless in our hands. We are deliberately proceeding to contract their currency. The contraction of the currency is one of the gravest evils that can afflict a country. Short of war, or famine, or pestilence, I know of no evil which cuts so deeply into the vitality of a nation as the contraction of its currency. Let the Committee recollect what happened in this country after 1819 when we contracted our currency. The next 20 years form the most miserable period in our modern history. It is a matter which all economists are agreed upon that abundance of money stimulates industry, and that contraction depresses it. Increase of money raises prices, increases profits, multiplies employment, and raises wages. The reverse of it has the reverse effect. What are we doing? What have we begun to do in India? We have decided to close the Mints. What is it that comes out of the Mints? What has been coming out of the Mints there for years? Coins; silver coins, full legal tender coins. I contend that every one of these coins was a blessing and nothing else to every man who was fortunate enough to get that coin into his possession. It was a blessing to him to pay his debts; it was a blessing to him to spend it in shop or bazaar, and I cannot understand a policy of artificially stopping the issue of coins, which are in themselves so great a blessing. It is not only so, but coin, money, is a most essential necessary of life. You may say bread is more necessary, but you cannot buy bread; you cannot buy clothes; you cannot procure shelter without money; and to deliberately cut off the free and unrestricted supply of

money which the country has been enjoying is, in my view, to do that country as grievous an injury as the law can possibly inflict upon it. There are two classes in every country differently affected by a policy of this kind. There are those who possess money, or who have money owing to them—what I will call the creditor class, of whom the right hon. Gentleman just spoke, and of whom he is looked upon as a very worthy representative in this House and country. But you have a far more numerous class in every country who have no money except what they win with their toil, or with the exchange of their produce for it. It is the few that possess money, while it is the many that have to win money by their toil or to suffer privation or pinching for the want of it. What is proposed to be done here? The stopping of the Mints will, of course, enrich the class who possess money; it will raise the value of the money which is owed to them, and it will, in the same proportion, bless all those of the official classes who have their salary payable to them in these rupees, the value of which will be increased. And, mark you, Mr. Mellor, this increase of value is artificially brought about. It is Protection in the most naked and offensive form. There is the right hon. Gentleman who comes from the Isle of Thanet, who openly advocates protection of produce, and ridicule is sometimes heaped on him from these Benches; but now the very Government which heaps that ridicule on him is lending its authority to protection of the money-lender. I cannot see anything worse in protecting produce than in protecting the money-lender. I am amazed as a Liberal and a follower in most respects of right hon. Gentlemen who sit below me—I am amazed that they have consented to take this retrograde step. They would be ashamed to close the ports of the country against food, but they have closed the Mint against that money without which the people cannot buy their food. I hope the House will condemn that conduct as severely as it deserves to be condemned. While they are doing this the toilers of that country are cursed by the deed. From Cashmere to Cape Comorin, from the mouths of the Indus to the Bay of Bengal, every man working in a tea or

coffee garden, or cultivating rice, or growing wheat or cotton or indigo in the fields, every man working in a factory, every man who has to win his money by his toil, will be cursed by this legislation. His difficulty in getting the money necessary to pay his way with is artificially increased by the extraordinary action to which our Government, I am sorry to say, has given its consent. Industry and trade will become unprofitable, because prices will be forced down by this unnatural step; and as you force down prices the cry of the unemployed will be heard in India as it is being heard here. This measure is a measure to reduce profit, to lessen employment, to throw people out of work, and to increase the toil with which men win the money necessary to pay their way, and, at the same time, it is a measure to increase the weight of debt, and to enrich the money lender and the usurer. Sir, this will be the effect in India of closing the Mints there. Now, just look at the effect on the external trade of India. This policy creates a great chasm, opens a wide gulf, between the rupee and the silver of which it is made, and all those countries with which India trades and which use silver as money will see a divergence between rupees and the money of those other countries, and unless the Indian merchant can sell his produce for more of the free silver of the countries to which he sells, he will receive home fewer rupees, which will take away his profit, so that he will have to discharge some of his men, because he will not be able to raise his price in the free silver, and will have to put up with fewer rupees and so go into bankruptcy, or squeeze the difference out of the working men that work for him. Look at those countries, too, which compete with India in open markets. The people who have free silver will be able, as the difference between the value of silver and of the rupee widens, to sell their produce for less gold than the people who have only the appreciated rupee. This will place India at a disadvantage as regards external trade with gold standard countries. It does appear to me that we are doing a grievous wrong to the people of India. I am sorry to use this strong language, which may, perhaps, be reported there, but I cannot help thinking

it is worse to do the thing than it is truly to describe the thing which is now being done. Then, Sir, what are the objects for which this remarkable and extraordinary change in India is being made? The first is to steady the relation between silver and gold, or rather the rupee and the sovereign. That object I admit to be a thoroughly good one, but I contend that the action which is being taken will not do this. When you want to steady the relation between two things you have to study the operation of both of them; you have not only to consider the operation on the rupee in order to get at what you want to arrive at. What will be the effect of the change you propose upon gold? It will increase the demand for it, because more of it will be wanted in India. And the example we set in giving silver another blow in the face will very likely encourage America to do away with the Sherman Act there, and we shall then have a greater demand for gold from there. The effect of these new demands will be that gold will be driven up in value faster than you will be able to appreciate the rupee. Sometimes when I am out walking my dog starts a hare, and though the dog runs fast, the hare runs faster, so that the distance between the two gradually widens. That will be the case, I think, with silver and gold under this measure. What is being done now will so act in appreciating gold that the sovereign will get wider away from the rupee, instead of being made to cling more closely to it. The second object is this. What has made India wish for a change is the weight of her gold debt; this is a scheme which is intended to ease the burden of that debt on the shoulders of the people. India may be compared to a mortgaged farm. India has borrowed money in gold, and has yearly to pay something like £18,000,000 or £19,000,000 as interest. Unfortunately, I happen to know that there are many mortgaged farms in England. Their owners borrowed money 20 years ago, and they have found they have to give more and more produce every year to meet the burden of their indebtedness. It is exactly so with India; she has to give half as much produce again to pay the interest on her debt as she used to do. I should like to know what effect

Mr. Everett

the tampering with the rupee will have on this payment which has to be made in England in gold? It does not appear to me it will touch the evil we want to remove in the least. What affects their gold debt is what happens to gold, and not what happens to silver. If, as I have said, gold is driven up still higher in value by what is being done, the effect with regard to the gold debt will be that this closing of the Mints, while it will do cruel hurt to the industrial population in India, will not ease the burden of her gold debt in the very least. What would ease that debt would be to lower the value of gold. Closing the Mints to silver while opening them to gold will have just the opposite effect. In concluding, I wish to say a few words to the Leaders of our Party. I want to ask them why they will not give themselves the trouble of looking the monetary position full in the face? This danger from which India suffers is new. Nobody heard anything said about it 20 years ago; it has all arisen since 1873. India herself was bimetallic—it had a free coinage of gold and silver—down to 1835, but in 1835 we made her go upon a single silver standard. While other nations continued the free coinage of gold and silver their free coinage maintained the balance between gold and silver all over the world, and India suffered no trouble. But when the free coinage of silver was forbidden in nation after nation, the two metals became divorced, and gold was driven up in value. The natural remedy for the existing troubles was to return to the old state of things, when the two metals were treated equally, and were as one money. There was wanted now an international agreement to restore free coinage of silver as well as of gold. The people of India know that well. Anyone who has read the Papers connected with the Currency Commission knows that the Government of India has been imploring the English Government to end the present troubles by bringing about an international agreement to restore the free coinage of silver as well as of gold. The answer given, I am sorry to say, by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on our side of the House to this entreaty was to add to the delegates who were appointed to go to the Conference

at Brussels two strong gold advocates who were against—dead against the free coinage of silver. The Government of India have expressly said that they did not recommend this closing of the Mints as being the right thing and the best thing. It is only because they are forbidden by our Government to have what they believe would permanently settle the difficulty that they propose this rather than go on as they are. I believe the Government of India have acted with ill judgment in the matter, and that they have jumped out of the frying-pan into the fire. Our Government, too, have mistaken the disease to be dealt with, for, as Sir G. Molesworth said at the Conference at Brussels, it is not silver that is sick, but gold. What has brought this trouble about is not a fall in silver, but a rise in gold. In a country where you are judging everything by a gold standard, it looks as if silver has gone down, while if you live in a country which has a silver standard it looks as if gold has gone up. If you measure the two metals by the same commodities you will find that in India they have had a stable standard, while we have been tortured by a standard which has been for ever fluctuating, and with that standard it is now proposed to afflict India too, and to make the fluctuation greater. Nothing but trouble can come from increasing the demand for gold, which has already appreciated 40 or 50 per cent. since 20 years ago.

*MR. MONTAGU (Tower Hamlets, Whitechapel): I have listened with great attention and interest to the remarks of the hon. Member for Woodbridge (Mr. Everett); but, while sympathising with many of his arguments, I think that at the bottom of his arguments there were two great fallacies. The hon. Member had a notion that the action of the Indian Government contemplates a contraction of the currency in India. As I understand it, however, there need be no such contraction, because India is not prevented from coining silver for the requirements of circulation, nor is India prevented from coining gold. The other fallacy was that with an International arrangement the rupee would be more appreciated than by closing the Mints. But at the same time, while agreeing with the Government in the measures they have taken, I think there may

be some blame attached to the mode in which they have endeavoured to carry out their financial policy. There is no doubt that the closing of the Mints against silver is a very important and grave step, but the Government were forced to take that step owing to the failure of the Monetary Conference at Brussels, and also owing to the proposed legislation in the United States against silver. It was, as the late Chancellor of the Exchequer said, a very general belief that the object of the Government was to prevent India becoming the receptacle for silver rejected by the United States, and also to give stability to the rupee. It was a very important object to endeavour to give stability to the rupee, because the commerce between the two countries depends in a great measure on that stability. And no doubt the Government also wished to benefit India by attracting British capital to that country by means of investments or trade; but up to the present time all those objects have been defeated. Silver has been sent recently to India in larger quantities than the average, for from the 23rd June down to the 21st December no less than £1,300,000 of silver has been shipped from this country alone. With regard to the stability of the rupee, instead of the value of the rupee being rendered stable, it has fluctuated from over 1s. 4d. to under 1s. 3d., almost as widely as before; and so far from attracting capital to India, it has been rather warned off, and investors in Rupee Stock have sold out their holdings, and they have been sent out in competition with Council drafts. I should think the cause of failure has been the want of bold and vigorous action to sustain what the Government desired—that is, the stability of the rupee. I have no doubt that the Government will be forced to take further steps. They ought certainly not to allow the natives of India to be tempted to buy the uncoined silver that is being sent out, and they should have power to put an Import Duty on silver. That is not a protective measure, for there is no silver mining industry in India. That measure would help to steady the rupee. You can never have prosperity in commercial matters where you have these constant fluctuations. If the Indian Government had a

little more backbone I think they would be able to keep the rupee steady, and not contract the currency or depreciate the exchange as they have been doing.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I only rise to make a few observations upon what has been said upon the monetary question, and I will leave the rest of the discussion to be dealt with by my hon. Friend. I think that the speech of the hon. Member for the Woodbridge Division of Suffolk (Mr. Everett) is a remarkable example of the saying that “the ruling passion is strong in death.” The hon. Member was able to revive the subject of bimetallism at half-past 10 o’clock on the last night of the Session. He will always be forward in what he believes to be a good cause. He believes that what he calls “an abundance of money” is the greatest of all blessings; but the question is, “What is money?” He appears to think that any amount of currency issued is necessarily a blessing. But the real point here is the bearing which this question has upon the people of India. It is now too late in the day to reverse the decision of the Committee of 1819.

*MR. EVERETT: I did not condemn the policy, but merely stated the consequences that flowed from it.

SIR W. HARCOURT: That certain inconveniences took place in the transition state of the currency is perfectly true, and that was inevitable. But I do not mean to go into that question at all, but merely to say a word or two upon the bearing of this question upon the people of India. I should be sorry if any course sanctioned by the Government of India had been a means of injury to the people of India. What is the injury to the people of India which my hon. Friend has suggested? He said—

“It tends to raise the price of the rupee, and, consequently, is a hardship to the people who most needed the rupee.”

The hon. Member advocated a plan which was to fix the price of silver. There was another advocate of bimetallism who is happily absent to-night—the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford (Mr. Chaplin). He said we had ruined the Indian population by making them hoard uncoined silver, but it turns out that what the people do hoard is coined silver, and, so far from being an injury to the people, our action will enhance instead of lower the value

of the rupee, and then I listened with very great attention and respect to what the right hon. Gentleman my predecessor in Office said upon this subject. I think the right hon. Gentleman spoke with commendable caution upon what everybody admits is only an experiment, and nobody can exactly tell how it will result. The closing of the Mints has had a beneficial effect in other instances in other countries. France closed its Mints to silver 20 years ago, and it was satisfied with the result of the experiment. So far, that is all encouraging. But the most important part of the right hon. Gentleman's remarks was when he said the Government had set before themselves the object of keeping up the rupee at an original value. That was never proposed. If it had been, we should have undertaken to establish a ratio and to maintain it. I cannot accept that proposition, because, if I did, I should at once become a convert to bimetallism. To profess to believe that any Government can fix any ratio which would establish any price is exactly the proposition which we monometallists deny. That is an entire mistake, and all the censure which my hon. Friend the Member for the Tower Hamlets passed upon the Indian Government was founded upon an entire misapprehension. No doubt, as I have said, this closing of the Mints is a great experiment. The depreciation in silver had taken place, to a great extent, before the closing of the Mints. This depreciation was not the consequence but the cause of the closing of the Mints. When it is said, "If you had adopted another system, you would have done good instead of harm to India," I must point out that the plan we declined to adopt was the plan of bimetallism, which, in the opinion of the Royal Commission upon that subject, would have worked a greivous injury to India. It would have injured the export trade. It would have persuaded the Indian native that, for the benefit of the Anglo-Indian Service and of English monopolists, we had operated upon the exchange so as to injure the Indian producer and the Indian exporter, and that for selfish objects we had adopted a plan which would have been injurious to the people of India. That is one of the strongest reasons which the Royal Commission advanced against the adoption of the bimetallic system, and it is one of the principal reasons why we did not adopt the suggestion that there should be an attempt to establish bimetallism in India or for India. Indeed, this is a great experiment with a people where there is an immense circulation of silver. My hon. Friend behind me does not believe in the depreciation of silver. He is a remarkable man if he thinks that all that has taken place within the last 10 years has not depreciated the price of any commodity, whether it be silver or anything else. The depreciation of silver had taken place before we decided to take this step of closing the Mints. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford has been saying that there has been an extraordinary fall in the price of the rupee in consequence of this action. It was not this measure which caused the fall in the price of the rupee. The rupee had fallen from 2s. to 1s. 4d. before this measure was adopted. The further fall is insignificant in comparison with that which had already taken place. He also made that singular error which was pointed out in a letter to *The Times*. When there was a fall of 3d. in the ounce in silver he interpreted it to mean a fall of 3d. in the price of a rupee. That being the fact, I do not wish it to be understood here or in India that the fall of the rupee has been the result of any policy adopted by the Indian Government. The difference between the price of silver before this measure was adopted, and the price to-day is, I think, not more than 1½d. in the ounce, as I understand before the measure was adopted it was 36d. the ounce and now it is about 34½d.; therefore the difference is extremely small. It should be thoroughly understood that the fall in the rupee has been the consequence, not of this measure, but of the over-production of silver in the world; and that, I believe, is the real fact. I quite believe that we must be patient in the matter. We cannot expect a change of this kind to produce at once the expected result. You close the Mints because you wish to control the quantity of this coin, which seems to be in superabundance. We all know that a very large quantity of silver on its road to India goes to neutralise the effect for the time of the closing of the Mints, and then there has been since that time a remarkable export of silver to India. All these

things prevent the measure from immediately having the effect required of it, and therefore we must wait for a time to see what the result is ; and in the meanwhile we are entitled to ask this House and the people of India, as well as the people of England, to believe that this course has been adopted after careful consideration, and upon the recommendation of the persons who are most competent to judge and most fitting to advise the Government upon it.

SIR J. GORST : The hon. Member for Suffolk's (Mr. Everett's) speech was entirely directed to the future. He prophesied, with the greatest confidence, the misfortunes which were about to fall upon the people of India and the people of the world at large. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has answered him, and he has admitted that the measure taken by the Government of India is an experiment ; but I think he has adduced reasons which may induce us to doubt the absolute certainty of the forebodings of the hon. Member for Suffolk. I should like, in the few words which I shall address to the Committee, to direct their attention, not to the future, but to the past, and to ask them to consider the position in which the Government of India was, and the choice of evils which it had to make. The charge of exchange has been growing steadily year by year. There has been one year, when the Silver Bill was passed in America, when the steady increase was for a moment, and for a moment only, arrested ; but the evil had grown to such magnitude that in the last financial year the charge which the Government of India had prepared for exchange amounted to upwards of 8,000,000 tens of rupees, which actually neutralised the whole improvement of the Revenue of India, and it turned the surplus which my hon. Friend the Member for Southport announced to the House last year into the deficit which the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for India has had to announce to-day ; and in the Budget Statement to-day that charge amounted to no less than 10,000,000 tens of rupees, and when you consider that the whole net expenditure of the Government of India is in all about £50,000,000, these 10,000,000 which India has to pay, by reason of the

depreciation of silver, is an enormous and startling item in her annual expenditure. What can the Government of India do under such circumstances ? The charge was thus continually growing larger. It could only be dealt with in one of two ways. Either the Expenditure must be diminished, or the Revenue must be increased. I do not think anyone will say that the people of India are able, at the present moment, to bear any increased taxation. Well, then, if that is so—and I think it is so—the Indian Government had to face either certainly a deficiency which would annul the increase until they were on the verge of national bankruptcy, or they had, in some way or the other, to diminish this charge. Could they diminish the sterling payments which India has to make ? I have heard a good deal said to-night in this House about the home charges. It is, of course, these home charges, which form the sterling expenditure of India, which cause this enormous charge upon exchange. I do not know whether hon. Members have examined these home charges. If they have, they will see that upwards of half on the whole amount of the sterling charges, which amount in round numbers to £15,000,000, consists of the interest on the Debt, which is chiefly a debt for public works and railways. Money has been lent in this country to India for the purpose of developing railways and carrying out remunerative public works. Only a very small part of the Public Debt of India is for war expenditure or anything of that kind, and, of course, the interest on that sterling Debt has to be paid in sterling, and no ability on the part of any financier in the world can alter that part of the sterling charge which represents the interest upon railway capital. Then there is the smaller half which remains, and in reference to that half I may remind the Committee that when the late Government were in Office Lord Cross had a very strong Committee appointed at the India Office which went into every item of these home charges, with a view of recommending any possible reduction. Reductions were made, so much so that the charges are now reduced. They could not be brought down any lower, and I do not believe any Commission, or any Committee, or anybody in the world, would

be able to make more than an infinitesimal reduction in these home charges. It is impossible to make any substantial impression upon them. The only course before the Government of India to save the country from bankruptcy was to endeavour by some means or other to stop the depreciation of the rupee, so that, at all events, the fall, great as it is, might not be annually increased. What was the expedient? I suppose the hon. Member for Suffolk and I have no doubt my right hon. Friend the Member for Sleaford (Mr. Chaplin), if he were here, would answer "Bimetallism." But bimetallism, if it is a remedy, is a remedy which could not be applied in time. The hon. Member for Suffolk will admit that you cannot carry out the system before you have got the chief commercial relations in the world to agree to it. That would be a work of some years. It would be too late to save India, and while negotiations were going on the extended charge would have been continually mounting up still further. Well, then, what else could be done? What the Government of India have proposed and the Government have sanctioned and carried out is, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer said, an experiment. It is a bold experiment. It is an experiment of which none of us, except the Member for Suffolk, can predict the consequences, and I should like to ask the critics who find fault with the Government of India what else could have been done? What would they have proposed themselves? I do not think it is fair to criticise or censure the Government of India for the course they have taken, unless you are at least prepared to suggest some alternative course which, in your opinion, would be a wiser one than that which the Government of India take. Now, from all the critics of the Government of India I have never heard any alternative suggestion, and I think until those who are disposed to find fault with the course that is taken are prepared to suggest some alternative scheme which would have saved the Government of India from this imminent financial peril which has been hanging over it for years, and which has lately become very acute. I do not think they have any right to find fault with the method they have adopted. The danger had become so acute and the necessity so urgent that the Government of India were obliged

to take some step or other. Unless some step could be suggested which would be wiser and safer than the one they have taken, I think the Committee ought to approve it, and await with anxiety the result of the financial expedient.

MR. EGERTON ALLEN (Pembroke, &c.) : I hope I may be allowed to take up a very short time of this Committee to call attention to what is a crying grievance in Burmah. Although the inhabitants of Burmah deserve consideration from the Government in the matter of the financial administration, I am sorry to say they do not get it. Burmah has returned as revenue to India 5,487,400 tens of rupees, and it has had expended on it 4,127,400 tens of rupees—that is to say, that 1,360,000 tens of rupees have been taken out of Burmah, and expended, of course, on other parts of India. If the Indian Government could show that they provide fairly and reasonably for the wants of Burmah, of course they would be welcome to take any surplus revenue they could get from that Province; but in various ways Burmah has a grievance that the money spent on it is not nearly sufficient to provide for its wants. I only wish now to bring forward one of these grievances. It is a grievance which can be easily understood by the Committee in a very few figures and a very few words. I ask the Committee to allow me to occupy a short time in putting this grievance before you. It is connected with the administration of justice in Burmah. The cost of the administration of justice is very small compared to the importance of the commercial interest of the Province. Everyone knows Burmah contains three large commercial towns. Rangoon is the fourth or third important town in all India. These commercial interests evidently and clearly require a strong judicial administration to take charge of them. Burmah is worse off in the matter of judicial administration than any other Province in India, and it suffers from a most extraordinary system, which no other Province does. Every Member of this Committee is familiar in Macaulay's Essay on Warren Hastings, and knows that in the time of the old Company the greatest friction arose between the Company's Judges and what were called Westminster Court Justices. The Westminster Judges had complete jurisdic-

tion within the town, and the Company's Judges complete jurisdiction outside the town. That was merely a compromise and a makeshift, and when the Company gave up its administration to the Crown that makeshift was, as a matter of course, cleared away, and the High Courts were established in Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras, and all the administration of justice throughout the country was committed into the hands of these Courts—that is to say, there was no longer this absurd distinction between one set of Judges who had power in the town, and another set of Judges who had power throughout India. In 1863, just at the time this absurd anomaly was swept away in the whole of India, it is set up afresh in Burmah. There is no object in it—no reason for it. The absurd distinctions had been merely brought about by a conflict between the Company's Judges and the Westminster Judges in the time of Warren Hastings, and there was no kind of reason why it should have been adopted or set up in any other place, and yet it was set up in Burmah. The Judicial Commissioners outside Rangoon have power everywhere except in Rangoon. The anomalous and extraordinary system cripples still further the incapacity of the Judges, who are in the country to do justice. The expenditure on the Burmese Courts is only 212,800 tens of rupees a year; the expenditure of the Punjaub Court is 305,000 tens of rupees. Now, Members of the Committee will easily apprehend that, although the expenditure of the Punjaub is so much larger than in Burmah, the business done in the Punjaub cannot be in any respect as important as the business done in Burmah, as the business done in the Punjaub is merely land and railway business. There is hardly any commercial business. There is a little native trade in Lahore; but compared to Burmah you may as well compare a small Provincial town to one of our large commercial centres, and the thing stands clear on the face of it that it is an injustice to the large commercial interests of Burmah that they shall be worse served by a judicial administration which costs so much less than the much less important interests of the Punjaub. I urge upon the Government most strongly that they should set up in Burmah a Chief Court similar to what has been set up in Lahore. We ask, and Burmah

asks, for the same amount of attention that has been paid to the interests of the Punjaub. I hope I have shown that they have at least as important interests, and that they have suffered under a peculiar and anomalous system which never had any basis in reason. The matter has been thrashed out over and over again. Everyone has consented that it ought to be done. Nothing stands in the way except the want of money. I hope that the want of money will not be allowed to stand in the way in the future, because, as I have shown the Committee, Burmah is one of the very few paying Provinces in India, and it is most unjust and unfair that the surplus money should be taken out of Burmah for the general purposes of India, when Burmah requires that money itself. I say that Burmah will amply repay any money spent on it, and I do hope that the Indian Government will listen to this matter, and will also see if it can give Burmah better Court accommodation. I do hope that there will be no complaint made at any future period regarding the want of money, for in my belief the Government will be well rewarded for any expenditure on Burmah.

*MR. G. RUSSELL: I can assure my hon. Friend that, although I cannot promise him a High Court off-hand, his suggestion shall receive the consideration of the Secretary of State. I will endeavour to answer the question of the hon. Baronet (Sir R. Temple). He is quite right in surmising that the deficit will have to be met out of the cash balances. With regard to the moral progress to which I alluded in my speech, I have not the statistics of the moral progress which we have in England, and cannot, therefore, furnish the hon. Member with them. I must point out that the statement made by the hon. Baronet the Member for Kingston as to material progress, which was called into question by the hon. Member for Elgin, is perfectly accurate; and that if my hon. Friend will refer to a certain Blue Book, published in 1889, he will find that the statement of the hon. Baronet is confirmed in every particular. My hon. Friend the Member for Elgin (Mr. S. Keay) said that our object had been to raise the value of the rupee, but that, I say, is a mistake. Our object has been to prevent its still further de-

Mr. Egerton Allen

preciation. As regards what he said of the effect of this change in diminishing the food of the people, it seems to me that he forgets that there is such a thing as surplus food, which can be eaten instead of being exported. With regard to the question of compensation, I may say that it is really paid on account of the depreciated state of the rupee. We feel that at the present value of the rupee we cannot get men up to the work we require in the Service in India, and therefore this compensation is really given so as to keep their pay up to something like what may be called a fair rate. There is no obligation to continue it longer than the pecuniary circumstances of the country seem to require. Now, Sir, I think I can bring this Debate to a close, and, as the Session is also concluding, I think I may say that I have always endeavoured to facilitate the work of those who have the interests of India at heart, and to promote the harmonious working of the Parliamentary machine. I hope that I have shown that I have not the slightest sympathy with the idea of exploiting India in the interests of Englishmen or Scotchmen; or of saddling her with great pecuniary burdens for the sake of any wretched scheme of annexation or self-aggrandisement. My object is so to administer this great change that the people of India, without distinction of class, or creed, or sex, may have reason to bless, and not to curse, the providential dispensation which placed them beneath the rule of a country professing to be Christian.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) said, he only rose to suggest to the Government that they would make some points more easily understood if they were to give a little more explicit information with regard to certain matters on page 14, under the heading of "Home Charges." There was another point which he wished to bring under the notice of the Under Secretary. There were certain non-effective charges. Now, he thought that the attitude generally of this House was against any increased charges for the non-effective portion of the Army. It did not justify the expense, and he thought the money would be better expended on educational matters.

Question put, and agreed to.

Resolved, That it appears, by the Accounts laid before this House, that the Total Revenue of India for the year ending the 31st day of March, 1892, was Rx.89,143,283; that the Total Expenditure in India and England charged against the Revenue was Rx.88,675,748; that there was a Surplus of Revenue over Expenditure of Rx.467,535; and that the Capital Outlay on Railways and Irrigation Works was Rx.3,500,000.—(*Mr. G. Russell.*)

Resolution to be reported To-morrow.

CONSOLIDATED FUND (APPROPRIATION) BILL.

Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; to be read the third time To-morrow.

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made, and Question, "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Mr. Marjoribanks,*)—put, and agreed to.

House adjourned at a quarter after Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 22nd September 1893.

COMPANIES (WINDING-UP) BILL [H.L.]

Returned from the Commons agreed to.

SALE OF GOODS BILL [H.L.]
Commons Amendments to be printed.
(No. 274.)

MADRAS AND BOMBAY ARMIES BILL [H.L.]

Commons Amendments to be printed.
(No. 275).

PUBLIC AUTHORITIES PROTECTION BILL [H.L.]

Commons Amendments to be printed, and to be considered on Thursday, the 9th of November next. (No. 276.)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Moved "That Standing Order No. XXXIX. be considered in order to its

being dispensed with for this day's sitting."—(The Lord President (*E. Kimberley*); agreed to.

MERCHANT SHIPPING BILL.

Commons Message of Tuesday last considered (according to Order).

Moved, That this House do concur in the following Resolution communicated by the Commons—namely, "That it is expedient that the Merchant Shipping Bill be committed to a Joint Committee of Lords and Commons."—(The Lord President (*E. Kimberley*); agreed to; and a Message sent to the Commons to acquaint them therewith.

CONSOLIDATED FUND (APPROPRIATION) BILL.

Read 1^a: Then (Standing Order No. XXXIX. having been dispensed with) Bill read 2^a; Committee negatived; Bill read 3^a, and passed.

EARL OF PORTARLINGTON.

Report made from the Lord Chancellor that the right of Lionel George Henry Seymour Dawson-Damer Earl of Portarlington to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland has been established to the satisfaction of the Lord Chancellor; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

COMMISSION.

The following Bills received the Royal Assent:

1. Consolidated Fund (Appropriation).
2. County Surveyors (Ireland).
3. Reformatory Schools.
4. Statute Law Revision (No. 2).
5. Trustee (Consolidation).
6. Burghs Gas Supply (Scotland) Act (1876) Amendment.
7. Elementary Education (School Attendance).
8. Light Railways (Ireland).
9. Metropolis Management (Plumstead and Hackney).
10. Law of Commons Amendment.
11. Expiring Laws Continuance.
12. Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs.
13. Companies (Winding-up).

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Five o'clock, to Thursday the 9th of November next, Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 22nd September 1893.

The House met at Ten of the clock in the morning.

QUESTIONS.

POST OFFICE CASKS.

MR. MACDONA (Southwark, Rotherhithe): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether, in consideration of the fact of so many coopers being out of work in London and in order to lessen the risk of carrying infection, he will order fresh casks to be made to carry the mails in, instead of using old casks which are hired by the Post Office Authorities from time to time?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby): I am sorry to say that the Postmaster General is not here, but I am quite sure that he will consider the question of the old casks.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

CONSOLIDATED FUND (APPROPRIATION) BILL.

THIRD READING.

Order for Third Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the third time."

*SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall) said, he should not have risen but for the personal attack made upon him by the hon. Baronet the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs on Tuesday last. On that occasion he (Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett) had attributed the crisis that occurred last December in Egypt to some indiscreet utterances of the present Prime Minister before he came into Office. The hon. Baronet made a violent personal attack on him. The hon. Baronet not only denied the accuracy of the statements he had made, but he also accused

him of serious unfairness. The hon. Baronet alleged that the late Conservative Government had adopted a similar policy with regard to Egypt to that advocated by the Prime Minister. The statements he referred to as having been uttered by the Prime Minister were those made at Newcastle in October, 1890, and reiterated in Midlothian in July, 1892, in which he described the occupation of Egypt as a burden and an embarrassment, and advocated the immediate evacuation of Egypt, and in which, in connection with Egypt, he denounced our military expenditure as excessive. He challenged the hon. Baronet to say that Lord Salisbury, or any Conservative Leader, had ever used language of that kind in regard to Egypt. The utmost that the Conservative Party had ever done in regard to Egypt was to say that they were willing to arrange for the evacuation of Egypt, when that evacuation could be carried out without any injury to the interests of the Egyptian people or to the interests of this country. The Drummond-Wolff Convention, which the hon. Baronet accused him of unfairness in not referring to, was never carried out. [*Cries of "Divide!"*] Before he sat down, he must read one quotation to prove the accuracy of the statement that he had made, that the crisis in Egypt was caused by the unfortunate utterances of the Prime Minister before he came into Office. In the French Chamber constant reference was made to the pledges which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian had made when out of Office. The quotation he referred to was from the leading organ of the French Foreign Office—*Le Temps*—and the words were practically identical with those used by the Deputies in the French Chamber. They were—

"Europe requires to know once for all what the Liberal Prime Minister meant by his declarations of not so long ago, and whether he thinks with Mr. Milner and others that Egypt is henceforth to be one of the jewels in the Imperial Crown of the Empress of India?"

That was the universal feeling in France at the time, and for the hon. Baronet to accuse him of political unfairness because he associated the Egyptian crisis with the utterances of the Prime Minister, or because he did not admit that Lord Salisbury or other leading Members of

the Conservative Party had ever made similar utterances, was, in his opinion, a serious violation of the rules of fair argument in that House. If the hon. Baronet had been in his place he would have advised him in future to model his replies rather upon those of the Prime Minister—who, whatever his faults might be, was always courteous to his opponents—than upon those of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whose innate passion for hectoring led him frequently into making deplorable exhibitions.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I think I should abuse the patience of the House as much as the hon. Member has done if I make any reply to the speech of the hon. Member. Everybody this Session will have observed that the hon. Member has undertaken the conduct of foreign affairs for the Opposition, without any support from other gentlemen on the Front Opposition Bench. A gentleman whom we all respect—the right hon. Baronet the Member for Manchester (Sir J. Fergusson)—on one occasion distinctly repudiated the hon. Member's utterances on foreign affairs, and I think that is a sufficient answer to give to the hon. Member.

MR. H. FOSTER (Suffolk, Lowestoft) said, as that was the last occasion on which notice could be taken, he desired, on the part of the Sanitary Ports of the Kingdom, to utter a protest against what he believed to be the unjust treatment they had received at the hands of Her Majesty's Government in the matter of the heavy expenses they had been put to in guarding the country against an invasion of cholera. He believed the Chancellor of the Exchequer was mainly responsible for not granting assistance to the Sanitary Authorities out of the Imperial Funds. If the House had had an opportunity of discussing and dividing upon the Motion which had appeared many times on the Paper it would have received a large measure of support, not merely on the Opposition side of the House, but on the Ministerial side. Therefore, he did not raise the question in any Party spirit, because it was not a Party question. Undoubtedly the Port Sanitary Authorities had had cast upon them a national duty. They were the first line of defence against that dread enemy—cholera. Happily, the country, owing partly to climatic con-

ditions, and he acknowledged also to the efforts of the Local Government Board and the efforts of the Local Authorities, had up to the present moment been spared anything like a serious invasion, and he trusted the year would pass by without anything of the kind. But all these invasions were looked upon by the Medical Authorities as a danger which ought to be guarded against; and although there was no prospect of getting any grant this year, he raised the question rather with a view of bringing it to the front next year. He desired to acknowledge fully the way in which the Local Government Board had carried out their duties. The President of the Local Government Board and his efficient Parliamentary Secretary had done their work admirably. That would be acknowledged, irrespective of Party. The Government had, nevertheless, unfairly treated the Local Authorities, and he hoped Ministers would consider the matter.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read the third time, and passed.

EAST INDIA REVENUE ACCOUNTS.

Resolution [21st September] reported;

"That it appears, by the Accounts laid before this House, that the Total Revenue of India for the year ending the 31st day of March 1892 was Rx.89,143,283; that the Total Expenditure in India and in England charged against the Revenue was Rx.88,675,748; that there was a Surplus of Revenue over Expenditure of Rx.467,535; and that the Capital Outlay on Railways and Irrigation Works was Rx.3,500,000."

Resolution agreed to.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to,—Metropolis Management (Plumstead and Hackney) Bill, Light Railways (Ireland) Bill, Expiring Laws Continuance Bill, Consolidated Fund (Appropriation) Bill.

Amendment to County Surveyors (Ireland) Bill [*Lords*].

Mr. H. Foster

Amendments to Amendments to, Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs Bill, without Amendment.

Merchant Shipping Bill,—That they do concur with the Commons in their Resolution, That it is expedient that the Merchant Shipping Bill be committed to a Joint Committee of Lords and Commons, as desired by the Commons.

The House suspended its Sitting at twenty minutes past Ten o'clock:

The House resumed its Sitting at twenty minutes past Four o'clock.

Message to attend the Lords Commissioners;—

The House went;—and, being returned;—

MR. SPEAKER reported the Royal Assent to,—

1. Appropriation Act, 1893.
2. County Surveyors (Ireland) Act, 1893.
3. Reformatory Schools Act, 1893.
4. Statute Law Revision (No. 2) Act, 1893.
5. Trustee Act, 1893.
6. Burghs Gas Supply (Scotland) Act, 1893.
7. Elementary Education (School Attendance) Act, 1893.
8. Light Railways (Ireland) Act, 1893.
9. Metropolis Management (Plumstead and Hackney) Act, 1893.
10. Law of Commons Amendment Act, 1893.
11. Expiring Laws Continuance Act, 1893.
13. Companies (Winding-up) Act,

Whereupon Mr. Speaker, in pursuance of the Resolution of the House of 21st September, adjourned the House without Question put.

House adjourned at a quarter before
Five o'clock till Thursday
2nd November.

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I N D E X
TO
THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(AUTHORISED EDITION).

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TENTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1893.

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Adj. Adjourned.		

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Vice President—Mr. A. H. D. Acland

(See under title *Education*)

Committee of Council on Education—Lord President

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l. Returned from the Commons, agreed to Sept 19, 1578

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Lord Advocate—Mr. J. B. BALFOUR

Solicitor General—Mr. ALEXANDER ASHER

Barry Links—Tay Yachting Accident, Q. Mr. W. Whitelaw; A. Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *Sept 12, 959*

Board of Supervision, Q. Mr. Beith; A. Sir G. Trevelyan *Sept 15, 1268*

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Coal Miners' Check-Weighers, Q. Mr. Wason; A. Mr. J. B. Balfour *Sept 14, 1140*; Q. Mr. D. Crawford; A. Mr. Asquith *Sept 19, 1595*

Crofter Colonisation in Canada, Q. Mr. Loder; A. Sir G. Trevelyan *Sept 16, 1407*

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Mr. Gordon, Qs. Mr. Weir, Mr. Dalziel, Mr. W. Whitelaw; As. Sir G. Trevelyan *Sept 5, 110*; Qs. Mr. Dalziel, Mr. Weir, Sir H. Maxwell, Mr. A. C. Morton; As. Sir G. Trevelyan *Sept 8, 664*

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Diphtheria in the Island of Lewis, Q. Mr. Weir; A. Sir G. Trevelyan *Sept 8, 651*

Edinburgh Museum, Q. Mr. Paul; A. Mr. Acland *Sept 18, 1476*

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Aberdeen University—Chair of Literature, Q. Mr. Benson; A. Sir G. Trevelyan *Sept 12, 945*

Schoolmasters' Houses, Q. Mr. W. Whitelaw; A. Sir G. Trevelyan *Sept 14, 1146*

Secondary Education Grant, Qs. Mr. D. Crawford, Mr. Hozier; As. Sir G. Trevelyan *Sept 19, 1596*

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Fishery Board—Mr. Esslemont—(References to, in Debate on *Supply*, *Sept 13, 1083*, &c.)

Fishery Board, Vote for, Con. in Com. Sept 13, 1078

Sea Fisheries Select Committee (see that title)

(References to, in Debate on *Supply*, *Sept 13, 1060*, &c.)

General Registry of Sasines, Q. Mr. Paul; A. Sir G. Trevelyan *Sept 12, 942*; Qs. Mr. R. Wallace, Mr. Paul; As. Mr. J. B. Balfour *Sept 21, 1782*

Hawick Sheriff Court, Q. Mr. T. Shaw; A. Mr. J. B. Balfour *Sept 11, 826*

Highlands and Islands Commission—References to, in Debate on *Supply*, *Sept 16, 1438*, &c.

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Law Charges and Courts of Law, Vote for, Con. in Com. Sept 15, 1393

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Loch Broom, Navigation of, Qs. Mr. Weir, Mr. W. Whitelaw; As. Sir W. Harcourt, Sir U. Kay-Shuttleworth *Sept 5, 111*

Lunacy Commission, Vote for, Con. in Com. Sept 13, 1101

Mitchell, Abraham, Case of, Qs. Captain Sinclair, Mr. Hozier; As. Sir G. Trevelyan *Sept 12, 948*; Q. Captain Sinclair; A. Sir G. Trevelyan *Sept 19, 1594*; Q. Captain Sinclair; A. Mr. J. B. Balfour *Sept 21, 1784*

National Gallery, Vote for, Con. in Com. Sept 16, 1429

Parish Councils Bill, Qs. Dr. Farquharson; As. Sir G. Trevelyan *Sept 7, 476, 483*

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Queen's Messenger Train and the Duke of Fife, Q. Mr. A. C. Morton; A. Sir W. Harcourt *Sept 18, 1477*

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Garce and Ullapool, Qs. Mr. Weir, Mr. W. Whitelaw; As. Sir W. Harcourt, Sir U. Kay-Shuttleworth *Sept 5, 111*

Mixed Trains, Q. Sir W. Wedderburn; A. Mr. Mundella *Sept 14, 1137*

Railway Rates, Q. Mr. Anstruther; A. Mr. Shaw Lefevre *Sept 8, 653*

Rates, Payment of Pensions out of, by the County Council, Q. Dr. Farquharson; A. Mr. J. B. Balfour *Sept 8, 655*

Register House, Edinburgh, Vote for, Con. in Com. Sept 15, 1395

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Sea Fishery Regulation (Scotland) Bill

c. As amended, Con.; Read 3^o, and passed *Sept 12, 1055*

l. Read 1^o *Sept 19, 1578*

Sea Fisheries Regulation (Scotland) Bill

Qs. Mr. Anstruther; As. Sir W. Harcourt, Sir G. Trevelyan *Sept 7, 476, 478, 483, 484*; Qs. Mr. Anstruther, Sir H. Maxwell; As. Mr. Marjoribanks *Sept 8, 666*

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Qs. Mr. Anstruther, Sir H. Maxwell; As. Mr. Marjoribanks *Sept 8, 666*

Secondary Schools (Teachers' Registration) Bill

c. Withdrawn *Sept 11, 936*

Secret Service

Vote for, Con. in Com. Sept 12, 1055 Report *Sept 13, 1132*

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ward III. 1715, 1793

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Sheffield Union (see under *Local Government Board*)

Sheriff Courts Consignations (Scotland) Bill

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British Interests, Q. Sir R. Temple; A. Sir
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cent; A. Sir E. Grey Sept 14, 1133

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Sept 7, 486, 489, 500, &c.)

SIDEBOTHAM, Mr. J. W., Cheshire, Hyde

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Mitchell, Abraham, Case of, 948, 1594, 1784

Supply—Census for Scotland, 1101

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Slave Trade

Vote for, Con. in Com. Sept 18, 1516

Small-pox (see under *Local Government Board*)

SMITH, Mr. H., Falkirk, &c.

Supply

Scotch Fishery Board, 1097

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SOLICITOR GENERAL—Sir J. RIGBY

SOUTH AFRICA (see under *AFRICA*)

South Africa

Copy pres. Sept 13, 1132

SOUTH HETTON (see *DURHAM*)

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Qs. Mr. J. Collings; A. Mr. Acland Sept 12,
939

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Trade Reports, Copy pres. Sept 9, 816

Speaker, The (RIGHT HON. ARTHUR WELLESLEY PEEL), *Warwick and Leamington*

ADJOURNMENTS OF THE HOUSE TO CALL ATTENTION TO DEFINITE MATTERS OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

A Member had obtained the leave of the House to move the Adjournment for the purpose of discussing the existing circumstances in the colliery districts, and he would not be in Order in discussing the general policy of arbitration, or any policy of that kind contained in Bills before the House Sept 8, 671, 672, 676

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SPEAKER, THE—cont.

A Member proposed to move the Adjournment of the House to discuss the question of Indian Cantonments. There also appeared on the Paper a Notice of Motion by another Member, who proposed to draw attention to more or less the same subject, but without assigning any definite occasion or date. The second Motion would clearly act as a block upon the first Motion, and, unless the block were removed, it would not be competent to move the Adjournment even the next day. If there were a legitimate occasion on which the Member might take that course, it would be on the Question that the Speaker leave the Chair on going into Com. on the Indian Budget. In answer to the question whether it would be possible to discuss the question on the Indian Budget without a Motion, the Speaker said, he did not think that would be in Order. To discuss the matter on the Indian Budget would be anticipating the discussion to which the Notice on the Paper related. Whether the fact that no day had been given for the discussion of the second Motion did preclude the bringing forward the first Motion, the Speaker said, it was constantly held that a Motion, which was down on the Paper, but for which no day had been fixed, acted as a block on the discussion of the question with which it dealt before the date at which it was ultimately proposed to take the Motion on the Paper. As to the withdrawal of the second Motion, the Speaker said, the Motion could not come on that day, but it could come on the next day, on the Motion that the Speaker leave the Chair. Whether the Member could have moved the Adjournment of the House, if the second Motion had not been put upon the Paper, raised another part of the question. The Speaker thought that, as a legitimate opportunity for the Member occurred on the Question that the Speaker leave the Chair, it would not be permissible for him to raise the Question on the Motion for an Adjournment of the House, the more especially as only a short time would elapse before the subject could be legitimately discussed in the ordinary way *Sept 19, 1579, 1580*

MEMBERS

A Member could not speak of Members of the House unless he could show that they were connected with the disturbances and the actions of the Home Secretary *Sept 20, 1721*

MISCELLANEOUS RULINGS

Sept 7, 478; Sept 13, 1131; Sept 14, 1259, 1260; Sept 19, 1630, 1634

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS

Bills placed below the Government Bills on the Paper, and not reached, were promoted, so to speak, from day to day. A Member could defer a Bill to a later date at the commencement of Business, after the Private Business was disposed of at the commencement of the Sitting *Sept 14, 1264*

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SPEAKER, THE—cont.

RULES AND ORDER OF DEBATE

Business of the House—Statement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer as to whether it was in Order for anyone to make observations going beyond those of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Speaker ruled that Questions only could be put *Sept 7, 476*

It was the custom when a newspaper was used in the House to reduce it to the smallest possible compass *Sept 7, 480*

A Member understood that his Amendments on the Report stage of a Bill would have to be moved first, though he intended to move to reject the whole clause. The Speaker said that he would so put the Question that the Member might speak at first against the whole clause *Sept 14, 1255*

A Member was not entitled to raise the whole question of elected Magistrates on the Appropriation Bill *Sept 20, 1732*

SUPPLY—REPORT OF

The Question, "That the House doth agree with the Com. in the said Res." had been put, and no further reduction could be moved *Sept 7, 556*

A reduction could be moved to a Vote on Report; but as no notice of Motion had been given, and no Member rose to move, the Speaker put the Question, "That the House doth agree with the Com. in the said Res." *Sept 7, 557*

The Member could not move a reduction, as that had already been done; but he could divide against the whole Vote *Sept 19, 1634*

A Member could not speak twice on the Report stage of a Vote *Sept 19, 1643*

Speaker, Mr.

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SPENCER, EARL (First Lord of the Admiralty)

Government of Ireland Bill, 2R. 2, 8, 10, 14, 214, 244, 269, 270, 271, 274, 408, 450

STANHOPE, Right Hon. E., Lincolnshire, Horncastle

Army Estimates

Aldershot Command, 909

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Employment for Discharged and Reserved Soldiers, 1020

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Cholera at Boston, 832

STANSFELD, Right Hon. J., Halifax
Indian Cantonments, 1579

Stationery and Printing

Vote for, Con. in Com. *Sept 12, 1043*

Statute Law Revision (No. 2) Bill

c. Con. in Com.; Reported; Read 3^o, and passed *Sept* 11, 1936

l. Returned from the Commons *Sept* 12, 1937
Royal Assent *Sept* 22, 1895

Statutory Rules Procedure Bill

l. Order for 3R. read and discharged *Sept* 8, 649

Straits Settlements—Military Contributions

Reference to, in Debate on *Supply*, *Sept* 8, 704, &c.

Strikes (see under *Labour Department*)**STUART, Mr. J., Shoreditch, Horton**

Indian Cantonments, 1580

London (Equalisation of Rates) Bill, 476

National Telephone Company, 660

SULLIVAN, Mr. D., Westmeath, S.

Supply—Landlord of Castleisland, 1219

Sunday Closing (Ireland) Bill

Qs. Sir T. Lea, Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Bartley, Mr. Sexton; As. Mr. J. Morley *Sept* 5, 112

Superannuation Act, 1887

Copy pres. *Sept* 20, 1775

Superannuations and Retired Allowances

Vote for, Con. in Com. *Sept* 16, 1429

SUPPLY

ARMY AND NAVY ESTIMATES (see under those titles)

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS, 1893-4.**CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS.**

£139,238—Rates on Government Property—Report *Sept* 5, 199

£142,176—Public Buildings, &c. Ireland, Con. in Com. *Sept* 5, 116; Motion to reduce by £500 (Mr. Bartley), 116; Division, 127; Motion to reduce by £1,000 (Mr. T. W. Russell), 132; Division, 138; Original Question put; Division, 147; Report *Sept* 6, 352

£8,676—Tramways and Public Companies and Light Railways, Ireland, Con. in Com. *Sept* 5, 147; Motion to reduce by £5,000 (Mr. Bartley), 148; Negatived; Original Question put, and agreed to; Report *Sept* 6, 355

CLASS II.—SALARIES AND EXPENSES OF CIVIL DEPARTMENTS.**ENGLAND.**

£23,095—House of Lords Offices, Con. in Com. *Sept* 5, 156; Motion to reduce by £4,000 (Mr. G. Bowles), 159; Withdrawn; Motion to reduce by £45 (Mr. G. Bowles), 163; Negatived; Motion to reduce by £500 (Mr. Hanbury), 168; Division, 177; Original Question, as amended, "That £22,595 be granted for the said Service," put, and agreed to, 180; Report *Sept* 6, 356; *Sept* 7, 555; Division, 559

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£33,223—House of Commons Offices, Con. in Com. *Sept* 5, 180; Motion to reduce by £500 (Mr. G. Bowles), 181; Withdrawn, 185; Original Question put, and agreed to, 193; Report *Sept* 6, 357

£52,458—Treasury and Subordinate Departments; Con. in Com., and agreed to *Sept* 5, 193; Report *Sept* 6, 360

£56,697—Home Department and Subordinate Offices, Con. in Com. *Sept* 6, 302; Motion to reduce by £200 (Mr. Griffith-Boscawen), 306; Division, 319; Original Question put, and agreed to 349; Report *Sept* 7, 555

£45,471—Foreign Office, Con. in Com., and agreed to *Sept* 7, 485; Report *Sept* 8, 747

£25,680—Colonial Office and Emigration, Con. in Com. *Sept* 7, 526; Motion to R.P. (Mr. A. J. Balfour), 550; Division, 553; Motion to R.P. (Mr. J. Chamberlain), 553; Motion withdrawn; R.P., Con. in Com. *Sept* 8, 676; Agreed to, 706; Report *Sept* 9, 808

£7,533—Privy Council and Quarantine Expenses, Con. in Com. *Sept* 8, 706; Motion to reduce by £1,000 (Mr. Heneage), 708; Withdrawn; Motion to reduce by £1,623 (Mr. G. Bowles), 716; Withdrawn; Original Question put, and agreed to, 717; Report *Sept* 9, 809

£108,090—Board of Trade, Con. in Com. *Sept* 8, 717; Motion to reduce by £1,000 (Captain Naylor-Leyland), 720; Negatived; Original Question put, and agreed to, 746; Report *Sept* 9, 809

£16—Bankruptcy Department of the Board of Trade, Con. in Com., and agreed to *Sept* 8, 746; Report *Sept* 9, 809

£36,059—Board of Agriculture, Con. in Com. *Sept* 9, 756, and agreed to; Report *Sept* 11, 925

£21,674—Charity Commission, &c., including Endowed Schools Department, Con. in Com. *Sept* 9, 776; Motion to reduce by £5,000 (Mr. J. Collings), 790; Division, 791; Original Question put, and agreed to; Report *Sept* 11, 929

£25,853—Civil Service Commission

£33,467—Exchequer and Audit Department

£3,353—Friendly Societies Registry

£9,917—Lunacy Commissioners

£84—Mint, including Coinage

£8,043—National Debt Office

£12,042—Public Record Office, Con. in Com. and Votes agreed to *Sept* 9, 791, 803, 808; Report *Sept* 11, 929, 930

£90,621—Local Government Board

£30,000—Mercantile Marine Fund (Grant-in-Aid)

£5,842—Public Works Loans Commissioners

£30,659—Registrar General's Office

£280,232—Stationery and Printing, Con. in Com. and Votes agreed to *Sept* 12, 1040, 1043; Report *Sept* 13, 1117, 1124

£13,129—Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues, &c. Office, Con. in Com., and agreed to *Sept* 12, 1047; Report *Sept* 13, 1124; Motion to reduce by £100 (Mr. P. Morgan), 1126; Withdrawn; Res. agreed to, 1130

£30,287—Works and Public Buildings Office

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SUPPLY—cont.

£16,000—Secret Service, Con. in Com., and Votes agreed to *Sept* 12, 1050; Report *Sept* 13, 1130

IRELAND.

£2,764—Lord Lieutenant's Household
£24,028—Chief Secretary's Offices
£941—Charitable Donations and Bequests Office
£78,497—Local Government Board
£3,327—Public Record Office
£19,528—Public Works Offices
£8,670—Registrar General's Office
£4,683—Valuation and Boundary Survey, Con. in Com., and Votes agreed to *Sept* 14, 1156, 1158, 1218, 1233, 1237; Report *Sept* 15, 1399

SCOTLAND.

£6,410—Secretary's Office
£15,858—Fishery Board
£2,872—Lunacy Commission
£4,887—Registrar General's Office
£4,830—Board of Supervision, &c., Con. in Com., and Votes agreed to *Sept* 13, 1057, 1078, 1101; Report *Sept* 14, 1253

CLASS III.—LAW AND JUSTICE.

ENGLAND.

£25,506—Law Officers, &c., Con. in Com. *Sept* 13, 1103; Motion to reduce by £500 (Mr. G. Murray), 1103; Withdrawn; Original Question put, and agreed to, 1112; Report *Sept* 14, 1253
£23,282—Miscellaneous Legal Expenses, Con. in Com. *Sept* 13, 1112; R.P.; Con. in Com., and Vote agreed to *Sept* 15, 1364; Report *Sept* 16, 1468
£177,902—Supreme Court of Judicature
£3,830—Land Registry
£24,200—County Courts
£3,498—Police Courts, London and Sheerness
£35,385—Police, England and Wales
£352,637—Prisons, England and Wales
£130,000—Reformatory and Industrial Schools
£22,604—Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum, Con. in Com., and Votes agreed to *Sept* 15, 1374, 1382, 1384, 1385, 1386, 1393; Report *Sept* 16, 1468

IRELAND.

£46,806—Law Charges and Criminal Prosecutions
£65,006—Supreme Court of Judicature, &c.
£40,467—Land Commission, Con. in Com., and Votes agreed to *Sept* 14, 1237; Report *Sept* 15, 1399
£75,093—County Court Officers, Con. in Com. *Sept* 14, 1250; Motion withdrawn; Con. in Com. *Sept* 15, 1297; Motion to reduce by £1,000 (Mr. Macartney); Negatived; Original Question put, and agreed to, 1314; Report *Sept* 16, 1468
£60,709—Dublin Metropolitan Police
£78,532—Prisons
£55,702—Reformatory and Industrial Schools

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SUPPLY—cont.

£3,958—Dundrum Criminal Lunatic Asylum, Con. in Com., and Votes agreed to *Sept* 14, 1252, 1253; Report *Sept* 15, 1399

£732,249—Constabulary, Con. in Com., and agreed to *Sept* 15, 1314; Report *Sept* 16, 1468

SCOTLAND.

£59,891—Law Charges and Courts of Law
£21,655—Register House, Edinburgh
£4,955—Crofters' Commission, Con. in Com., and Votes agreed to *Sept* 15, 1393, 1395, 1396; Report *Sept* 16, 1468
£56,800—Prisons, &c., Con. in Com. *Sept* 15, 1396; Motion to reduce by £2,200 (Mr. W. Whitelaw), 1399; Negatived; Original Question put, and agreed to, 1399; Report *Sept* 16, 1468

CLASS IV.—EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND ART.

ENGLAND.

£405,015—Science and Art Department
£87,500—British Museum
£6,382—National Gallery
£736—National Portrait Gallery
£13,663—Scientific Investigation, &c.
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£1,445—National Gallery, Con. in Com., and Votes agreed to *Sept* 14, 1253; Report *Sept* 15, 1399
£539,969—Public Education
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